

**COUNSELING &
STUDENT SUCCESS
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**LOOK FOR
OUR FUTURE
WORKSHOPS
ON:**

- De-Stress Fest
- Time Management
- Stress & Anxiety Reduction
- Career Choices
- Strategies to Deal w/Life
- Faculty Workshop

IMPORTANT NEWS

Starting in the Fall semester of 2013, the Counselors in the CSS Office will be offering their time to come into the classrooms of each department and give a brief overview of all the services CSS offers.

Need assistance?

Create a **Retention Alert** and we will help by contacting the student to aid him/her with succeeding in their classes

Counseling Corner

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Ways to DE-STRESS!

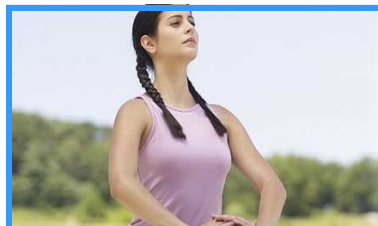
As a professional, it is very important to be mindful of the potential for burnout. As stated by www.helpguide.org, the definition of burnout is: "A state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress." This occurs when one is overworked or overwhelmed, making it easy to lose motivation if something does not change in the immediate future. Burnout can cause people to feel unappreciated, fatigued, or as though they are on autopilot – going through the motions without the intrinsic motivation that may originally have been present. If not addressed, these feelings may ultimately lead to more negative forms of sarcasm or cynicism. These feelings are often overlooked, but there are some simple techniques that can be practiced in order to lessen the risk of burnout.

Techniques to Avoid Burnout

Deep Breathing - What you may not realize is that on a daily basis most of us are shallow breathing. Deep breathing is a practice that delivers more oxygen to your brain. The more oxygen that is delivered, the better we feel; reducing blood pressure and heart rate as well as transferring more air to the lungs, which then lessens muscle tension (www.amsa.org/healingthehealer/breathing.cfm).

When one first learns to deep breathe, closing one's eyes and allowing oneself to be in a relaxing atmosphere is best. Put your hand on your belly so you can feel the air that is inhaling and exhaling. Take a deep breath as though you are singing– by lifting your diaphragm– and try holding your breath for 3 seconds. Then allow yourself to breathe out for 3 seconds through your mouth letting a slow breath expand your belly and making sure your shoulders drop. As you practice you will be able to slow your breath for longer periods of time. Aiming for 7 seconds is a good target.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) - We often have tight muscles that become so common to us that we forget that they exist. We become used to being stressed or just "deal" with being in pain. PMR is an exercise in which one squeezes/tenses a specific muscle in the body for an extended period of time while the rest of the body is relaxed. It is good to start on one side of the body and go to the next. For example, starting with your upper body, lift up your shoulders by shrugging/tensing them for seven to ten seconds. As you unclench you will notice a difference in how your shoulders feel compared to the rest of your body. If your shoulders were tight from stress, after this exercise it will be lessened.



Mindful Eating - When we get overwhelmed it is common to eat a candy bar or have a soda for a boost in energy or because it is the most convenient thing to eat. It is easy to forget about how the food we digest affects the way we feel, and that sugar often makes us feel the opposite of energetic. Just as important in making conscientious decisions of what we eat is taking the time for lunch and experiencing mindful eating. Throwing a few pieces of food in our mouths while we are writing a report does not give us the chance to take a break and recharge our batteries. It is important to allow ourselves to fully take time to de-stress. For instance, start asking yourself, when is the last time you tasted your food? Too often, we think about the laundry we have to do, the kids we have to pick up, and the dinner we have to make; rather than paying attention to what we are experiencing when we are eating. Taking time to prepare our food, as well as appreciating what we are consuming not only allows us to be mindful, but it allows us to take a break from our daily busy routines.

Take time for yourself
at least once a day!



A recent study showed that a cup of tea can be helpful in relieving stress and anxiety, but also gave the participants a “chill out moment.”

**The Social Psychological Effects of Tea Consumption on Stress: Executive Summary*

Find any activity for at least 15 minutes a day to allow yourself to decompress and breathe.



“The beautiful thing about learning is that nobody can take it away from you.”

-B.B. King

Meet Our Newest Counselor: Lisa Volante!

Lisa has worked in higher education for the past 6 years and serves as the Career Specialist in the CSS office. Lisa attained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology with a double major in Psychology, and received a Master of Arts degree in Counseling in 2009 from Kean University. During her graduate studies, Lisa authored a thesis and developed a subsequent counseling protocol for mental health workers who counsel sexually assaulted females. She currently holds a provisional license as a Licensed Associate Counselor and continues to pursue supervised clinical hours with the intentions of earning professional licensure. Prior to working at the County College of Morris, Lisa worked at Kean University serving as an Academic Specialist in the Office of Retention and Intervention. In addition to working at Kean, Lisa also served as a mental health therapist at a non-profit woman’s counseling agency where she performed individual, couples, family, and group therapy with a variety of populations. In addition to therapy, Lisa was also responsible for helping clients explore their career interests and find employment. Lisa’s specialties include anxiety disorders, depression, eating disorders, domestic violence and sexual assault, relationship issues, and career development and exploration.

FACT OR MYTH

The Story of Robbie

Robbie is in his second year at CCM, attending full-time, and would like to graduate in the summer. Robbie’s attendance in his classes has been infrequent, and when he does attend he arrives late and often falls asleep while the professor is lecturing. He almost always “forgets” his books and seems absent-minded when asked to do anything pertaining to course work. When approached about his performance in class, Robbie just sighs and shrugs his shoulders.

THE EASY EXPLANATION:

The simple explanation would be that Robbie has no motivation, is lazy, and is treating the class like it is a waste of his time. He is not giving classes, or college in general, the effort required in order to succeed, and is ignorant if he thinks he can pass the course without dedicating time and energy to it.

OTHER POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS:

Even though these behaviors can easily be construed as indicative of a student not caring or being lazy, they are often also symptomatic of a student suffering from a number of other life stressors. Robbie could very well be experiencing symptoms of depression, which can inhibit those affected by sapping them of the energy or motivation needed to complete daily life tasks. Robbie may also be acting differently because of issues with substance use/abuse this semester, whereas last semester he may have not been using. There are a number of other disorders that Robbie may be working through that he has not told anyone about, as well, such as: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); severe anxiety; adjustment disorder; and anything else that has altered his current lifestyle.

THINGS TO ASK / THINK ABOUT:

- Approach Robbie differently. Rather than inquiring about school work, ask how he is doing as a person and student. He may answer you differently and make more of an attempt to ask for help.
- Get resources from the office of Counseling & Student Success to assist with the student’s individual situation.
- Consider creating a **Retention Alert**.