Greetings to all our new and returning students, faculty, administrators, coaches and staff! We hope everyone had a fun and rejuvenating summer. As we embark on another new academic year at Fordham, we at Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) recognize that adjusting (or re-adjusting) to university life can be simultaneously challenging and rewarding. In this issue of “Welcome to Wellness,” we’ll highlight various strategies and resources for navigating some of the challenges that can come with transitions and “new beginnings.”

We hope you find this newsletter helpful as you begin the new semester. And remember, if you’re ever struggling or feeling overwhelmed by university life (or anything else), please reach out to any of the campus resources listed on page 6.

Jeffrey Ng, Psy.D.

**Welcome to Wellness**

**By Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS)**

**WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR**

**Transition and Change**

Homesickness and other stress related to living away from home/family
Struggling with making new friends and fitting in
Feeling insecure about academic abilities
Struggling with balancing academic, social, work, and extracurricular demands
Conflicts with roommates
Body image and eating concerns
Drug and alcohol experimentation
Curiosities, questions, and explorations about identity
Sexual experimentation
Cultural adjustment/culture shock (see page 2)
Stress related to graduating, work, career

If you find yourself having any of these difficulties, you are not alone!

**GET SUPPORT!** Share how you’re feeling with a trusted friend, family member, or mentor

**REACH OUT** to Fordham staff who are here to support you, such as a dean, professor, RA/RD, coach student life staff, or CPS (see pages 4, 6)

**TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!** Engage in activities that help you to feel balanced (e.g., exercise, healthy eating, spiritual practice, connecting with others) (see pages 4, 5, 6 for ideas)

**GET INVOLVED** with a club or activity on campus that interests you
DID YOU KNOW?
This year’s freshman class at Fordham includes 171 international students from countries as far as Australia and Myanmar.

Fordham students hail from 49 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and 66 countries.

CPS offers a group for international students to discuss issues of cultural and language adjustment, academic stress, career considerations, and relationships. (see page 5)

“...In diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”
Maya Angelou

March on, and fear not the thorns, or the sharp stones on life’s path.”
Khalil Gibran

CULTURE SHOCK
Whether you are an international student who has recently moved to the US, or a domestic student from out of state, living and attending school in NYC can be a major cultural adjustment.

THE HONEYMOON PHASE:
• You may be experiencing feelings of excitement, optimism and wonder upon entering a new environment or culture.
• For many students this experience may gradually or suddenly shift, as they experience difficulties assimilating into the new culture.

COMMON SIGNS:
• Changes in eating and sleeping habits
• Difficulty with focus or concentration
• Homesickness
• Anger toward or complaining about the host country/culture
• Irritability, sadness, depression, frustration
• Self doubts; sense of failure
• Recurrent illness
• Withdrawing from friends or other people and/or activities

EASING THE TRANSITION:
• Realize that what you are going through is normal. These unpleasant feelings are temporary, natural, and common to any transition that a person makes during their life. Be patient and give yourself time to work through the process.
• Keep in touch with your home country/culture but also try to be open to the new one. Read newspapers from home, international magazines, websites, etc. Call home regularly. Have familiar things around you that have personal meaning, such as photographs or ornaments. Find a supplier of familiar foods or visit restaurants that are similar to your home cuisine.
• Take care of yourself. Eat well, exercise, and get enough sleep!
• Talk to someone. Find friends who are going through a similar process, call your family back home, or see a counselor. Counseling and Psychological Services has trained counselors from many cultural backgrounds who can help you through the difficult parts of cultural adaptation. In the U.S. it is very common to talk with a counselor about problems or difficulties. Take advantage of the resources available to you at the university.
• Have fun and get involved! Become a member of the I-House. Volunteer to help others. Take up a new sport. Participate in activities, clubs, and student organizations of interest to you.
• Improve your English skills. Cultural adaptation is greatly enhanced by developing your English skills. Not being able to clearly communicate can create isolation and loneliness. Make a point to join activities that give you the opportunity to share in conversation.

