Self-Care Tips and Resources
Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)

While you are in the process of scheduling a counseling appointment, you may ask what you can do in the meantime to try to alleviate some of the distress you may currently be experiencing. This handout provides some suggestions. (This handout is for informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or treat any conditions—it cannot substitute for a consultation with a medical or mental health professional.)

- **Stick to a routine.** Get dressed, go to class, keep to the structure you normally have during your day.
- **Eat healthy food regularly.** Skipping meals robs you of the energy you need to cope.
- **Talk to supportive friends or family members.** Isolating yourself can make things worse.
- **Keep a journal** of your thoughts and feelings. Note any patterns or questions you’d like to discuss in counseling.
- **Get some sleep.** Most people need 7 to 9 hours of sleep every night. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- **Do some kind of physical activity** regularly. This can be running, swimming, playing sports, working out—preferably something you like to do. Even walks around the campus and neighborhood can help you feel better emotionally and reduce stress.
- **Avoid using alcohol or drugs** as a way to “self-medicate.” This includes caffeine.
- **Find activities that are relaxing** or soothing to you. Listen to your favorite music, take hot baths, meditate, go on a long walk, visit the CAPS website “Self-Help” page for relaxation podcasts and other self-help resources.
- **Use humor.** Spend time with people who make you laugh, watch a comedy, read a funny book.
- **Distract yourself temporarily** from your difficulties. Watch TV, play a game, go window shopping.
- **Recall what has helped you before** in similar situations. Make a list of these things and try to do them.
- **Check out the CAPS website** (http://caps.ucsc.edu). Our site has information about our services, including same-day crisis assessments and consultations; other services on and off campus; self-help resources; and more.

**Other On-Campus Resources That May Help:**

- Academic Advisors (academic support & services) Call or visit your college office
- Cantu Center (GLBTQ community support & resources) (831) 459-2468
- CARE Office (sexual assault, domestic violence, & stalking support) (831) 502-2273
- Career Services (career counseling & job hunting support) (831) 459-4420
- Disability Resource Center (disability accommodations & services) (831) 459-2089, (831) 459-4806 (TTY)
- Educational Opportunity Programs (for 1st-gen. low-income, & others) (831) 459-2296
- Ethnic Resource Centers (community support & resources) (831) 459-2427
- Learning Support Services (tutoring, study groups, & more) (831) 459-4333
- SHOP (drug/alcohol, wellness, sexual health support) (831) 459-3772
- Smith Renaissance Society at STARS (for former foster youth, juvenile offenders, runaways, orphans, homeless youth) (831) 459-4968
- Student Health Center (831) 459-2211
- Slug Support at Dean of Students Office (early intervention for students in need of support and/or resources) (831) 459-4446
- SOAR (student orgs, government, & community activities) (831) 459-2934
- STARS (services for transfer & re-entry students) (831) 459-2552
- VETS at STARS (veteran community support & resources) (831) 459-1520
- Women’s Center (community support & resources) (831) 459-2072

**Crisis & Other Resources**

Counseling & Psychological Services offers same-day crisis assessments and consultations for students experiencing mental health–related emergencies. Students in need of crisis services can come to CAPS or call (831) 459-2628 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

The following emergency resources are available on holidays, weekends, and after CAPS office hours:

- **CAPS After Hours Crisis Service:** (831) 459-2628 (follow menu prompts to talk to a counselor by phone)
- **Crisis Text Line:** [http://www.crisistextline.org/](http://www.crisistextline.org/) (text START to 741-741 to text with a trained peer counselor; text returned in a few minutes; free for AT&T, T-Mobile, Sprint, & Verizon)
- **Emergency:** (police, fire, medical): 911
- **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Santa Cruz County chapter (support and information):** www.namiscc.org
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** (888) 799-7233 (SAFE)
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** (800) 773-8255 (TALK)
- **Santa Cruz County Crisis Stabilization Program (mental health crisis stabilization and inpatient care):** (831) 600-2800
- **Suicide Prevention Service of the Central Coast:** (877) 663-5433 (ONE LIFE)
- **24-Hour Suicide Crisis Line:** 877-663-5433 (ONE LIFE)
- **UC Santa Cruz Police Dispatch:** (831) 459-2345 (emergencies when can’t call 911)

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