

Mental Health: Anxiety and Depression

HEALTH TIP #10
October 26, 2014



Hello there, you awesome person you. What's up? How's it going? How's life? I hope everything is going well for you. And if something is up – *always, always* know you have somebody to trust to talk to about *anything*.

I could not really think of a witty title this week (oh creativity, where have you gone?), but as you can see, we are going to engage in a dialogue about mental health – a topic near and dear to my heart. And a topic that I hope we can externalize and one day talk about more openly in our society.

Have you ever felt happy? Sad? Nervous? Afraid? Anxious? Apathetic? Stressed? I'm going to take a wild guess that you answered yes to all of the above – and that is great. Congratulations, you are human.

Now, have you ever felt (or observed in others around you) some of these feelings occurring continuously over a longer period of time? Have you noticed any of the following signs?

- **Physical:** Disturbances to regular sleep patterns, changes in appetite (weight gain/loss), decreased energy, headaches and stomachaches
- **Behavioral:** Loss of pleasure in activities that were once enjoyed, difficulty concentrating, neglecting responsibilities or personal appearance
- **Emotional:** Persistent sad or “empty” mood, crying “for no reason,” feeling hopeless, helpless, guilty or worthless, feeling irritable or anxious, thoughts of death or suicide.

We don't hear or talk about these statistics enough, but did you know that, according to the National College Health Assessment for UC Berkeley Spring 2012, 67.7%

of Berkeley students have “felt very sad” and 33.7% “felt so depressed that it was difficult to function” anytime within the past 12 months?

So, let's TALK about this. Let's talk about what you can do if you or somebody you know may be showing some of these signs. Depression is one of the most common mental health issues for college students – it is also one of the most treatable (see resource box for links):

- Mental Health Screening: If you are interested, the Tang Center offers free and anonymous mental health screenings (see resource box)
- Counseling and Psychological Services: You have five free professional counseling sessions
- Health and Wellness Coaching: You can make an appointment with Karen Gee (510-643-6179)
- Massage Chair: Free 15 minutes sessions at the Tang Center
- S.P.I.L.L. (Supporting Peers in Laid Back Listening): Free, anonymous and non-judgmental venting via email for all students (berkeley@studentspill.com)
- Your Health Workers: we are always here for you

And what can *you* do for others? Be a **ROCK(star)** – **Reach Out, Care, and Know.** Let's be there for each other, whether it just be to listen or to encourage a person you care about to seek help and support. We can get through the ups and downs together.

Bathroom Stall Wisdom #3 (drumroll please.....):

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall” – Nelson Mandela

“However long the night, the dawn will break” – African Proverb

Other resources:

National Crisis Help Line:
800-273-TALK

Emergencies: 911

Mental Health Screening:

mentalhealthscreening.org/screening/uofcberkeley

A Great Blog:

<http://www.marcandangel.com/>

VISIT THE TANG CENTER

Appointments (M-F 8-5): 642-2000
Advice Nurse (M-F 8-5): 643-7197
Psychological and Counseling Services: 642-9494
Health and Wellness Coaching: 643-6179

Reminder: all students can use Tang even if they waived out of Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)

Health Tips are written by I-
House Health Workers for I-
House residents. But many
of these tips may be
applicable to all
international students at UC
Berkeley.