

INITIAL APPOINTMENT INFORMATION

Your therapist can be reached at **253-535-7206** (or x7206 from on campus). Please be aware that your therapist won't always be available immediately when you call, but if you leave a message, an attempt will be made to reach you later that day, or the next business day.

Sometimes when a person is stressed or upset, it can feel difficult to wait for your next appointment time. In some cases, your therapist may be able to schedule an earlier appointment. But, there are some things you can do to manage during those times until a stressor passes, or until you can speak with your therapist. You may find some or all of the following hints to be helpful in a time of stress:

- Exercise can help improve your mood. Start with light (even just a few minutes) or moderate exercise, and work up to approximately 30 minutes per day.
- Good nutrition will help build your strength for coping with difficult problems. Don't skip meals and try to make nutritious food selections.
- Avoid alcohol and other drugs during times of distress. While these can give a sense of temporary relief, they can also cause a decline in mood, a decrease in sleep quality, and/or intensify other symptoms.
- Call or visit a friend, loved-one, or RA. Seek out positive people who will listen without judging or giving unwanted advice.
- Sleep – if you're getting too little (less than approximately 6 hours) or too much (approximately more than 9 hours) sleep, this can increase stress, sadness, or even exacerbate headaches.
- Plan at least one pleasurable activity into every day. Engage in activities which renew or inspire your heart, mind, and body.
- Try meditation, a relaxation exercise, or yoga. One example of a relaxation exercise is 10 minutes of slow, deep, diaphragmatic breathing.
- If faith is important to you, prayer and service attendance can also lift the spirits.
- Spend time in nature and seek out beauty. Find ways to accept yourself and forgive mistakes in your life.
- Time management – rushing around can increase stress. Try getting a planner. Remember to make it realistic and balanced, this means planning for fun and down-time as well as work!
- Keep to a routine of getting up, getting dressed, going to classes, etc. even if you don't always feel like it. Sometimes just doing the routine can help you to feel better.
- Laugh. Watch a funny movie or TV show. Laughter can cause a chain reaction that lifts mood.