



# Center for Counseling and Wellness Services

of Rowan College at Gloucester County

*College is an Exciting Time of Change and Personal Growth*

*Vol. 1 No. 2 December 2015*

*From the Director:*

## Greetings from the Counseling and Wellness Center,

The Fall semester is quickly coming to an end. On behalf of the CWS, I want to wish you the very best as you finalize your remaining papers, quizzes and/or final exams. The final weeks of the semester often present a very stressful time for many students. When you are feeling stressed, anxious or depressed, please do not hesitate to visit the Counseling and Wellness Services, College Center, Room 206. It is always best to address issues earlier than later. Unfortunately, many students wait until they are overwhelmed with stress and anxiety to seek mental health counseling. Remember, if your emotional and physical well-being is compromised, your academic performance will undoubtedly be compromised as well.

Read this e-newsletter and implement the tips into your daily routine. Wishing you a healthy and successful completion of the Fall semester.

*Lois Y. Lawson-Briddell,*  
Ph.D., MSW, LSW

Director, Counseling and Wellness  
Services

## RCGC Cares — *Do Not Let This Be You*

*"A depressive episode made it impossible for me to go to classes and I did not get help until it was too late and I was withdrawn and I could never afford the cost to go back because I lost my scholarship for being withdrawn."*

— Survey Respondent

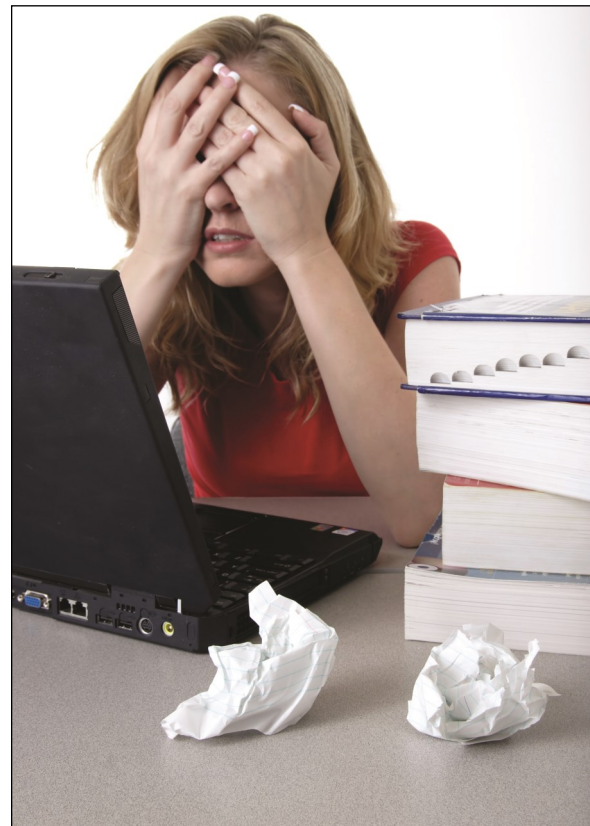
*"I was scared to let anyone know about my crisis because I did not want people to worry, did not know who I could turn to and did not want to get in trouble."* — Survey Respondent

There are many resources available at RCGC and in the community to help you deal effectively with the stresses of college and your personal life. RCGC's Center for Counseling and Wellness Services is a good place to start if you are feeling anxious, overwhelmed, depressed or having suicidal thoughts.

The licensed behavioral professionals can provide you with confidential counseling and support. If needed, we can also provide guidance on referrals to community mental health resources.

Additional resources are also listed on the RCGC's Portal under Counseling and Wellness Services ([RCGC.edu/CWS](http://RCGC.edu/CWS)).

*Mental illness is the most common invisible illness many students deal with when trying to get a college education (Lee, 2015).*



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*"Wellness is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."*  
— The World Health Organization

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## Understanding Depression

Events such as break-ups, loss of a loved one, academic difficulties, financial problems, problems at home, sexual abuse/assault (rape or date rape), job dissatisfaction or serious health problems can bring on depression. Depression is more than just feeling blue. It's a persistent feeling of sadness (or irritability in some people), emptiness or lack of pleasure along with symptoms such as:

- Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Feeling worthless, hopeless or guilty
- Sleeping less or more than usual
- Losing or gaining weight without trying
- Feeling tired and sluggish
- Loss of interest in things once enjoyed doing
- Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts

If you have several of these symptoms that last longer than two weeks and make it hard to function, you may be experiencing depression. Feel free to contact the Center for Counseling and Wellness Services.



*"Students are reporting significantly higher levels of anxiety, depression and stress-related problems than they have in the past."*  
— Gregg Henriques

## The College Student Mental Health Crisis

- 58%** of campuses have seen a rise in anxiety disorders
- 89%** of campuses have seen a rise in clinical depression
- 33%** of campuses have no psychiatrists available
- 31%** of campus counseling centers have waiting lists
- 8%** of students in the past 12 months have seriously considered suicide

*The Chronicle of Higher Education,*  
September 4, 2015, LXII(1).

Today's college students have greater levels of stress and psychopathology than any time in the nation's history (Henriques, 2014).

## What is an Anxiety Disorder?

Anxiety disorders are one of the most common mental health problems on college campuses.

