The Resilient Times

Depression and Deliberate Self-Harm (DSH): What to Know

Symptoms of depression...
- Sad mood (irritable/angry)
- Physically slowed or agitated
- Reduced or lost interest/pleasure in activities
- Oversleeping or insomnia
- Dramatic/sustained change in appetite/weight
- Fatigue or energy loss
- Increased feelings of worthlessness or excessive/inappropriate guilt
- Increased social discomfort
- Recurrent thoughts of death, suicidal thoughts or plan

What you might notice...
- Social withdrawal
- Reduced self-care/hygiene
- Missing classes/activities
- Decreased work ethic
- Increased use of alcohol or other drugs

Some students deliberately harm themselves when depressed or distressed. Why?
- To cope with emotional pain
- To punish themselves
- To relieve tension
- To feel real by feeling pain or seeing evidence of injury

Increased risk for self harm comes with...
- Poor connection to others
- Childhood physical/sexual abuse (> 50% who self-harm have abuse history)

Resources...
The Wellness Center (646-4080)
Books:
Websites:
- http://www.dbsalliance.org/
- http://www.dr-bob.org/vpc/
- http://www.facetheissue.com/
- http://www.mentalhealth.com/
- http://www.athealth.com/

Is it depression? Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)? Grief? Mono? Hypo/hyperthyroidism? A breakup? Or just a bad day?

Resilience and Reaching Out: Strategies for Tough Times

Strategies for Resilience...
- Stay socially active
- Assert yourself
- Volunteer in personally meaningful ways
- Get enough sleep, exercise, and healthy food
- Make time for hobbies/fun
- Set realistic goals
- Learn and use relaxation techniques
- Watch for distorted negative thinking
- If symptoms persist more than a week, seek help

Approaching a Resident who appears to be depressed or self-harming...
- Explain what you’ve noticed
- Express your concern
- Listen attentively and without expressing judgment
- Allow crying and venting
- Offer but do not demand problem-solving together
- Take seriously any suicidal threats or gestures or warning signs like high risk and impulsive behaviors

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Four steps...
- Consult w/ hall director and/or Wellness Center
- Approach resident
- Refer for services
- Evaluate response and effectiveness

Inside this issue:
Inside story: Number of weeks for 5 or more depressive symptoms to persist to meet diagnostic criteria for a major depressive episode:
- 0 weeks
- 10%
Inside story: Per the National College Health Association (NCHA), percent of college students who seriously consider suicide:
- 17%
Inside story: Of the Carleton students who sought counseling in 2005-2006 at The Wellness Center, percent indicating depression as a concern:
- 31%
Inside story: Per study conducted by Cornell and Princeton researchers, percent of students that deliberately self-harm:
- 38%
Inside story: Per the NCHA, percent of college students with a history of deliberate self-harm:
- 45%
Inside story: Per study in Texas (2002), percent of college students who said they couldn’t function at least once while in college:
- 45%
Inside story: Percent Carleton College’s graduates of 2006 who received counseling at The Wellness Center at least once over the course of their 4 years (not exclusively for depression):