

SEEING GREEN PART 2

An Introduction to Mental Health Needs for Distance Learners

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Learning Objectives

Select more advanced strategies for interacting with distressed students

Identify Specific Signs of Distress

Identify resources so that you can receive more training and create a community of support for online learners

Create a syllabus statement about mental health or sample email to check in on students

Identify how COVID-19 has impacted college student mental health

If anything that is discussed evokes a painful reaction or you find it triggering, please feel free to mute me or leave the session

Signs of Distress (Academics)

- Uncharacteristically poor work
- Dropping grades
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty working in teams
- Increased difficulty completing tasks
- Excessive absences
- Increased anxiety around exams or deadlines
- Repeated requests for special consideration, e.g., deadline extensions, changes in requirements, grade changes

• <https://counseling.ufl.edu/worried-about-a-student/>

Changes in Behavior

- Changes in personal Hygiene
- Changes in eating patterns
- Changes in sleep patterns and level of energy (taking longer to fall asleep, waking up tired, feeling lethargic)
- Increased generalized frustration, agitation and/or anger
- Inappropriate responses and/or disjointed thoughts
- Intense, dramatic, or volatile emotions

Additional Changes in Behavior

- Loss of interest in pleasurable activities
- Physical harm to self
- Verbal or written references to distress, including suicidal/homicidal thoughts or plans
- Increased disorganization
- A greater sense of time pressure
- Certain social media communication

• <https://www.jedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/help-a-friend-in-need-jed-freedom-instragram-guide-NEW.pdf>

• Above is a link to the JED foundation PDF that includes additional information on how students can recognize signs of emotional distress in one another

Interpersonal Signs

- Interpersonal signs
- Difficulty getting along with others
- Isolation from family and friends
- Extreme defensiveness
- Amplified short-temper

Physical Health

- Increased frequency of headaches
- Recurring colds and minor illness
- Frequent muscle ache and/or tightness
- Persistent fatigue

Connection = Prevention



Connection: Strong student and professor relationships leads to academic success, engagement, better grades, better communication (this involves a sense of belonging, feeling like professors care, trust and feeling safe in class)



Be Intentional In How You Respond

When a student is experiencing mental distress how we react in return can determine whether the situation escalates, deescalates, the student seeks help, student is academically successful, the student remains a student or drops out of the learning institution.



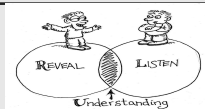
Barriers To Communication

- ☐ Cultural differences
- ☐ Poor listening skills
- ☐ Making assumptions
- ☐ Being preoccupied or in a hurry
- ☐ Reacting with anger
- ☐ Defensiveness
- ☐ Blaming
- ☐ Our hot buttons
- ☐ Language differences



http://www.ccimh.org/component/docman/doc_view/452-de-escalation-skills?Itemid=144

Empathetic Listening



- Remain non judgmental and use the student's name
- Be Present (stop yourself from thinking about other things going on in your life or what to do with the student next, etc.)
- Interpret what the student is really saying "I'm fine I'm just having a bit of a hard time focusing".
- Re-State what the person said ... "What I hear you saying is" (then ask a clarifying question...is that what I heard you say? and please feel free to correct me"

Empathetic listening continued

- Then Validate their emotions..... "I can see why this is difficult for you or it sounds like you have been experiencing some difficult challenges in your life and this is impacting your classwork"
- Thank the student for coming to you with their concerns and praise their courage "I really appreciate you sharing with me what you are going through and admire your courage because I know that it can be difficult to share, can you please tell me how I could help you?"
- Maintain eye contact and remain calm – your voice, tone, cadence must be congruent with what you are saying

What to avoid

- Dismiss what has been shared with you
- Silver lining it "at least you don't..."
- Minimize student's experience "it's not so bad you could still graduate even if you have to take the class over."
- Preaching "actually I think you've got this wrong because..."
- Judging.... "I think you should just go tell the authorities what happened right away"
- Quit Pro Quo ... "If I let you turn the assignment in late you have to promise me that..."