WORDS OF WISDOM:
“Make friends with people from different cultural backgrounds. It teaches you to be more open-minded and accepting.” - Jiayi Ji, a Global Transitions assistant

Resident Director Samantha Tymchyn (LC) recommends that new students take advantage of programming, clubs, and community building activities offered during the beginning of the semester. These opportunities are designed “to help everyone find their place here at Fordham.”

“It may be scary to try new things and to put yourself out there, but it’s important to remember that everyone else is also trying to find their place.” - Kimberly Russell, Dean of Students and Director of Residential Life (RH)
SEMESTER REFLECTIONS & PRACTICES

As we begin the new school year, students face many sources of stress, including those related to living in a busy and fast-paced environment. It can be helpful to develop self-care practices to cope with daily stressors that can sometimes feel out of our control. Try the following meditation, designed with NYC commuting in mind...

“I Just Missed My Train” Meditation

You hear it first. Your train is coming into the station. All you need to do is run! RUN! Run through the station! Run down the stairs! Now you can see it. It’s right there and...No! No! The doors are closing. Wait! Oh, no! It’s leaving, and you’re heaving after a breathless run to try to get on board. Now what?

You want to scream, curse, or even hit the train as it whizzes past (who’s that gonna hurt?). Rather than getting yourself all riled up, how about a little mindfulness-based meditation instead?

(Of course, be sure that it is safe for you to conduct a meditation at this time. If you notice anyone behaving erratically or if you have any concerns about taking attention away from your surroundings, then do not do the meditation. If things are secure, then go ahead.)

1. Your heart rate is up, so you’re going to need to walk a little briskly down the platform. You can’t just “stop and drop” into a breath meditation without some transition, after all.

2. Keep your head level and parallel to the floor looking straight ahead.

3. Gradually slow down the pace of your walking. As you do, turn your attention to the sensation of your feet hitting the floor of the station.

4. As you slow down, gently lower your gaze—not your head—so that you gradually are looking at an area that is closer and closer to you.

5. As you slow to a stop, turn your body to face the area where the train doors will open then the next one arrives. Be sure to keep a safe distance away from the edge of the platform, though!

6. Very gently and subtly, shift your body weight back and forth to each side. You can imagine “pouring” yourself into one leg as the other “empties,” then vice versa.

7. Gradually bring your body closer and closer to the center line as your shifting becomes less and less apparent. Slow to a stop, and focus your attention on your feet rooted to the floor.

8. Breathe naturally and mindfully.

9. Note the periodic urges to look into the tunnel for signs of an approaching train. Do not turn. Simply return your attention to your breathing.

10. As you hear the next train approaching, become aware of the sounds and whoosh of air coming through the station. Keep your eyes focused forward and notice the train as it enters your field of vision.

11. As the train nears to a stop, note one final breath and congratulate yourself for this mini meditation.

12. Enter the train when the doors open and proceed to your destination.

Jonathan S. Kaplan, Ph.D. - UrbanMindfulness.com
COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CPS)

Counseling and Psychological Services is a comprehensive mental health service 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. We strive to foster a community of care that recognizes and values the depth, dignity and uniqueness of each student.

CPS provides the following confidential and free services in a safe and accepting environment:

- 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

MEET OUR COUNSELORS

Dr. Susie Smedresman is a Supervising Psychologist and the Coordinator of Outreach and Prevention at CPS’ Rose Hill Office. She completed her graduate training here in New York City. She is particularly interested in the intersection of mental health and spirituality, relationship and interpersonal issues, and psychodynamic psychotherapy.

Dr. Sophie Karp is a Supervising Psychologist and the Coordinator of Outreach and Prevention at CPS Lincoln Center. That means you may see her out and about providing interactive and educational programming for the campus community. Sophie enjoys working with students from all walks of life and is committed to providing multiculturally-sensitive counseling.

