



reCAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz

A Lasting View by Araceli Aviles

Being so close to graduating, I've been thinking a lot about endings. In college, especially, we measure our lives by beginnings and endings, whether it's a quarter, an assignment or the relationships we have.

Someone recently told me how bothered he was when a person said, "I hope she gets better," in response to finding out his loved one has a mental illness. He said it troubled him because the comment implied that his loved one cur-

rently wasn't well, and that a mental illness could be fixed as quickly and completely as a broken bone. As we continued our conversation and came to the same conclusion that living with mental illness is a constant, daily struggle, it occurred to me that this premise can apply to a variety of struggles. With most things that are difficult, when life seems out of control, the answer isn't as simple as figuring out how the struggle started and how we end it. It's

about finding ways to mitigate the impact and then thrive in the struggle, to not let it control you. There is no quick fix or ending to anything; instead, every struggle and milestone has the potential to lead to something new, something potentially transformative.

Araceli Aviles is a graduating senior with a background in non-violent communication. She is a member of the CAPS Student Advisory Board.

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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. Check out the [CAPS blog](#), visit our [website](#) and like us on [Facebook](#)!



Wellness Tip: Meditation for Exam Stress



Photo from NYU Law Magazine

You may know that meditation is a great way to quiet the mind and relax. However, what you may not know is that there are lots of meditations available that can address specific issues. One such issue is test anxiety. The following two websites offer a

variety of meditations, and both sites provide meditations specially designed to help you remain more calm around exam time.

Fragrant Heart:

Offers an extensive selection of free audio meditations and visuali-

zations for a variety of purposes, including exam stress (under “Meditations for Self-Esteem”). Most are based in Buddhism or mindfulness.

Inner Health Studio:

Offers free audio meditations and visualizations on a variety of topics (as well as some for purchase). To listen to a free guided imagery script on exams, see the “Guided Imagery” page (about two-thirds of the way down the page). These meditations and visualizations are non-spiritual.

Dear CAPS,

I have a decent job lined up for after graduation, but I am feeling really anxious about it. Is that normal?

—Worried Worker

Here at CAPS, we don’t like to use the word *normal*, since it implies that there is something “abnormal” going on if you aren’t the same as everyone else. That said, fears about graduation and starting a new job are extremely common, so you are definitely not alone.

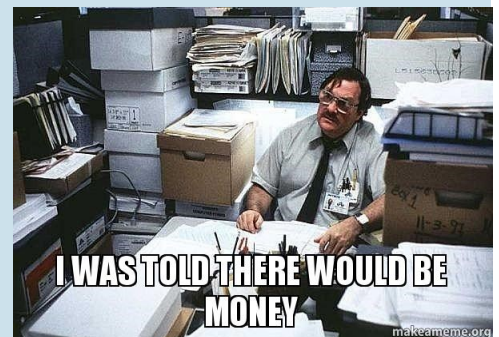
Some of the most typical fears grads have when starting a job are whether they can succeed and whether the new boss and coworkers will think they are doing a good job. Almost everyone has these (or similar) concerns, so don’t worry too much.

Remember that your new boss would not have hired you if he or she didn’t think you could cut it. Also, keep in mind that everyone has a learning curve when starting a new job, so remember that making a few mistakes or needing some guidance is expected. Just do your best, ask for help or clarification when you need it and don’t slack off, and you should be OK.

Something else you should remember is that your first job will probably not be your last—if things are not ideal with this first position, have faith that better jobs could be out there once you have more experience and connections under your belt. Most people don’t get a “dream job” right out of school. Use your first job as a chance to learn what you like and don’t like in

a work setting and what your strengths and weaknesses are as an employee. This way, you can work on filling in any gaps in your education and narrowing down your ideas of what you might want to do next.

Finally, don’t be afraid to ask for support from friends and family if you need it. New-hire jitters will almost always fade with time.



Advice for Exam Day

Most people don't love exams. They can be stressful, but with a little preparation, you can give yourself the best chance possible to do well. Here are CAPS' top tips for exam day:

1. Be awake and alert—get a good night's sleep the night before. (Of course, this means you have prepared by studying ahead of time and not staying up all night cramming!)
2. Eat a small but nutritious breakfast. Eating complex carbs (e.g., whole grain toast) and protein (e.g., milk, nuts, cheese, yogurt, soy, eggs, peanut butter) can give you the energy you need
3. Get to the exam site a little early but not too early—10 minutes is perfect to ensure you're not stressed over being late but don't have to sit too long worrying about taking the exam.
4. Avoid talking to stressed-out/stressful people before the exam. Listening to someone freak out is not going to help you! Wear headphones playing soothing music if it allows you to avoid joining in a freak-out session with classmates.
5. Bring an extra pen or pencil—just in case you need it.
6. Bring exam aids if

to focus.

allowed (e.g., calculator, notes); bring other stuff you might need, like tissues, cough drops or water.

7. Use the restroom before the exam to minimize distractions.
8. Wear comfortable clothes.
9. Visualize yourself doing great on the exam. Imagining a good outcome can actually improve your performance and confidence.
10. Be aware of the time allotted for the exam and pace yourself accordingly.

Kick some exam butt,
Slugs!



Upcoming Events

PAUSE FOR PAWS: Those loveable canines are coming back to help you de-stress during finals week! Petting and interacting with dogs is a great way to take a break from studying to relax and smile. Therapy dogs are specially trained to enjoy interacting with a lot of new people. Come to McHenry Library on Sunday, June 8th, 6–7 pm and the Engineering Library on Monday, June 9th, 6–7 pm. Cosponsored by the University Library and Counseling & Psychological Services.



Recovery Program off to Great Start

A trend that has been around for a while but has recently started gaining steam across the nation is for campuses to house Collegiate Recovery Communities (CRCs) or Programs (CRPs). These programs provide support and resources to students who are in recovery from substance addiction or compulsive behaviors (e.g., codependency, compulsive gaming or eating), students with a loved one who has an addiction and allies who want to show their support for people in recovery.

At UCSC, a CRP has been in the works the past couple of years. A committee of students, staff and faculty has met regularly to discuss the needs of students in recovery on our campus and make plans for growing our CRP. According to Blair Davis, committee member and CAPS

psychologist with alcohol and other drugs focus, "Students in recovery are high-achieving members of college campuses—when they have the support and resources they need. We are working to ensure that students in recovery at UC Santa Cruz can reach their highest potential and meet other students in recovery."

So far, UCSC's CRP planning committee has been working to get funding and establish a dedicated space on campus where CRP members can hang out, hold meetings and other activities and know there is a safe place for them to meet up. Members hope to find a space soon. In the meantime, they are planning social and educational activities for the fall of 2014 and creating a web page and other ways to reach out. They have also added questions to

the campus housing application to allow for the matching of students in recovery who want to room with others in recovery or join the CRP. Eventually, the CRP may include a sober living residence on or off campus.

The University of California administration is showing its support for CRPs. In April 2014, the UC Office of the President hosted a working retreat in Santa Cruz for staff and students from UCs and a selection of a few other universities who are involved with current CRPs or interested in starting one.

For more information, contact Mike Yamauchi-Gleason (831-459-5015), Paul Willis at SHOP (831-459-1417) or Blair Davis at CAPS (831-459-5883).

Contact CAPS:

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

Thank You From CAPS!

We at Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) want to thank you for reading *reCAPS* and making our newsletter's first year a great one. *reCAPS* will be taking a hiatus over the summer and will return in October 2014. Have a great summer, Slugs, and congratulations to all of the 2014 graduates!

