Transition to University for Rural Students

Brought to you by the Counselling Service
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Common issues experienced by Rural Students in their first year at university

- Rural students who have accessed the counselling service have commonly reported the following issues of concern:
  - Transition issues (adjustment to change)
  - Anxiety, panic attacks,
  - Social anxiety
  - Problems with Self Confidence
  - Problems with Relationships
  - Grief issues
  - Peer relationship issues
  - Depression
  - Sexuality
  - Medical issues
  - Financial issues
  - Family issues
  - Identity issues
  - Problems with drug use/abuse
  - Legal issues
  - Stress
  - Disability
  - Problems with motivation
  - Considering changing courses or withdrawing from their course
Transition and Adjusting to Change

• Coming to university for the first time is daunting for all students. When you have to move to a new place, it can be even more difficult and you may experience a kind of “culture shock”:
  
  – Not knowing how things “work” in the new place.
  – Not knowing where things are in the new place.
  – Things seem unfamiliar.
  – Loss of established networks and resources.
  – Missing friends, family and familiar places.

And university itself can be quite a change from school.
  – The scope may be bigger and the campus more spread out.
  – University can seem complex and confusing.
  – You may feel overloaded with information
  – You may feel uncertain about study techniques (taking lecture notes, writing assignments and essays on unfamiliar topics, research and literature reviews, different exam formats).
On a positive note…

It can be exciting at the same time…

• Gaining a place in the course of your choice.
• Studying a course that you are interested in and one that will lead to a career.
• The general buzz of "Being at Uni".
• The anticipation of being more independent than you have been in the past.
• Personal freedom
There are also some experiences and situations that fluctuate between dread and excitement

- Having to be responsible for your own learning,
- Having to be responsible for your own living,
- Living with people that are not family.
- Sharing, the rent, the cleaning, the shopping, etc.
Coping with Transition

• Becoming a university student is about making changes.
• You may sometimes feel more stressed or anxious…
• But you will also feel anticipation, excitement and experience some fun times!
Adapting to change

- Think of past experiences of coping with change
- Utilise this self-knowledge and skills in a new situation
- Normalise your experience - mixed feelings are okay.
- Don’t bottle up your feelings or tell yourself that you should be able to cope on your own:
  - Be informed of support services available
  - Talk to friends and family.
- It’s okay to ask for help – this will prevent more problems in the long run
- Don't leave things too late!
Handling the course effectively

• Review your expectations of yourself:
  • Do you have a high investment in succeeding?
  • Do you have high expectations of self and the course?
  • Remind yourself that you cannot be perfect!
  • You may not have all skills at the beginning but you will learn as the course goes on.

• Organising your time
  • Prioritise tasks
  • Saying 'no'
  • Delegating
  • Some things will have to take a back seat.
A final word…

• It is important to remember that the goal to strive towards as a student is balance! You cannot achieve if you miss out on the important things in life either, like time out and time for fun!

• Work towards achieving a balance between:
  – Study
  – Work
  – Time spent with family and friends
  – Time to yourself
  – FUN!!