Alex Smith is a Supervising Psychologist at Fordham’s Rose Hill Counseling Center. He studied psychotherapy and psychological testing at the George Washington University in Washington, DC, and completed his internship at Fordham’s Counseling Center. His interests are in psychoanalytic psychotherapy and neuropsychology.

FORDHAM IS DE-STRESSING WITH THE STRESSBUSTERS APP

CPS is excited to announce the launch of the Stressbusters Wellness app! Produced by the national Stressbusters wellness program, this customized app puts Fordham-specific health and wellness information, announcements, and resources right at your fingertips. The app includes features such as:

- **Break Pad:** A “sonic spa” featuring audio tracks to help students increase a sense of calm and focus.
- **Videostream:** A channel of Stressbusters how-to segments, expert interviews, and other wellness-related short videos.
- **Health Rewards:** Like a frequent flyer program, students can accrue award points for participating in CPS and other Fordham wellness activities.
- **Events:** Stay informed about campus wellness events sponsored by a range of departments.
- **Get Help Now:** One-touch emergency buttons to connect students to immediate support day or night.

Download Stressbusters Wellness FOR FREE on the App Store and Google Play. For more, and to learn how to become a student Stressbuster, visit fordhamstressbusters.com
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
International Connections
Keep Calm and Carry On (Relaxation & Resilience)
Gender and Sexuality
Understanding Yourself & Others
Women’s Hour

ROSE HILL
Spectrum: Gender and Sexuality
Women’s Process Group
Men’s Group
Interpersonal Process Group
Seniors Group
Survivors 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 (718-817-3725) or Dr. Philicia Rubin at Lincoln Center CPS (212-636-6225).

HELP A FRIEND WHO IS STRUGGLING: KOGNITO AT-RISK TRAINING

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 difficulties, 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, CPS 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 www.kognitocampus.com/login
- Create a new account using the 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.
DID YOU KNOW?

Fordham students have started an Active Minds chapter at Rose Hill, and are working toward another at Lincoln Center!

For information about Active Minds go to www.activeminds.org

To get involved with Active Minds at Fordham please contact:

Anika Masand at amasand@fordham.edu (RH)

or

Jacob Azrilyant at jazrilyant@fordham.edu (LC)

RESOURCES ON CAMPUS

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

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

ONLINE RESOURCES

- http://transitionyear.org/ Emotional health before & during the transition to college
- http://www.ulifeline.org/ Resources for college mental health & wellness
- http://www.halfofus.com/ Celebrities & artists discuss their own struggles with mental health

FOCUS ON WELLNESS: KORU MINDFULNESS

Alleviate stress, improve your relationships, increase your ability to focus, enjoy life more fully — Meditation can have all these effects and more! Strengthen your mind for free with mindfulness tools you can use for a lifetime. Sign up for our next KORU Mindfulness workshop with Jill Lederman, LMSW.

KORU STUDENT TESTIMONIALS:

“Koru taught me to be mindful of the little things in life that I take for granted - little things as fundamental as breathing. Jill was a patient, fun, and truly inspirational teacher. She brought in and shared her good energy with us. Jill's Koru class came in at the time I needed calm the most. I was getting ready for finals, organizing club events, and taking care of family. Koru reminded me to take each moment one at a time, and breathe between each. A true stress reliever.”

“As a graduate student, I find that KORU is extremely beneficial in helping me to focus on the task at hand, to stop worrying about the future and to let go of all of the distractions that I am so frequently tempted by. KORU has also helped me to pay attention to what I am doing, to be present for myself and for others, to use all of my senses and to not rush through all of my daily tasks without taking the time to take it all in. In a world where we are constantly feeling compelled to multitask and are distracted by so many things, having the tools to stay afloat, focused, aware, connected and present from moment to moment is truly a gift.”

Fall dates TBD. Please e-mail Jill at JLederman1@fordham.edu if you are interested in this free 4 week class at Lincoln Center or Rose Hill.