



# "POTTY TALK"



## "Check-Up from the Neck-Up"

Although college can be an exciting time, charged with new emotions, new experiences and new challenges, it can also be a confusing time for students filled with anxiety, sadness, uncertainty, and difficulties coping. The transitions of leaving home, family and friends, combined with the challenges of the academic environment easily contribute to feeling lonely and overwhelmed. For some, these feelings just "go away," but for others, they linger. If symptoms persist and you just don't feel "like yourself" anymore, you could be experiencing depression or anxiety. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE** and help is available for you at SCU.

### The Blues or Depression?

Life is full of good times and bad, happiness and sorrow. But if you've been **feeling "down" for more than a few weeks** or are **having difficulty functioning in daily life**, you may be experiencing more than just the "blues." You may be suffering from a common, yet serious, medical illness called clinical depression. **The good news is clinical depression is highly treatable.** |

**Clinical Depression is NOT a matter of willpower!  
It is NOT a character flaw or a sign of personal weakness.  
You CAN'T make yourself well by trying to "snap out of it."**

#### Signs to watch for include:

- Change in sleeping patterns (too much/little, disturbances, early waking)
- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells
- Change in weight or appetite
- Speaking and/or moving with unusual speed or slowness
- Significant changes in appetite and sleep patterns
- Irritability, anger, worry, agitation, anxiety
- Pessimism, indifference
- Loss of energy, persistent lethargy
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Inability to take pleasure in former interests, social withdrawal
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide



### SUICIDE

*Most people who contemplate suicide are ambivalent about killing themselves and typically respond to help.*

*Suicidal students usually attempt to communicate their feelings prior to attempting suicide.*

#### High risk indicators include:

- Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and futility
- A severe loss or threat of loss
- A detailed suicidal plan, talking about death
- History of a previous attempt
- History of alcohol or drug abuse
- Feelings of alienation and isolation



#### WHAT TO DO:

- 1) **Take the student seriously** - 80 percent of suicides give warning of their intent.
- 2) **Be available** to listen, to talk, to be concerned, **but GET ASSISTANCE!**
- 3) **Involve your CF or RD if possible** and refer the student to the **Counseling Center (554-4172)**.
- 4) **If it is an emergency, call 911!!!**
- 5) **Take care of yourself.** Helping someone who is suicidal is hard, demanding, and draining work.

### What is Anxiety?

Anxiety affects our whole being. It affects how we feel, how we behave and has very real physical symptoms. It feels a bit like fear but whereas we know what we are frightened of, we often don't know what we are anxious about.

#### How will I Recognize Anxiety?

As well as feeling apprehensive and worried (possibly without knowing why), you may experience some of the following physical symptoms:

- Tense muscles
- Trembling
- Churning stomach
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Backache
- Heart palpitations
- Numbness or "pins and needles" in arms, hands or legs
- Sweating/flushing



### Cutting/Self-Injury

**Self Injurious Behavior** is defined as deliberate, repetitive, impulsive, non-lethal harming of one's body. It can be hard to understand, but people who cut themselves sometimes do it because it **actually makes them feel better**. Self injury is their way to **cope with or relieve** painful or hard-to-express feelings. But relief is temporary, and a self-destructive cycle often develops without proper treatment.

#### Methods of self injury include:

- cutting
- scratching
- picking scabs or interfering with wound healing
- burning
- punching self or objects
- inserting objects in body openings
- bruising or breaking bones
- some forms of hair pulling, as well as other various forms of bodily harm.



These behaviors can pose serious risks, both physically and emotionally. But, they can be treated. Please help yourself and contact the **Counseling Center (x 4172)** to discuss this in a free and confidential setting.

**You CAN learn healthier ways to soothe yourself.**

## "Check-Up from the Neck-Up" Feeling DiScOnNeCtEd?

**Anxious? Can't Focus? Trouble Sleeping? No energy?  
Sad or crying all the time?**

**Can't Stand it Anymore???**

**Come to a FREE, Anonymous,  
Mental Health SCREENING**

**Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>  
11:00 – 2:00 pm  
Benson Parlors B & C**



"Potty Talk" is brought to you by the Peer Health Education (PHE) Program.  
For more info contact:  
Jeanne Zeamba, Psy. D.  
Health Educator  
554-4409 or JZeamba@scu.edu

**HELP ON CAMPUS  
SCU Counseling Center  
554-4172 www.scu.edu/tcc**