

Things to Do While Waiting to Talk to a Counselor:

We know how difficult it can be to wait when you feel motivated to get help now. Please know that we regularly monitor and review the waitlist and that you will be contacted by a staff member as soon as an appointment becomes available.

If your situation involves thoughts of suicide, thoughts of doing serious harm to yourself or someone else, or recent sexual assault or other recent, serious trauma, we would like you to tell the front desk "This is a crisis" so that we can assess response.

If you're having **academic problems** such as avoiding going to class, turning in assignments, test anxiety, difficulty concentrating, trouble approaching your instructor for help, or needing to decide whether to keep or drop a class, we suggest that you contact our friends in the Learning Center.

If you do not need an emergency/crisis appointment, you might consider **off-campus counseling** rather than being on our waitlist. There are a number of off campus therapists in Wooster. Please check our website for Mental Health resources. You will be responsible for the cost of off campus therapy, so we recommend that you investigate your insurance coverage before scheduling an appointment.

-Your Counseling Staff

Taking Care of Yourself

If you are feeling low, anxious, stressed or simply not yourself, you may feel that these feelings are impossible to move out of and you just can't make yourself feel better. We have found that students who follow through on even one or two of the following suggestions do, in fact, feel better.

Focus – Focus on things you can take action on – shift focus away from the things you can't do anything about. Brewing and stewing deepens a rut, doing and moving can steer you out of it.

Exercise – Even moderate exercise like walking, jogging, swimming, or any sport or activity that you enjoy can be therapeutic. The Scot Center is a great place to go to get out of the cold weather and do something healthy.

Eat Healthy Foods – If you're feeling jittery or anxious, try to avoid caffeine in pop, coffee and tea. Caffeine and sugar helps pick you up in the short run but can contribute to depressed feelings when the initial jolt wears off.

Get a Reasonable Amount of Rest – Either too much or too little sleep can worsen your mood. You know how much sleep make sense for you better than anyone. Try to get enough sleep, but be careful of sleeping too much. Some people find that staying in bed is a great way to avoid things they don't want to do; the trouble with hiding in bed is that when they finally get up, they're even further behind.

Write Down What You Are Feeling - Pay attention to what gets you down by writing it down. Write a letter to the person that you're upset with in your journal – do not send it; this can give you the freedom to let out troubling feelings, the start of the process of letting go of them. When something good happens, don't forget to write that down, too. Many depressed students tend to screen from their awareness any good things that happen like a compliment, a smile, a hello, or a good grade.

Check Out Whether Anyone Else Feels Like You - We find that many students feel different and alienated from others. We hear students say repeatedly, “I didn’t know anyone else felt this way”, or “I thought I was the only person in the world who had this experience.” Go to one of your friends, your R.A., your professor, or your advisor and ask if they ever get down or depressed or ever felt like you. You may be surprised to find that you’re in good company and that you are not as alone as you think.

Remember A Success - Take time to pat yourself on the back about a time that you succeeded or did the right thing for someone else. Explore what it is about you (what strength/ability) that enabled you to do that.

Avoid Using Substances - We find that students often resort to drugs or alcohol as a way to get through a tough time. Drinking can be used as a way to relieve tension, to escape, and to numb feelings. Unfortunately, alcohol is a depressant which leads to more trouble (sometimes serious legal trouble) and more depression. At times, when students feel down, they want to escape their pain so much that they drink and also take pills. Even when they have not meant to harm themselves, students who have mixed pills such as Tylenol, aspirin, or antihistamines with alcohol have caused very serious damage to themselves. If you are worried that you might be impulsive and harm yourself this way – call our office.

Give Yourself Credit - You have already made two very positive moves! One is that you called for an appointment and requested help. The other is that you have taken the time and invested the energy to read this. Honor your courage and strength for this!

**There are also a number of resources available on the Wellness Website under the Counseling Services homepage.*