



reCAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz

A Student Perspective: Using Let's Talk **By Alina Crom**

Hello fellow Slugs! I hope all of you are coping okay with the end of the quarter, a time when all of our final projects and deadlines suddenly get very, very real. Also, this is when many of us are planning which classes to take in the spring. Clearly, it's an exciting and very stressful time!

So ... CAPS started a really cool program last year called Let's Talk,

which was designed to give students the opportunity to have a brief, anonymous, drop-in consultation with CAPS therapists with absolutely no appointment necessary. Although I personally think this is an awesome program, many of my friends told me they have never heard of it. Let's Talk has been going strong in winter quarter, and it might be just what

you need if you have any questions about counseling or have been unable to schedule a formal appointment with CAPS.

The reason I'm so enthusiastic about advertising for Let's Talk is not just because I'm a CAPS peer educator. When I was going through a rough time last year, I decided to visit Let's Talk and had an overwhelmingly positive experience. My participation in Let's Talk was what encouraged me to eventually set up counseling sessions at CAPS.

If you're still a little skeptical of Let's Talk, trust me, I was too. As someone who volunteers with CAPS, I thought that meant I was strong and smart enough to take care of myself and was exempt from therapy. (Yes, I do realize it's ironic that someone who works to destigmatize mental illness felt there was a stigma involved in pursuing counseling!) Long story short, I wasn't sleeping, and I struggled

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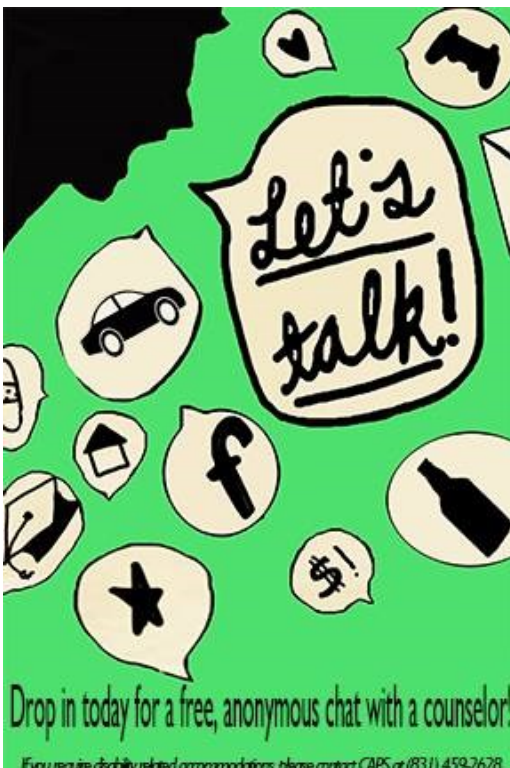
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All About CAPS

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers FREE, confidential mental health services to registered UCSC students all year 'round:

- Brief individual, couples' and group counseling
- Awesome workshops and trainings around campus
- Referrals to on- and off-campus resources
- Crisis services (in person Mon-Fri 8 am-5 pm; by phone 24/7 at 831-459-2628)

To make an appointment, call us at 831-459-2628 or stop by (Student Health Center, East Wing, 2nd floor) weekdays between 8 am and 5 pm. To learn more, visit our [website](#), check out the [CAPS blog](#), and like us on [Facebook](#)!



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with feelings of constant anxiety. I knew that I needed to take better care of myself, so I finally decided to talk to a counselor at Let's Talk. I went to the Baskin Engineering location, where a small sign pointed me toward the room. I knocked on the door, and a counselor warmly welcomed me in. She talked me through some of the confidentiality policies and explained that Let's Talk was not the same as a therapy session. However, she attentively listened to me as I discussed my issues and offered empathy. She encouraged me to make an appointment with CAPS and offered resources for counseling off campus as well. Even though my session was only 20 minutes long, I walked away feeling much lighter and more confident in myself.

While therapy may not be for everyone, I think that visiting Let's Talk and actually talking to a counselor is definitely worth a shot. Let's Talk meets several times a week at different locations. Days and times may change each quarter, so make sure you're following the CAPS newsletter, [Facebook page](#), and [Let's Talk web page](#) to stay posted! Let's Talk has wrapped up for winter quarter. Starting April 7th in spring quarter, Let's Talk meets Tuesdays 1:00 to 3:00 pm at the Cantu LGBTQ Center; Wednesdays 1:30 to 3:30 pm at McHenry Library, Room 2285; and Thursdays 2:30 to 4:30 pm at Baskin Engineering, Room 153B. Good luck, Slugs!

Alina Crom is a 4th-year student majoring in psychology and minoring in linguistics. She has participated in CAPS' Peer Educator Program for the past 2 years.

