Welcome from the Director

Greetings! We hope everyone’s Spring semester has gotten off to a positive start. We are thrilled to announce that CPS was recently awarded a 3 year federal grant to enhance our mental health and suicide prevention programming on campus. As a result of this grant, we will be launching various activities and resources this semester, such as a mental health awareness week, the “Stressbusters” mobile application, and mindfulness workshops for reducing stress and anxiety. Additionally, we are offering a virtual bystander intervention training for students, which you can find out more about and access on page 5 of this newsletter. Also included in this issue of “Welcome to Wellness” are various practices and strategies for optimizing our mental and emotional health during the cold, wintery months. We hope you find this newsletter helpful for navigating the many challenges that come with university and college life. And remember, if you’re ever struggling with school (or anything else), please reach out to any of the campus resources listed on page 6.

Jeffrey Ng, Psy.D.

Beat the Winter Blues

Gray skies got you down? It is that time of year we often experience cloudy, snowy, windy and frigid weather. The winter sun sets earlier, making daylight hours in demand. When we are not sprinting indoors for warmth, we are moving at snail-speed and dodging slippery ice. Some of us might notice tiredness, difficulty getting out of bed, and a bit of weight gain during this season. Feelings of depression, sadness, and lethargy, to name a few. Many people attribute the colder weather to these changes in their mood. But, scientists believe seasonal sadness has more to with a lack of light getting to the brain, than changes in temperature.

Sunshine and the Brain:
During the winter months, people are inside more. This affects their exposure to light, which impacts their circadian rhythms (body clocks). Sunlight triggers the mood-enhancing chemical, Serotonin, which regulates hunger, energy and feelings of well-being. When there is no light, the brain produces more melatonin. This is the sleep hormone that makes us tired and less alert. All living beings are affected by changes in sunlight. One of the best things we can do is notice how our moods are affected by the amount of sunlight getting to the brain.

Additionally, research shows that cold temperature can affect energy usage. In the winter, our immune systems work harder to keep our bodies warm and heart rate up. This means that energy is directed toward those tasks and not available for other activities. As a result, we tend to eat more. That can cause lethargy if our body uses up a lot of the energy to digest the food.
DID YOU KNOW?
Approximately half a million Americans are negatively affected by the changing seasons and darkening of summer light and may feel depressed, irritable, and tired.

“Anyone who says sunshine brings happiness has never danced in the rain.”
Author Unknown

PRACTICE
Try a 5-10 minute mindful eating exercise with a raisin or a tangerine (or a food of your choice). First, hold the food in your hand. Notice the texture and feel. Observe the smell. Pay close attention to the taste, the sensation in your mouth, the way it feels when chewed. Notice anything different?

“Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are.”
Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

TIPS TO BRIGHTEN YOUR WINTER MOOD:
Unlike bears, we have a very busy and public hibernation in New York City. Here are some ways to bring more sunshine to your winter:

- Work it out: Even though it is cold, be physically active. Exercise at home, in a gym, or take a brisk walk. 15-20 minutes a day can go a long way. Now is the time to be creative with your winter activities. Try ice skating, dancing or yoga.

- Soak up the sun: Get outside as much as you can. Take advantage of those sunny days. Sit by a window in the classroom. For those gray days, some people recommend being three feet from a 300 watt bulb for 20 minutes three times a day. A broad spectrum bulb can also brighten things up. Exposure to light is particularly helpful during the morning hours!

- Drop the Doritos: Reach for fresh, healthy foods, rather than comfort foods. Healthy foods provide your mind and body with essential nutrients and can increase your energy levels.

- Drink water! Just because it is cold out doesn’t mean you should neglect your 8 glasses!

- Find ways to relax and set aside time for yourself. Relaxation, meditation, and positive thinking can reduce stress and leave you with a calm energy and enhanced mood.

- Keep your bedtime and waking time consistent so your sleeping patterns can normalize. Aim for 8 hours per night. Twelve hours a night may sound tempting, but it can actually lead to feeling MORE tired!

