

Making the Transition...Life after NCC!

The jump to college can be stressful. You're leaving behind your school, friends, family, and home, and going off to explore a new place, make new friends, learn new things, and set your own priorities. Many students overlook the stress involved in making so many big changes in such a brief period of time. The more prepared you are for college when you get there, the more ready you'll be to confront any new pressures. Here are some realities to consider, and a few common-sense ways to help you handle them:

After Graduation

You can still get advice and counsel from your high school mentors and counselors up until you get to your new college campus. Once you get to your campus, start looking for substitute mentors and counselors. Join organizations which reflect your interests so you can begin making new friends.

- Attend summer orientation at your college or university
- Communicate with your professors
- Get involved with organizations
- Get help when you need it

Many schools, during freshman orientation, help students familiarize themselves with the many sources of help on campus. Tutors, study skills centers, counselors, and other help sources are all available for students making this exciting but sometimes difficult transition.

Summer Orientation

Attending the Freshman Orientation at your school is important and many colleges and universities actually require this. The experience will introduce you to the campus, faculty, staff, and all aspects of a college environment. In most cases, you will meet your college advisor during orientation. Most college advisors encourage students to register for their first semester during orientation. In large, public universities, college courses fill-up early and students sometimes have a hard time getting the particular courses they would like.

By visiting a campus during orientation, you will interact with current students, make new friends, and get a jump-start on learning about campus activities and student organizations. Some programs also welcome parents in an effort to inform them about campus life. If a special orientation is held for parents, you should encourage your parents to attend if they are able.

If you are undecided about your living arrangements, remember that your living environment will have an effect on your personal and educational growth. Usually, students who live on campus are more involved in both academic and social activities. Some schools require Freshman to live on-campus.

Cope With Stress

A certain amount of stress is natural. College life, however, can be very stressful. You must learn to cope with stress by learning to relax, prioritizing and improving your time management, developing a support system, talking about your problems with someone you trust, and adopting a practical, non-emotional problem-solving approach. However, if you feel overloaded and you need extra help, do not be afraid to ask for it. Most colleges and universities offer different types of student support services, like counseling services, student health centers, tutoring services,

academic counseling, etc. Take advantage of the academic and non-academic resources at your college or university as you need them.

More Independence—and Responsibility

You may not have the same day-to-day support system as you do now. For example, how will you manage your money and debt, especially when credit card companies are bombarding you with offers? Who is around to make sure you're not getting sick or run down? Factors like stress, late-night parties, and generally pushing yourself too hard can take a toll. **Your Strategy:** Don't always do what's easiest at the time. Make smart decisions. For example, when it comes to your money, stick to a budget and use credit cards wisely. When it comes to your health, get enough sleep, eat well, and pay attention to what your body tells you. You'll need energy to enjoy all that college has to offer.

Develop Healthy Habits

College students, in general, never seem to get enough sleep or rest. The rigors of academic work can take a physical toll. Studies show that college students tend to nap in the afternoon, which greatly improves their performance in school, especially as part of a healthy routine. Eating the correct foods and exercising regularly are two simple rules you can follow that will make your life easier. These practices will enable your body to better handle the stress of this transition. If attending church regularly is part of your life at home, continue this practice at college. This is a time of great change, challenge, and growth. Your first priority is to take care of yourself, every part of yourself.

Information obtained from the following sources:

www.collegeboard.org

www.hsf.net/Programs

school.familyeducation.com/teen/college-prep/40685.html