GUIDE FOR TRANSITIONING

Welcome back to campus, Mustangs! We are so thankful to be back in person together. This note is specifically for you, the second-year students that came to Cal Poly amid the COVID-19 pandemic and are just now experiencing your first normal quarter on campus. We wanted you to know we are here to support you.

We are all coming back to campus with different levels of comfort and having had different experiences during the social/physical distancing portion of the pandemic. Whether you're nervous, excited, scared, anxious, or perfectly ready to be on campus, we're here for you and we validate that what you're feeling is totally normal given the circumstances.

During the transition to campus life, you'll face new challenges that you've never quite experienced before. Below are student recommended tips, as well as campus resources, that can help support your mental health and wellbeing during this transition.

Tips:

1. Try New Things (One Step at a Time): Understand what your comfort zone is compared to what activity you want to try. Break down the activity you hope to achieve to explore a new avenue of growth. Explore pushing the boundaries of comfort with small steps at first. For example: If you feel comfortable spending time at home and are anxious about going out to hang out with friends, invite a friend or two over to your house as a first step.

2. Feeling anxious in a social situation? Deep breathing is a way to signal to your nervous system that it's okay to calm down – and you always have your breath with you! Breathing helps lower blood pressure, bring down anxiety, and give you greater control regulating emotions. For example: If you find yourself overwhelmed at a group event, excuse yourself to the restroom or- if you feel comfortable - stay where you are and take 10 deep breaths pulling oxygen deep to your stomach. After 10 breaths see how you feel and repeat if needed.

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3. Check Your Thoughts: Notice your thought patterns when you're making plans or preparing for an activity. Often people begin to reinforce that the worst-case scenarios of an event will occur. Recognize that your thoughts on the issue are not the facts of the matter and re-orient to the possibility that other scenarios are just as likely to happen.

4. Stay present: Pay attention to what you're feeling and let those feelings be. Resist the urge to use substances to ease your mind or alter your feelings. Alcohol can actually increase anxiety and depression. While alcohol or drugs may feel like a social lubricant, relationships built around using tend to be less authentic. Being your real self with others is the best way to make, and keep, real connections.

Resources:

CH&W Counseling Services

CH&W Counseling Services provides a wide range of free services including (but not limited to):

- Individual Therapy - The goal is often to heal, to promote new patterns of behavior, to gain insight, or be more effective as a human and a student. There is no charge for individual therapy at Cal Poly – your student health fees cover this service.
- Let's Talk - Free, confidential, drop-in, one-on-one, informal consultation spaces with a mental health provider, for Cal Poly Students. Let's Talk is not therapy, but you can talk about anything on your mind.
- Emotional Wellbeing Workshops - These workshops offer quick, effective solutions and useful tools for common concerns like anxiety (Anxiety Toolbox), relationships (BRIDGE), and depression (Getting Unstuck).We know your schedules are full – these workshops are designed to be high value, helping you learn new skills and gain insight while connecting with other students.
- 24/7 consultation - When you are in crisis, are experiencing a panic attack, or just need some support, call 805-756-2511.

To get connected to Counseling Services, call 805-756-2511 to set up same day/next day consultation. More information is available at: chw.calpoly.edu/counseling

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Wellbeing Services
Presentations and 1:1 conversations with peers (PULSE) to promote healthy lifestyle management through an intersectional lens by empowering students with knowledge, skills, and resources to achieve holistic well-being for themselves and their community. Topics include: homesickness, stress management, adapting to your new environment, relationship and sexual education, physical and mental health, safe alcohol use, and more.

Professional Health Education staff are also available to meet with you about concerns or questions relating to alcohol and other drug use, concerns about a friend's use, and to connect you to support. https://calendly.com/basics/basics-initial

Mustangs for Recovery offers spaces for those in or seeking recovery or impacted by the substance use of a friend or family member. Events include harm-reduction and moderation models as well as abstinence-based recovery. https://chw.calpoly.edu/wellbeing/mustangs-recovery

Get Involved!
Clubs on campus are an incredible way to meet people like you and make new connections outside just your residence hall. There are over 300 clubs, including ones that focus on wellness activities such as Mindfulness, Gardening, Hammocking, Hiking, & Boardgames! Visit now.calpoly.edu/organizations

ASI offers many places to connect through Poly Escapes, Intramural Sports, or the Craft Corner. Find out how to engage at asi.calpoly.edu/.

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