Wayne College Counseling Services

Why do people come to counseling? Students generally take on many roles and may encounter a great deal of stress (i.e. academic, financial, social, family, and work) while attending school. Some common concerns dealt with in counseling include:

- stress
- anxiety
- low self-esteem or confidence
- poor academic performance
- issues related to disabilities
- recovery issues
- low self-esteem or confidence
- confusing and/or distressing feelings
- relationship problems
- career exploration
- identity issues
- alcohol and substance abuse
- sexual assault/abuse/harassment
- problems with eating and body image
- depression
- underachievement

Personal Counseling

Counseling is a chance to talk confidentially with a licensed mental-health professional who can help you learn skills and new ways looking at and dealing with situations. Counseling is free to currently enrolled Wayne College Students. Stop by the Smucker Learning Center, or call (330) 6848960, to set up an appointment.

Breaking Up Is Hard to Do (But You Can Lessen Its Distress)

Whether children are involved or not, ending a marriage or partnership challenges us like nothing else. The term “good divorce” can seem a contradiction in terms. And yet, there are things we can do that can help us navigate the big waves and the rolling waters.

Taking care of yourself by attending to your physical and emotional needs is one of the most important things you should do during this or any other stressful period. Give yourself the time, space and permission to rest and heal.

Here are some other practices that can help:

Minimize change for yourself and your children. Whether or not you have custody, whenever possible, keep your routines, rhythms and habits the same. Discipline the children and maintain the rules that always have been in force.

Express your feelings, but not necessarily to the other person. Vent your anger by journaling, painting furious red canvases or by talking to your therapist. Do not share your talk with a spouse, partner or romantic friend. While the strategies offered on page 4 won’t take away your pain, they can help you cope and move on.

Communicate. When talking isn’t working, use email or mail. Keep your exchanges out of work time and remember that the goal is not to zing the other but to gain clarity.

Avoid speaking negatively about your ex in front of your children or mutual friends. Such talk has a negative impact on your children and their self-esteem, and will polarize friends who want to remain in relationship with both your former partner and you. Also, don’t encourage others to take sides against your ex. You put them in an awkward position and it could backfire on you.

Take stock of the relationship. Spend time—perhaps months—acknowledging the lessons you’ve learned from this relationship. Do this on your own, in your journal, or with the help of a therapist.

Perform a closing ritual or ceremony. If possible, do this with your former partner; if not, then with loved ones or by yourself. In your ceremony, you might acknowledge the good things about the relationship, the ways you grew, even what you will miss. Spend time with your feelings, do something nurturing, and then imagine your next step. Finally, say goodbye.

Do we all have ADHD (Or Does It Just Seem Like It)?

While there is no cure for ADHD, the notion of “significant impairment” is key. Impairment refers to the ways in which symptoms disrupt a person’s life. For example, people with ADHD may have trouble staying employed because of their inability to meet deadlines or stay focused, or they might have whopping credit card bills because of impulsive spending. Others might be failing college because of their symptoms, or have an unusually high amount of stress and conflict in their relationships.

ADHD is diagnosed only when a person’s symptoms have significantly impaired at least two major settings in their life, such as work and family. And since people with ADHD have had trouble ever since they were kids, if it’s gone undiagnosed, many also develop low self-esteem.

Managing the Disorder

While there is no cure for ADHD, there are ways to manage it. Treatment focuses on reducing symptoms and improving quality of life. While there is still some debate about the best treatment, combining medication and counseling seems to be the most effective. Counseling for adults often includes psychotherapy and education about the disorder, as well as developing the skills to successfully manage daily tasks and responsibilities.

So while blaring out an expletive every once in a while or having a tough time organizing your schedule is certainly troublesome, it does not justify an ADHD diagnosis.

Frequent mood swings

Hot temper

Trouble coping with stress

Unstable relationships

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Impulsivity

Difficulty completing tasks

Disorganization

Frequent mood swings

Hot temper

Trouble coping with stress

Unstable relationships

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How Well Do You Cope with Disappointment?