EATING MINDFULLY

What is mindful eating? Mindful eating is a concept with its roots in Buddhist teachings. It involves being more aware of your eating habits, as well as noticing the sensations, thoughts, and emotions that come up while you are eating. The goal of mindful eating is to connect more deeply with the experience of eating and enjoying our food.

OK, SO HOW CAN I EAT MORE MINDFULLY?

- Base your meals on physical cues, such as your body’s hunger signals and not on emotional ones. Take the time to notice emotional triggers that lead to overeating or feelings you may have that make you not want to eat.

- Eat slower! Remember that eating is not a race. Slower eating leads to longer chewing, which enables you to digest your food more easily.

- Practice eating in silence. Silent eating provides you with an opportunity to reflect on your day and some quiet time for yourself.

- Pay attention to flavors and textures. Too often we scarf down our food in a hurry and do not take the time to notice all the complex flavors and textures of what we are putting into our bodies.
**Semester Reflections & Practices**

As we begin the new semester and new year, it is helpful to compassionately reflect on our journey, be it academic or spiritual. It is never too late to make improvements in your life. Everyday is a new chance for a new year’s resolution. Be kind to yourself as you adjust to the new semester filled with new classes, teachers, friends, and work/life responsibilities. It is all a work in progress. There is no failure, always room for improvement. Reflect on the poem below to help inspire some compassion in the new year. Additionally, yoga and mindful movement is another restorative way to center yourself. Try this yoga sequence to greet the day and energize your year!

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### There’s a Hole in My Sidewalk

**By Portia Nelson**

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost... I am helpless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.  

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in the same place.  
But, it isn't my fault.  
It still takes me a long time to get out.  

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in. It's a habit.  
My eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault. I get out immediately.  

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.  

I walk down another street.

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### Sun Salutation Sequence

The Sun Salutation sequence is traditionally performed as a way to awaken the body. These poses are great to do right upon rising, even before you brush your teeth and get that warm cup of coffee!

To perform the sequence, stand up straight with your feet together and arms at the side of your body with open palms.

Sweep the arms up and extend them over the head on the inhale, then exhale and bow forward into a forward bend. On the inhale, lift the torso halfway up, place your hands at your shins and extend the spine. Fold forward again on the exhale. When you inhale, sweep back up and bring the palms together into prayer. Repeat this sequence three or four times.

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**Current Mindfulness Programs at CPS**

**Mindfulness Meditation Group**  
At LC  
Fridays 3-4pm

Call 212-636-6225 and let the front desk know that you’re interested.

**Mindfulness Workshop**  
At RH  
Tuesdays 11-12pm  
Wednesdays 4-5pm

**Managing Anxiety & Stress Workshop**  
@RH  
Mondays 5-6pm  
Thursdays 11-12pm

To attend a RH CPS workshop, just come to CPS (lower level O’Hare Hall) and let the front desk know that you’re there for the workshop.

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**FORDHAM UNIVERSITY**  
**THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**
Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS)

Counseling and Psychological Services is a comprehensive mental health service within the Division of Student Affairs at Fordham University. Our mission is to promote students’ emotional and psychological health and well-being through counseling, psychotherapy, psychiatric services, consultation, outreach, prevention, and contributions to the mental health professions. Consistent with the University’s commitment to Cura Personalis, we strive to foster a community of care that recognizes and values the depth, dignity and uniqueness of each student.

CPS provides confidential and free services for all matriculated students. These services include:

- Individual Short-Term Counseling
- Group Counseling & Workshops
- Psychiatric Evaluations and Medication Management
- Crisis Intervention for Urgent Situations
- Personalized Referrals for Specialized and/or Longer Term Services

For a virtual tour of our office and services click on the video below:

MEET OUR STAFF

Jill Lederman is our new Community Training and Outreach Specialist for our SAMSA Campus Suicide Prevention Grant. If she looks familiar, that is because she is an alumni. Jill graduated from Fordham’s Graduate School of Social Service with a Masters Degree in Social Work. “I am so honored and excited to be back at my alma mater.” Jill is looking forward to reconnecting with GSSS staff and working alongside students and faculty on increasing suicide prevention awareness and education throughout campus. She will also be teaching mindfulness tools to improve coping skills and resiliency.
Why Group Therapy?

