

This issue of **SHOP NEWS**
will focus on
College students & Mental Health!



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On-campus & off-campus resources

Beating the Blues

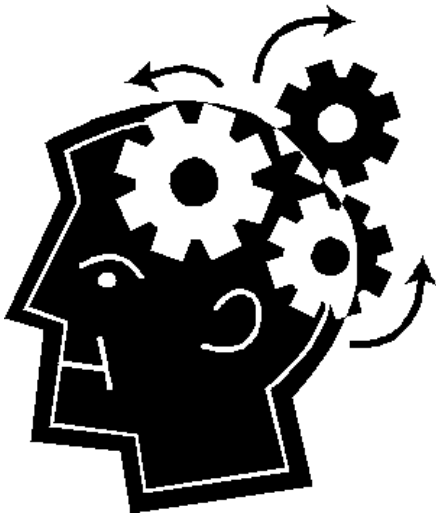
Stress Busters

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Half of Us

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First Things First...

If you or someone you know is struggling with a mental health issue and they need help here are some excellent resources both on and off campus:

UCSC Campus:

Counseling and Psychological Services: 831.459.2628

- ❖ Appointment scheduling 8:30am-4:30pm
- ❖ Crisis hours M-F 9:30-11:30am and 2:00-4:00pm
- ❖ Consultation available 8:30am-4:30pm

UCSC Psychiatry: 831.459.2214

Student Health Center: 831.459.2211



UCSC Student Health Services

Beating the Blues

A guide for uncovering, understanding and managing depression and suicidal thoughts.

Signs & Symptoms of Depression

- * Lost pleasure in most activities.
- * Fatigued / lacking energy
- * Feeling sad, blue, or down in the dumps
- * Feeling hopeless about future
- * Difficulty concentrating
- * Unrealistic ideas / worries
- * Decreased interest in sex
- * Sleep changes (too much / too little)
- * Increased/decreased appetite
- * Headaches, other aches and pains
- * Feeling worthless or self-blame
- * Exaggerated guilty feelings
- * Frequently tearful
- * Thoughts of suicide

Effective ways to beat the blues & feel better:

- Think about possible causes of your depression and be active in your treatment. Small shifts in thinking and behaviors can make a very big difference.
- Seek out professional help to overcome depression. Look for a caring counselor, psychologist, or doctor to assist you.
- Examine some of your negative thoughts (e.g., blaming yourself, perfectionism, or expecting failure) and keep a record of them. Finding more positive thoughts to replace the negative ones can change the way you feel and lift your mood.
- Focus on your positive experiences, accomplishments (even small ones!) and good relationships.
- Engage in activities that you enjoy –if you stopped doing something because of the sadness, find a way to integrate it back into your life.
- Increase your social connections...find other people to be with or to do enjoyable activities with. This fights off stress and can be healing.
- Do some exercise—even little amounts help, try to reach 3 times per week. Pick an activity you enjoy and do it. Research indicates that exercise can be as effective as medication.
- Take good care of your body ... eat well, avoid alcohol and drugs which can increase the sadness.
- Use self-relaxation techniques like deep breathing, visualizing relaxing places or visualizing better moods.
- Set a few realistic and achievable goals and allow yourself to succeed in achieving them.
- Consider the possibility of using one of several effective anti-depressant treatments available through your doctor.
- Recognize that depression takes time to develop and be patient with yourself as you work your way to feeling good again.

Stress-busters

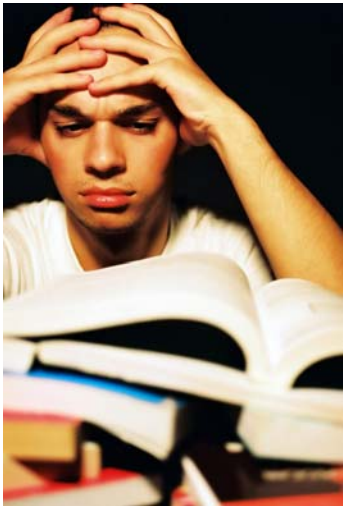
Tips and techniques for managing stress and introducing relaxation into your life

- What are the primary sources of stress in my life?
- What are the signs and symptoms in my body that let me know I'm stressed?
- What have I done that worked in the past to manage my stress?
- What can I do to integrate more relaxation into my daily routine?