Disappointment is feeling that being let down by a person, an expectation or a hope. It is a normal response that everyone experiences. But all too often, when we’re disappointed and especially need caring attention, we beat ourselves up instead. Take this quiz to see how well you take care of yourself after a disappointment.

True/False

Set 1

1. I recognize that disappointment is a part of life. When I experience a disappointment, it doesn’t mean I’m a bad person or that I deserved it.

2. When I have suffered a disappointment, I let myself have my feelings. I realize that when you give feelings the time and attention they need and deserve, they tend to fade on their own.

3. With a therapist or in another safe setting, I work through other feelings that disappointment brings to the surface. These feelings often include shock, hurt and anger.

4. While the feelings of disappointment are fresh, I avoid any conclusions about my behavior or role in the situation. Self-analysis has its place, but in the early stage it’s more likely to be destructive self-rejection.

5. I take steps to prevent disappointment from turning into depression or bitterness. From the outside, she appears on top of her game. Internally, however, she bears the burden of making the family look good. She also believes that if she is perfect enough, the family problems will go away.

6. I don’t make major life decisions until my strong feelings subside and I begin to feel some enthusiasm or hope again.

7. If I am disappointed by a person, I don’t reflexively end the relationship. When I feel more centered, and if the situation is safe, I enter into a dialogue with the person.

8. When the intensity of the feeling has faded, I ask myself if there’s anything that I can salvage or learn from the situation.

9. Also, when I am feeling more hopeful, in order to gain insight, I ask myself, “What if this is not a setback, but actually what I want?” Among other things, my response will reveal any ambivalence I may have had and may help make future endeavors more successful.

10. If I am repeatedly disappointed by life or other people, I am willing to consider what actions or beliefs of mine might be contributing to those experiences.

Disappointment doesn’t have to stop you from getting what you want in life. If you answered false to several of these, you may want to explore ways to better cope with disappointment. Please don’t hesitate to call.

The Effect of Family Roles on Life’s Choices

With hardly any thought at all, you can probably say whether, in your family of origin, you played the role of the responsible one or the rebel, the people pleaser or the mascot. Roles serve an organizing function. In a family, roles sort out each person’s relationship to the group. While there’s nothing inherently wrong with roles, they become a problem when they’re rigid and shape poor choices as a teenager or adult.

Roles are especially harmful in families where abuse and/or addiction occurs. They become a vain attempt to control a situation that is chaotic and frightening. Also, as John Bradshaw explains in On the Family, roles function to project the image of the happy family, preserving denial that anything is wrong.

Based on the work of Virginia Satir, Claudia Black and Sharon Wegscheider, below are the common roles that children play in the family, as well as that role’s impact on adult life.

The Hero

The hero is the responsible one. She gets good grades in school, is goal oriented and self-disciplined. From the outside, she appears on top of her game. Internally, however, she bears the burden of making the family look good. She also believes that if she is perfect enough, the family problems will go away.

Work: As an adult, she is often successful, reaching for excellence in her occupation. The trouble is, “excellent” is never good enough. If she’s not at the top, she’s nowhere.

Relationships: Whether as breadwinner or head of the household, the hero will take charge, needing to lead and be in control. This can create discord or inequality in relationship.

Self-esteem: Although she’s a leader, she still relies upon the approval of others for her own self-worth. To be healthy, she needs to realize that she doesn’t have to prove her worthiness and that life can be joyful regardless of achievement.

The Placater or People Pleaser

The placater tries to ease and prevent any trouble in the family. He is caring, compassionate and sensitive. He also denies his own needs, is anxious and hypervigilant.

Work: The placater will find himself caretaking and facilitating in his work environment. He may be drawn to service occupations; however, in order to truly help others, he must face his need to please.

Relationships: The placater believes that if he takes care of his partner, he will never leave. He may lose himself in his partner’s needs, becoming more caregiver than equal.

