

MENTAL HEALTH 201

MANAGING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH FOR A SUCCESSFUL FIRST YEAR

Jason Wynkoop, LCSW

EDGE Learning & Wellness Collegiate Community

KNOW THYSELF

- Consider school “fit” for *you*
 - Social life
 - Groups/clubs
 - Values
- Identify and mitigate risks
- Build resilience in advance
 - Skills
 - Growth Orientation
 - Hope
 - Resources
- Have high hopes and **realistic expectations**

MYTHS

- None of my classmates have the problems that I have (“no one will understand, school can’t help,” etc.)
- Accommodations are only for students with physical or learning disabilities
- I am cheating or taking short-cuts if I take prescription medication or ask for extensions for work. (“I shouldn’t need help to do this...I never needed help before”)

FACTS

- 25-40% of students meet the criteria for a diagnosis of a mental health issue during their college years. Leading issues are *depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, addiction*
- Many mental health diagnoses qualify you for academic accommodations
- College can be challenging and fun **and** it is more rewarding when everything isn’t a battle. Using available resources supports success in college and leveling the playing field is smart!

TRANSITION PLAN

- If it isn't broken...
 - Look to replicate the current plan if it has been working
 - Identify which things the student should be in charge of and which (if any) parts should be maintained by parent/guardian
 - Medication
 - Psychiatry
 - Therapy
 - Positive Lifestyle

- Any changes that you'd like to make **for** college, make **before** college!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING REALLY WELL AND WHAT RESULTS IS IT PRODUCING?

ADAPT AS NECESSARY

(ANTICIPATE AND/OR RESPOND TO CHALLENGES)

- Pressure
- Novelty
- Expectations
- Lack of support/structure
- Substance use
- Trauma

TRANSITION IMPLEMENTATION

- 6 Months Prior: Schedule a series of psychiatry and therapy appointments to prepare for transition
- 3-6 Months Prior: Identify Resources at College
 - Campus Resources
 - Health Center
 - Counseling Center
 - Accommodations
 - Resident Assistants/Resident Directors
 - Psychiatrist, Therapist, Pharmacy, Emergency
 - Complete Housing Application (honestly)
 - “What If?” Plan Created

CAMPUS RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Health Center, Counseling Center, Student Services, Office of Disabilities/Accommodations
 - Services
 - Policies
 - Forms
- Questions:

Peer support groups? Off-Campus Resources? Crisis Hotline?

ESTABLISH HABITS & PATTERNS

- Daily Living
 - Sleep
 - Eating
 - “Healthy Choices”
 - Study
 - Work
 - Volunteering
- Communication
 - Who?
 - What?
 - How?
 - How Often?

TRANSITION IMPLEMENTATION

- 1 Month Prior through Enrollment: Engage New Resources
 - Schedule initial appointments
 - Complete FERPA & HIPPA forms
 - Review academic and financial policies
 - Finalize family communication plan
- First week: Establish Practices & Relationships
 - Introduce yourself to faculty & staff
 - Have discussion with roommate about lifestyle needs
 - Follow family communication plan
- Third week: Review Progress & Celebrate Success
 - Review previous commitments
 - Explore sustainability

RESOURCES

- **NAMI.com**
- **Dearpennfreshman.com**
- **mentalhealthamerica.net/whats-your-plan-college-mental-health-disorder**
- Search “**Freshman College Mental Health**”

Feel free to contact me directly with any individual questions:

Jason Wynkoop, LCSW

jwynkoop@edgelearningcommunity.com