- Forty million U.S. adults suffer from an anxiety disorder
- 75 percent of them experience their first episode by age 22

### Various types of Anxiety Disorders:

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD):** Excessive, uncontrollable worry about everyday issues including school, work, money, friends and health.

**Social Anxiety Disorder:** Avoidance of everyday social situations due to extreme anxiety about being judged by others or behaving in a way that might cause embarrassment or ridicule.

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):** Persistent, recurring thoughts (obsessions) that reflect exaggerated anxiety or fears and manifest as repetitive behaviors or rituals (compulsions).

**Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** Avoidance, detachment, difficulty sleeping and concentrating, and reliving a traumatic event or experience several months or years after it has occurred.

*(These are only a few types of anxiety disorders; click for additional information  
<http://www.adaa.org/sites/default/files/GotAnxiety-2014.pdf>)*

**Anxiety disorders are real, serious and treatable. Do not hesitate to contact the Center for Counseling and Wellness Services, College Center, Room 206 or call 856-415-464-5236**

## Feed the Brain with Breakfast

Eating breakfast may improve short-term memory as well as attention. Students who eat breakfast tend to perform significantly better than those who don't.

Diets rich in blueberries significantly improve both the learning capacity and motor skills.

Adding blueberries to oatmeal, cereal, yogurt and pancakes is extremely healthy for your brain's health.

So, are you ready to start powering up each morning with a healthy breakfast? Start off with 100% fruit juice, a whole grain cereal or oatmeal, blueberries and a cup of coffee.

As you complete the final weeks of the Fall semester, remember to eat a well-balanced breakfast. The mental health experts also advise to:

1. Get a good night's sleep.
2. Stay hydrated.
3. Exercise to help sharpen thinking.
4. Practice relaxation techniques.
5. Eliminate as much stress from your life as possible.
6. Stay physically active – remember, keep that blood circulation for your heart AND brain.

Source: <http://www.thementalfitnesscenter.com/blog/brain-health-breakfast/>



## Coffee and Tea May Protect the Brain

Coffee and tea may do more than just jolt you awake — they could also help keep your brain healthy. Results show that coffee intake is associated with a slightly lower risk for depression. Some studies suggest that coffee and tea drinkers have lower rates of cognitive decline, but the evidence is mixed. It is still too soon to say whether coffee and tea truly protect the brain, but most researchers agree a daily intake couldn't hurt. (Rodriguez, 2014)



## Sweet and Sad

Soda and fruity drinks, whether sugary or artificially sweet... are associated with an increased risk of depression, according to the same NIH study that found that coffee and tea have a protective effect—the first investigation of this topic to follow a large cohort of many years. People who drank more than four soft drinks daily in 1995 and 1996 had a 30 percent higher risk of developing depression five to 10 years later. Artificially sweetened drinks seem to be the worst offenders: in all beverage categories, those who drank the diet version had the highest depression risk. For example, participants with a daily intake of four or more cups or cans of a diet fruit-flavored drink had a 51 percent higher risk than abstainers, whereas a similar intake of diet soft drinks was linked with a 31 percent increase in risk. Experts caution that it is too early to conclude that sugar or sweetener was causing the depression... it is possible people who were predisposed to depression chose to drink more sweet beverages.



—T.R.

Rodriguez, T. (2014). Coffee and tea may protect the brain. *Scientific American* 26(1).





## RCGC's Fitness Center

### The fitness center is a great stress buster

The fitness center is located near the Roadrunners practice fields and conveniently has hours of operation in the morning, afternoon and evening. The fitness center is free for all RCGC students, staff and faculty with current ID cards to provide everyone the opportunity for a flexible workout schedule. **Bring a personal lock for a locker and an exercise towel.**

Wondering how to get started? No problem! There is always a staff member on duty ready to help you reach your fitness goals.

Contact Lynn Kindrachuck, Administrator, Fitness/Wellness Center if you have questions about the Fitness Center or would like to request assistance.

Office Phone: 856-468-5000, ext. 6339;  
Email: [rkindrac@rcgc.edu](mailto:rkindrac@rcgc.edu)



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## The Center for Counseling and Wellness Services Mission Statement

Rowan College at Gloucester County is committed to efforts to promote the success of our students. In this endeavor, the College offers an array of supportive services. The primary mission of CWS is to provide short-term, solution-focused assistance in order to facilitate the student's college adjustment and success.

*To find out about upcoming Counseling and Wellness Services events, check out the RCGC Portal and the Counseling and Wellness Services Facebook page.*

## Counseling and Wellness Services

### Hours —

Monday – Friday

*(Contact the office to schedule appointment; summer hours may vary)*

### Location —

**College Center, Room 206**

### Contact —

**856-464-5236** or

**[counselingandwellness@rcgc.edu](mailto:counselingandwellness@rcgc.edu)**

*(Walk-in consultation available for immediate needs)*

### Professional Staff —

**Lois Y. Lawson-Briddell, Ph.D., MSW, LSW**  
*Director, Center for Counseling and Wellness Services*

**Shannon White, MSW, LCSW**  
*Clinical Consultant*

**William Leonard, Ph.D.**  
*Intervention Teams Consultant*

### Vacant

*Case Manager/Outreach Assistant*

### Additional Information —

**[RCGC.edu/cws](http://RCGC.edu/cws)**