Self-esteem: The people pleaser often feels that he has no value except for what he can do or be for another person. To be healthy, he needs to find his own value within.

The Scapegoat or Rebel

The scapegoat is the family member who is blamed for the trouble in the family. She acts out her anger at any family dysfunction and rebels by drawing negative attention to herself. While she is more in touch with her feelings than the other roles and is often creative, in school she gets poor grades and is often in trouble.

Work: No one expects much of the scapegoat and, too often, she agrees, choosing jobs that are beneath her abilities.

Relationships: The scapegoat will be drawn to friends and relationships who are certain to meet with parental disapproval. This will please her, despite the fact that her family may be right.

Self-esteem: While the scapegoat rebels against the family, she also internalizes their poor opinion of her and thus fails to acknowledge her talents. She’s a screw-up, she’ll say, proudly. To be healthy, she needs to realize that she’s much more than that.

OTHER ROLES

The Mascot

The mascot is the class clown with the uncanny ability to relieve stress and pain for others. But there’s something missing that he won’t find until he looks beneath the humor façade and faces his own pain.

The Lost Child

The lost child is quiet, withdrawn, lonely and depressed. She doesn’t draw attention to herself because she doesn’t want to be a burden. But what she wants most is to be seen and loved, and to be healthy, she must allow herself to be visible.

Roles may have shaped our childhood but they need not keep us in chains. Acknowledging the gifts and detriments of the role or roles that you played as a child can help you honor yourself, as well as help you make wise choices as an adult.
**TOP 5 Issues that Therapy Can Help Heal**

Therapy can help you get through tough times now or understand difficult life experiences from the past. It can help you understand yourself better and grow as a person. Below are five issues with which a skilled therapist can help you:

1. **Abuse.** Healing wounds from past abuse—rape, molestation, physical, verbal—helps you resolve hurts and stuck feelings that may be keeping you from living a meaningful life. Working with a therapist can also help you leave or avoid current abusive situations.

2. **Stress/anxiety.** Prolonged, severe stress or anxiety may be indications of deeper issues that require the safety and skill of a therapist to resolve.

3. **Relationship strife.** Any significant relationship has periods of strife. Anger flares, communication breaks down. But if battles keep erupting and going nowhere, an objective third person can help you sort through the struggles and learn new ways to be with others.

4. **Addiction/depression.** Beneath these two states lie issues that therapy can help resolve, heal or improve so that they don’t continue to rule your life. When you address the underlying issues, you’re much less likely to repeat these unhealthy patterns.

5. **Low self-worth/self-esteem.** These two debilitating conditions are at the root of many personal issues, such as unhealthy promiscuity or low earning. Therapy can help you break free of the cycle in which low self-worth fosters challenging situations that result in “less than” feelings.

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4. While the feelings of disappointment are fresh, I avoid any conclusions about my behavior or role in the situation. Self-analysis has its place, but in the early stage it’s more likely to be destructive self-recrimination.
5. I take steps to prevent disappointment from turning into depression or bitterness. These include eating healthfully, getting plenty of sleep, exercising and seeking support from family, friends and my therapist.
6. I don’t make major life decisions until my strong feelings subside and I begin to feel some enthusiasm or hope again.
7. If I am disappointed by a person, I don’t reflexively end the relationship. When I feel more centered, and if the situation is safe, I enter into a dialogue with the person.
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- sexual assault/abuse
- impulsivity
- difficulty completing tasks
- disorganization
- frequent mood swings
- hot temper
- trouble coping with stress
- unstable relationships

A Letter From Dr. Janice M. Harb

Many of us have experienced a few of the symptoms of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). Because these symptoms of restlessness, difficulty concentrating and disorganization are common experiences, there can be a fair amount of confusion about the disorder. Many people wonder whether they or their children may have it, while others go undiagnosed. The cover story explores the symptoms of ADHD, what the diagnosis really means and how it can be managed.

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