Useful tips to manage stress:

Think about possible causes of your stress and be active in reducing stress. Small shifts in your thinking, behaviors, or breathing can make a very big difference.

- ❖ Engaging in some **regular exercise** has been shown to alleviate the impacts of stress. Choose an assortment of tension-building and tension-releasing exercises, even small doses help.
- ❖ Find your own **optimal stress-relievers**. Is it changing your thoughts? Physical activity? A social occasion? Look for the healthy ways that help you to feel less stressed and do them!
- ❖ Chronic stress can have **long-term effects** on health and well-being, so if your symptoms are prolonged or severe, it is important to get outside support.



Some effective relaxation techniques to get you started:

- Try deep breathing exercises. Lay or sit in a comfortable position with your muscles relaxed and take a few deep breaths. Work towards breathing in to a slow count to five. 1...2...3...4...5... Exhale slowly. Rely on this technique when you start to feel stressed:
- When your body feels tense, take three minutes to sit or lay quietly and focus on calming all of the muscles in your body. Begin with the muscles in your feet and slowly work your way up the body, relaxing all of the major muscle groups until your whole body feels at ease.
- After doing some breathing and muscle relaxation, or just taking time to rest, take a moment to calm your thoughts and visualize a peaceful place in your mind, either a place you have been or would like to go. Allow your body to relax more and your mind to become calmer. Recognize that you can go to that peaceful place in your mind and feel better fast.

Myths and Facts

Myth: I can't do anything for a person with a mental illness.

Fact: You can do a lot, starting with how you act and speak. You can create an environment that builds on people's strengths and promotes understanding.

Learn the facts about mental health and share them with others - especially if you hear something that isn't true.

• **Don't discriminate** against people with mental illnesses. Like other people with disabilities, people with mental health problems are protected under federal and state laws.

• **Don't label people** with words like "crazy," "wacko," or "loony," or define them by their diagnosis. Instead of saying someone is "a schizophrenic," one should say he or she "has schizophrenia." This is called "people-first" language and it helps reduce the stigma associated with these labels.



Myth: People who talk about suicide won't really do it.

Fact: Almost everyone who commits suicide has given some clue or warning. Do not ignore suicide threats, or statements like "You'll be sorry when I'm dead," or "I can't see any way out." No matter how casually or jokingly said, these statements might indicate serious suicidal feelings.

Myth: Talking about suicide may give someone the idea.

Fact: You don't give a suicidal person morbid ideas by talking about suicide. The opposite is true—bringing up the subject of suicide and discussing it openly is one of the most helpful things you can do.

Myth: Suicidal people are fully intent on dying.

Fact: Most suicidal people are undecided about living or dying. This is called "suicidal ambivalence." While a part of them wants to live, death seems like the only way out of their pain and suffering. They sometimes "gamble with death," leaving it up to others to save them.

Myth: Sometimes a bad event can push a person to complete suicide.

Fact: Suicide results from serious psychiatric disorders rather than from any single event.

Tips for Academic Success!

Set academic and personal goals that matter to you.

Discover a secret of motivation: Find a passion in learning. Make your education meaningful to you. What do you want to accomplish at UCSC - and in your life - this year? Put your goals for

Meet and get to know faculty.

You'll be glad you did.

We're here for you! Know and use your campus resources.

Your college academic advisor or the Academic Resource Center: <http://www2.ucsc.edu/arc/> are great places to start with any academic questions or concerns. Check out the campus Counseling and Psychological Services: www2.ucsc.edu/counsel

Learn actively. Tap your deeper potential.

Understand your learning style: <http://www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm>. Is it more important for you to read and reflect or to discuss and question new material? Do you have a strong preference for visual information? Perhaps you learn best by hearing, or through a hands-on approach? Research shows that students who study on their own and discuss the material with a

Handle your time or it will handle you.

Evaluate your use of time – see how and where you spend it. (Oops! Five hours online!) Make a schedule and use a planner to keep up with reading and homework. Take a free campus workshop on time management: <http://www2.ucsc.edu/csas>. Study consistently, tackling difficult subjects first. Learn to say no to distractions, find a good study spot. When your use of time

Develop strong reading, listening, writing and note-taking skills.