Saying "calm down" to student in distress

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"Well, I'm glad we had this chat."



If a student is agitated

- You can identify inappropriate behavior without demanding the behavior be altered "I notice you are becoming more agitated"
- Use Humor but remember to be sensitive
- You can also convey the consequences for inappropriate behavior and still remain calm and using threats. For example, if you are teaching a lecture via zoom you could type privately to a student "If you continue to interrupt other students I will have to mute your mic"
- Speak with a calm voice and low tone and be honest when answering questions
- Feedback/redirection will probably not work with someone who has reached high levels or distress "think shaken soda can"

Types or Resources

- Resources at institution student is enrolled in
- Resources available in the community student lives in
- Online Resources for Students
- Apps
- Training that you may find helpful

What is available at your institution ?

- Search for Wellness, Mental Health, Student Services because not all institution use the same language
- [mdc.edu/student-wellness/resources/default.aspx](https://www.mdc.edu/student-wellness/resources/default.aspx) (Wellness Page)
- https://www.unf.edu/catalog/student-services/student_services/ (Student Services)
- <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/wellbeing/health-topics/mental-health.aspx>
- DRC, International Center, Ombudsman, Legal Services
- Victim's Advocate
- Counseling Center
- Food Pantry
- Health Center
- Veterans Center
- Career Center
- CARE Team

Counseling Centers Are Great Resource

- If institution has a counseling center ..Click on the resource link because there are usually resources students can use
- Students can take survey to assess their mental health ie anxiety
- Students may be able to use training or watch a video that will take them through a relaxation exercise
- There may be useful psychoeducational information
- Students can make virtual appointments (not sure what fee requirement is for institutions as institution may require fee be paid for counseling svcs)

Search for community services and have link on your syllabus

- **Roxey Bolton Rape Treatment Center**
305-585-7273
- **Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault**
305-763-2459
- **311 Miami-Dade County Social Services**
Dial 311 - Provides resource services such as community resource centers, elderly and disability services, home assistance, job skills, special services, and many more
- <https://www.marioncountyor.org/departments/agencies/departments-and-community-services>
Community Service Section in Marion County is offering assistance for housing due to COVID-19

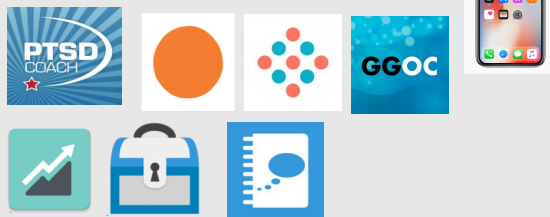
Online/Telehealth Resources for students

- <https://www.apa.org/hubcenter/> APA Help Center
- <https://www.jefferson.edu/mental-health-resources/careline/> (mental health resource center for young teens and young adults)
- <https://artandhealing.org/stuckathome/>
- CALL: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) to reach a 24-hour crisis center
- TEXT: MHA to 741741
- <https://screeners.williams.edu/> (screener for anxiety, depression, EID, Substance Use)
- <https://www.collegechickhealth.com/online-services/depression-counselor>
- <https://cam.ac.uk/worksheets/for-students-with-mental-health-illness/> for students with mental health illness
- <https://www.streeminds.org/>
- <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>
- <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/> (treatment locator)
- <https://findme.google.com/screeners/anxiety>
- <https://findcenteronlineonline.org/>
- https://psmi.org/About-Mental-Disorders/2019-Source-people&utm_campaign=6-11-20

Training

- <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/classes/psychological-first-aid%3A-supporting-yourself-and-others-during-covid-19/a6R3e0000014Z1g.html>. (Red Cross free online course COVID-19 Focus)
- <https://florida.kognito.com/>
- <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/> (Mental Health First Aid) you can sign up or have someone come and train you and staff

Apps...



- <https://www.research.com/25-best-mental-health-apps/>
- <https://www.psychiatry.com/wire/wisdom-award-winning-emotional-wellness-platform-launches-largest-study-date-25-million-american>
- <https://www.eucuisine.com/work/nox-app>



Sources