VOLUNTEER FOR CAPS!

Interested in volunteering for CAPS in the 2015-'16 academic year? Interested in mental health and stigma reduction? Want to make a positive difference? Beginning April 3rd, 2015, applications will be available for participation in the CAPS Peer Education Program (PEP) and the CAPS Student Advisory Board (SAB) for the upcoming year. Please like our [Facebook page](#) today so you can receive updates, or check the [CAPS website](#) on April 3rd. The deadline for completed applications will be Monday, April 20th. Mark your calendars and check on line for more information!



Dear CAPS,

I've been feeling depressed, but I'm not sure about getting help. What should I do?

—Really Blue

You're not alone. Studies show that a large percentage of college students feel depressed at times.

It's important to ask yourself some questions before ruling out professional help. Have you been having serious thoughts about suicide or self-harm? Have you been doing self-destructive things? Are you so depressed you can't function? Have you been feeling depressed all day every day for two weeks or more? *If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, we encourage you to come in to CAPS during business hours or call our 24-hour crisis number (831-459-2628).*

But let's assume you answered "no" to all of those questions: You're down, but you're not at risk of hurting yourself, and you're still functioning OK—you'd just like to be happier and functioning better. What might help?

You might visit Let's Talk, our weekly drop-in service, to have a brief conversation with a therapist to get another perspective and advice. You could also try some of the following self-help techniques:

- **Stay social.** Even if you don't feel like it, being social can help. Don't overdo it, but make sure you stay connected to at least a few people you can count on for support and fun.
- **Plan for the positive.** Schedule time for socializing, self-care (e.g., sleep, good meals, exercise), and pleasant activities, like watching your favorite show, going on a walk, or playing guitar with a friend.



- **Laugh.** Humor is a great way to beat the blues. Joke with a friend or see a funny movie.
- **Move your body.** Regular physical activity improves mood and reduces stress. You don't need to be an Olympic athlete—just do an activity that gets your heart rate up a few times a week.
- **Avoid relying on alcohol or other drugs to cope.** Substances provide temporary "solutions" that can cause bigger problems.
- **Find a creative way to explore your feelings.** Try journaling or making some artwork.
- **Start a "gratitude practice."** Take a few minutes each day to write down two or three things in your life for which you feel grateful. Research shows this helps when done regularly.
- **Pick up a self-help book.** Two good ones are *The Depression Cure* by S. Ilardi and *Thoughts and Feelings* by M. McKay.

Upcoming Events

QUEER MENS GROUP: A welcoming weekly drop-in group for all male-identified queer students. Provides support and discussion of topics of interest brought up by group members. The group has ended for winter quarter and starts again March 30th for spring quarter. Meets Mondays from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at the Cantu Center.

SLUG SOCIAL CLUB: A weekly support group for students with Aspergers or students on the Autism spectrum. Provides a welcoming social environment where students can meet, interact with, and learn from other students with Aspergers who have difficulty making and maintaining

social relationships. Short pre-screening required to join. Call CAPS counselor Brent Alsaker at 831-459-2828 for more info. Meets every Wednesday starting April 1st from 2:00 to 3:15 pm.

OTHER CAPS GROUPS FOR SPRING: CAPS will be offering a number of groups in spring quarter, some of which require a short screening to join and commitment to attending all quarter. Others are drop-in groups, where you can come when you like. Check out our [groups web page](#) on the CAPS website or call CAPS at 831-459-2628 during business hours for the latest information.

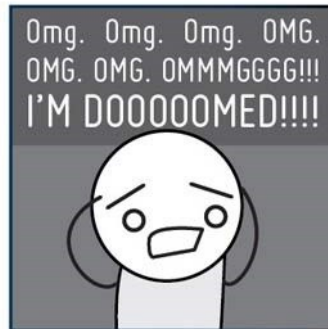
— A FIELD GUIDE TO —
PROCRASTINATORS

Contact CAPS:

Student Health Center
 East Wing, 2nd Floor
 Phone: 831-459-2628
 (24/7 crisis help)
<http://caps.ucsc.edu>



The Cleaner



The Panicker



The Watcher



The Delegator



The Napper



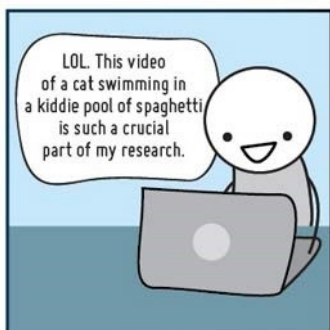
The Sidetracker



The Gamer



The Social Sharer



The Internet Researcher



The Snacker



The List Maker



The Perpetuator