Adjusting to College Life

**Warning signs of poor adjustment:**

**Isolation:** It can breed negative thoughts and feelings as well as anxiety and depression. It is not healthy to be uninvolved with others and campus activities.

**Irritability:** Feeling angry toward others may indicate other problems. When ignored irritability can escalate into many other problems.

**Poor class attendance:** Attendance should be a top priority. If not, it is often due to other problems and can lead to failure of courses.

**Too much partying:** Excessive alcohol and drug use can pervade a student’s life and interfere with personal and academic goals.

**Going home every weekend:** College is a time to develop independence and autonomy. This cannot be accomplished when a student never really leaves home emotionally.

**Sleeping and eating poorly:** When physiological processes such as sleep and appetite are disrupted, this may indicate underlying medical and emotional problems. Students cannot function well when the body is not nurtured.

**Stress:** While some stress is inevitable, prolonged periods of high stress are a serious warning sign of deeper issues. Sooner or later the body and emotions will begin to break down.

**Poor communication skills:** Lack of assertiveness in communications with others will produce other problems and interfere with college life.

**Relationship problems:** Most relationships experience some tension and conflict. When there is too much conflict, anxiety and depression may result.

**Poor concentration:** Academic life requires students to focus and concentrate. Students who are easily distracted are likely to experience problems in adjustment to college demands.

**Signs of successfully adjusting:**

**Getting involved:** Involvement with others and campus activities are healthy pursuits. Involvement can breed positive thoughts, feelings, and academic success.

**Staying positive:** Maintaining an optimistic attitude with others is productive. It is important to be accepting and tolerant of yourself and others.

**Going to class:** Attending class should be a top priority. Attendance supports academic success and successful stress management.

**Partying smart:** Drinking alcohol and partying in ways that don’t result in harm to yourself or others (personally, academically, and socially) is important. Do everything in moderation.

**Not visiting home every chance they get:** Staying on campus/in the college town helps develop independence and autonomy. You become your own person and develop new relationships in the new community.

**Eating and sleeping well:** We function at our best when our bodies are nurtured in healthy ways.

**Practicing good stress management:** Some stress is inevitable but there are some things we can do to prevent or reduce stress. Deep breathing and leisure activities are ways to manage it.

**Communicating productively:** Be assertive (but respectful) with others so that your own needs are met.

**Maintaining healthy relationships:** Work to avoid “toxic” relationships. Stay in touch with those who support you.

**Staying focused:** Academic life requires students to focus and concentrate. Work to avoid/reduce things that interfere with your concentration.

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For any questions/concerns about successfully adjusting to college life, please call Wellness Services at (660)562-1348