



How To Help A Friend: Adjustment

September 2013
Issue #1

Welcome to the first issue of How To Help A Friend (HTHAF). My name is Mifa Kim. I'm a Senior studying psychology and a peer educator at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). HTHAF is a campaign aimed at sharing information on how CU community members can help friends or other people in their lives who may be encountering various challenges.

September is a month of new beginnings- incoming freshmen, returning students, new schedules, new environments and so much more! **We all go through an adjustment process** whenever there is a big change in our lives. For many new students (and even returning ones), adapting to college life at CU may bring some new adventures, stresses, and challenges. It was important to me to reach out to the CU community to let others know that they are not the only ones who feel this way! This new semester may mean acclimating to a new social environment, and adapting to different cultural, mental, and physical changes. Here are some tips to help you, your friends, and CU students adapt to a new life at CU.

Academic:

Your Syllabus Is Your Best Friend—Read it, reread it, and reference it. This will give you a better sense on how to prepare for a class.

Plan Ahead—Use a planner, calendar or scheduling app to record all due dates.

Break It Down—Break down assignments/reading into chunks and record your own mini-deadlines. This will help make the "big picture" not as daunting, and do-able.

Create Structure—Living on your own means greater freedom, which can feel exciting and frightening at the same time. This is normal and to be expected. Establish a routine.

Social:

Get to Know Your Roommate—Take time to know them and set limits and boundaries to avoid conflicts.

Connect—Two thirds of UCB students feel lonely at some time during the year. To counter this, find opportunities to meet new people. Invite others to exercise with you. Talk to at least one person in every class. Hang out in your residence hall. Eat dinner with hall mates. Join a student group.

Look Beyond Stereotypes—Find friends who share things in common with you as well as friends who are different. It's a great way to grow as a person.

Resources:

How to Help a Friend—Want more information on adjustment or more topics? Worried about someone? This is a peer-to-peer resource to help students help each other.

<http://bit.ly/CAPSHelpAFreind>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)—A free counseling resource for UCB students. CAPS offer six free sessions per academic year and free workshops and groups. They have walk-in hours from M-F, 10am-4pm. They are located at the Center for Community (C4C) at S440.

303-492-6766

<http://counseling.colorado.edu>

Events:

How To Help a Friend Get Together—Get your tea and cookies on! If you have questions about resources or just want to stop by to say hello, **you can join me every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 12:30-2pm at the Foyer** (near the Norlin Commons information desk) at the Norlin Library. Its free too! **The next event will be on September 11, 2013.**

General Tips:

Remember that these are just tips—try to set realistic expectations about your adjustment. Do not expect yourself to be perfectly adjusted and organized right away. Recognize that you are learning, and have a sense of humor about your challenges and mistakes.

Talk about it—It can help to talk about your difficulties adjusting with a roommate, friend, RA, hall director, family member, or counselor. You'll find that you're surrounded by a lot of supportive people experiencing similar feelings.

Lastly, give it time—Adapting to a new situation is difficult so let yourself ease into it. College can eventually feel like your home away from home.