How to Help a Friend

ADJUSTMENT

What is adjustment?
Adjustment is a universal process that occurs when someone is adapting to a new environment with a new set of demands and challenges. It is a process of trial and error that requires learning from experience. The time adjusting takes and the stress it causes varies from person to person. For many, the transition to college can be challenging.

What to look for:
People who are experiencing difficulty adjusting to college may exhibit:
- Problems with time management and managing independence
- Skipping class, falling behind, and difficulty with juggling multiple projects
- Difficulty developing connections, or withdrawing from others and engaging less in social situations.
- Going home frequently and talking about being homesick often
- Appearing sad, moody, irritable, frustrated, or anxious
- Frequent crying or emotional outbursts; feeling isolated or hopeless

How to help a friend:
If you notice a friend struggling to adjust to college, there are many ways you can help:
- Invite them out for a walk to see campus and Boulder; this may help them feel more comfortable.
- Encourage them to see what CU organizations fit their interests, to immerse in campus and make new friends.
- Suggest they establish a routine to create more structure.
- Help them find ways to unwind and stay healthy, like taking a walk or meditating.
- Remind them that it is okay to ask for help if they are struggling academically.
- Encourage them to discuss their difficulties with others (like a friend, RA, family member, or counselor).
- Remind them to give it time! Adjusting to college is a gradual process; share how adjusting has been for you.
- If adjustment issues persist and interfere with academic performance, relationships, or general well-being, encourage them to consider talking with a counselor.

Additional resources:
If your friend needs additional support, connect them with Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS):
- CAPS at C4C: 303-492-6766
- CAPS at Wardenburg: 303-492-5654

For additional information, see www.colorado.edu/counseling