Groups allow members to see and explore their patterns of relating to others and to challenge those patterns that may not be effective.

Groups help members to see that they are not alone and to learn from the experiences of others who face similar struggles or who have similar questions.

Groups allow members to learn about themselves and to extend compassion to themselves and others.

Groups give members the opportunity to learn and explore new ways of relating to others in a safe and secure environment.

Groups provide members with feedback and social support from peers.

JOIN A GROUP AT CPS

LINCOLN CENTER
Spectrum: Gender and Sexuality
Women’s Group
Men’s Group
International Student Group
Mindfulness Group

ROSE HILL
Spectrum: Gender and Sexuality
Women’s Process Group
Men’s Group
Interpersonal Process Group
Senior’s Group
Survivor’s of Sexual Assault

Our groups change based on the interests and needs of the university community. Please let us know if you are interested in participating in a group that is not listed above. For more information about groups, group schedules, and to inquire about participation, please contact Dr. Debbie Lawrence at Rose Hill CPS (212-817-3740) or Dr. Philicia Rubin at Lincoln Center CPS (212-636-6225).

University and college life can be full of stress, demands and challenges. From exams, papers and internships to navigating our finances, relationships and self-identities, it’s no surprise that 87% of Fordham students described feeling overwhelmed by all they had to do in the past year. At times, these stressors can contribute to emotional distress, poor academic performance and mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicidal thoughts.

As students you play an important role in helping each other through challenging and difficult periods. To support you in this role, Fordham’s office for Counseling and Psychological Services offers an online, game-based simulation to assist you with recognizing, supporting, and when necessary, referring students who may be struggling. To access this simulation please follow the instructions below:

- Go to http://www.kognitocampus.com/login
- Create a new account with the following enrollment key: fordham718
- Follow the On Screen Instructions
- Choose Your Course and Click “Launch”

We strongly encourage you to participate in this training, which we’re confident will contribute to your growth and education at Fordham. If you have any questions or feedback about the training please contact us at 718-817-3725 (RH), 212-636-6225 (LC) or jeng@fordham.edu.
Focus on Wellness: Dining Services

Fordham University’s Dining Services are committed to working with students to provide them with healthy and nutritious food options while meeting their dietary needs. Dining Services has even implemented a program called “Mindful by Sodexo,” which is a mindful approach to eating that focuses on healthy, educated, and smart choices when selecting food options. As part of this program, students are ensured tasty and healthy options that meet particular wellness criteria and are easily identifiable when scanning food choices (for more information about this program, visit [https://mindful.sodexo.com/](https://mindful.sodexo.com/)). In fact, Dining Services even works collaboratively with Melanie Ordway, a registered dietician and certified dietician nutritionist. Melanie is available for 1 on 1 counseling sessions with students who come to her for a variety of reasons, including eating disorders, food allergies, help in gaining or losing weight, as well as specific dietary concerns. Melanie is a resource on campus who is dedicated to educating students in making healthy, creative, and smart food choices. Stay tuned for fun and informative events with Melanie to inspire healthy and mindful eating! For additional information about Melanie and Dining Services please visit [https://fordham.sodexomyway.com/index.html](https://fordham.sodexomyway.com/index.html).

Resources on Campus

The following resources are also available on campus to assist and support our students:

- Public Safety
- Health Services
- Career Services
- Library Services
- Dean of Students Office
- Resident Advisors/Directors
- Academic Deans & Advisors
- Athletic Coaches and Trainers
- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Disability Services for Students
- University Mission and Ministry
- Professors and Teaching Assistants
- Substance Abuse Prevention & Student Support
- Student Leadership & Community Development

Online Resources on Student Mental Health and Wellness

**Transition Year** - online resource on emotional health before & during the transition to college [http://transitionyear.org/](http://transitionyear.org/)

**ULifeLine** - online resources for college mental health & wellness [http://www.ulifeline.org/](http://www.ulifeline.org/)

**MTV’s Half of Us** - celebrities & artists discuss their own struggles with mental health [http://www.halfofus.com/](http://www.halfofus.com/)