Use the links below to develop your study skills. Attend study skills workshops offered each quarter through the Academic Resource Center: <http://www2.ucsc.edu/arc/>.



half of us

Did you know that nearly half of all college students reported feeling so depressed that they couldn't function during the last school year? More than that have faced an emotional problem of some sort. Sometimes these challenges can make it difficult for students to keep up with the demands of college life, and sometimes the impact is even more devastating. In fact, suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students. With so many people struggling, why is it still hard for us to talk about "mental health?"

Get Sleep:

Lack of sleep can hinder your ability to think rationally, make good decisions and deal with stressful situations. It can also make it hard to do well in class and can make you more likely to get sick, upset or depressed. Most experts recommend 7 to 8 hours a sleep of night, but the best sleep schedule is one that works for you and fits into your schedule. Take control of your emotional health by creating the best sleep plan for you and your lifestyle.

Stay Active:

Research has shown that people dealing with mild to moderate depression have experienced up to a 50 percent reduction in symptoms after exercising on a regular basis. Just 30 minutes of aerobic exercise 3 to 5 times a week can significantly improve mood, decrease fatigue and reduce stress. Take control of your emotional health by working exercise into your weekly schedule.

Eat Right:

It can be hard to eat well in the fast pace of campus life, but ignoring your body's nutritional needs can have severe consequences on your state of mind. Too much caffeine or foods high in sugar can increase nervousness and irritability and make you less able to concentrate and manage stress. Not getting enough key vitamins and nutrients can also have a negative impact on your mood. Take control of your emotional health by eating a healthy, balanced diet.

Manage Stress:

How we deal with stress is just as important as the factors that cause it. Good stress management involves avoiding stress when possible and developing coping skills to deal with necessary challenges and pressures. Take control of your emotional health by figuring out the best way to manage the stress in your life.

Know Your Limits:

Hanging out with friends and going to parties can be a stress reliever, but it is important to understand that using drugs or alcohol to unwind can also be detrimental to your emotional health. Abusing drugs and alcohol can cause depression, irritability, bad judgment, insomnia and make it impossible to have a good college experience. Take control of your emotional health by knowing your limits and the signs of a drug or alcohol problem.

Speak Up:

If you were experiencing back pain or stomach cramps, you would probably go to your doctor or health center to get it checked out. It's just as important to speak up and get things checked out if you are concerned about your thoughts, feelings or behavior. Take control of your emotional health by using our Check Yourself tool or reaching out for help.

- ❖ Have you or a friend been feeling stressed, anxious, sad, hopeless, irritable or unfocused? It's "OK" to answer "yes" if that's the case. These feelings could be a normal part of the college experience, but they could also be something that requires help to overcome.

If you were in physical pain, you'd get it checked out.

- ❖ Mental health is just as important. Reach out for support or encourage a friend to ask for help.
- ❖ Remember, **half of us** struggle with depression, and all of us have the power to help ourselves and others by fighting the stigma around mental health and speaking up when we need support.

fight the stigma

www.halfofus.com

Sources

UCSC Counseling and Psychological Services :

Beating the Blues, Stress Busters & Tips for Academic Success

http://www2.ucsc.edu/counsel/helpful_topics.html

Awesome Mental Health Websites:

Ad Council – Mental Health Anti-Stigma Campaign

‘What a Difference a Friend Makes’

www.adcouncil.org

Half of Us – provides a resource center with information on various mental health issues facing young people.

www.halfofus.com

The Bacchus Network – Friends Helping Friends, Promoting Mental Health

www.bacchusgamma.org/mental_health_campaign.asp

American Psychiatric Association - Healthy Minds

The APA has created resources that explore mental health issues that impact college students.

www.healthyminds.org/collegementalhealth_new.cfm

Gotanxiety.org – A service provided by the Anxiety Disorders Association of America. Provides information for college students.

www.gotanxiety.org

mpower – Musicians for Mental Health is a youth awareness campaign that is harnessing the power of music to change youth attitudes about mental health and stigma.

www.mpoweryouth.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention – AFSP

Dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research and education and reaching out to people with mood disorders and those affected by suicide.

www.afsp.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

A 24 –hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to ANYONE in suicidal crisis.

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org



It's about how we treat each other. Take time to connect.