

The Counselor's Corner



NWMSU Counseling Center's Newsletter



Counseling Center

NWMSU Counseling Center
120 Wells Hall
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Welcome Back Bearcats!

Homesickness is a universal experience. Few people are immune to it. Homesickness is experienced when people leave home or familiar surroundings. Below are some coping techniques:

1. **Admit you have it.** Much of what you know and rely on is back home. Homesickness is a natural response to this feeling of loss.
2. **Talk about it.** Talk with someone who has been away from home, a friend, an older sibling or your RA. It is a strength to admit something is bothering you and to confront it.
3. **Bring familiar items.** Photos, plants, even stuffed animals from home help to give one a feeling of familiarity and ease the shock of new surroundings.
4. **Become familiar with your new environment.** Go for walks or bicycle rides. If you know where buildings, classes, and services are you will feel more in control.
5. **Invite someone along to explore.** This is a way to get to know someone and make a friend. Making friends is an effective way to alleviate homesickness.
6. **Write or e-mail home.** That's correct! Write! Avoid telephoning. Write about your activities, experiences, and impressions of your new environment. Keep a copy for yourself – it becomes a good diary.
7. **Plan your trips home.** Avoid impulsive returns. Make formal arrangements. Planning for the trip will help you stay focused on your goals.
8. **Assess your expectations.** It would be nice to be popular, well-dressed, well-organized, well-adjusted and an "A" student. But, it's difficult to be all things. The most predictable way of causing trouble and grief for yourself is to be a perfectionist. Make your expectation reasonable and achievable. Also, laugh at your mistakes. After all, you're learning!
9. **Join a group.** Being part of a group will make your new environment more fun. Clubs and groups are a good source of support and introduce you to new activities and friends. The Northwest student booklet "**Connections**" lists almost all the campus organizations that are open to you.
10. **Take a chance.** All those new people, buildings, and choices seem scary, but they also provide an opportunity to make new friends, to learn more about what you're interested in, to get involved in your favorite activities or try new ones.
11. **Take action now.** You must **do** something. Get out and be around people. It won't go away by itself.

The Counseling Center: Do I Dare Go There????

Myth: Counseling is only for “crazy” people.

Actually, the most common reasons students seek counseling are relationship and family concerns, anxiety, and depression. College can be a very stressful time with many transitions, and counselors want to assist students so that they can meet their academic goals and enjoy their college experience.

Myth: Counseling is only for weak people who need a “crutch.”

Actually, it takes a lot of strength and courage to admit your struggles to someone else and try new ways of dealing with life. Working with a counselor is much harder than denying that you have any problems or trying to escape through substance abuse or other activities that will only create more problems.

Myth: If I go to the counseling center, I’ll have to lie on a couch while the “shrink” analyzes me and then brainwashes me with his/her Freudian philosophy.

Actually, everyone sits in chairs and talks openly and directly...and you won’t hear a bunch of stuffy “psycho-babble.” The counselors believe that each person is unique, and they want to help students recognize and maximize their strengths. Counselors respect individuals’ value systems and appreciate diversity.

Myth: My problems aren’t bad enough that I should need counseling... Other people have it much worse than I do!!!

There’s no ranking system for problems. If you’re feeling down or stressed and would like some support, then the Counseling Center is for you. In addition to individual counseling, the Counseling Center offers a wide range of services to both students and staff—including support groups, educational presentations, and one-session consultations.

The Counseling Center: Dare to check us out at 120 Wells Hall!

New Faces at the Counseling Center

We would like to welcome Gena Staggs, Ph.D. and Stacey Wiedmer, as new members of the Counseling Center team.



Gena is a counselor at the Center, who recently received her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Iowa State University. Some of her counseling interests include working with individuals on issues of depression and anxiety, family relationships, disordered eating, and sexual assault/abuse. In counseling, Gena aims to help individuals recognize and understand their strengths, emotions, and anxieties in a way that allows them to use these parts of themselves for growth and healing. She also enjoys giving presentations and meeting with students outside the Counseling Center to talk about topics such as body image, assertiveness, and relationship/gender issues.

Stacey joins the Center as the Graduate Assistant. Stacey is completing her Master’s degree in Counseling Psychology from Northwest Missouri State University. She graduated from Missouri Western State College with a B.S. degree in Personnel Psychology in 1999. Areas of interest include Career Counseling and Health Psychology.

Be sure to stop by and welcome them both!



Visit us on the web at:

<http://www.nwmissouri.edu/counseling>