

## STUDENT UPDATE FROM COUNSELOR KRISTI IRVING, MA, LPC, CCTP – March 26, 2020

Hello All,

As the college's counselor, I wanted to reach out to all of you and check in. I am sincerely hoping you are all keeping as safe and as well as you can be. Most of us would agree that this is certainly a trying, if not downright scary time with all the uncertainties in place. Please know that we care about not just your academic well-being, but also your physical and mental health.

With the requirements of "safer at home", isolation can be difficult for many, and especially difficult if you are living with anxiety and/or depression. Below are some thoughts on how to help take care of your mental health:

- **Maintain structure:** Go to bed at the same time every night and get up at the same time every morning. Schedule time for classes and studying and any work that you may still be doing. As fun as it may be to lounge around in your pajamas all day, keep a routine. Get up, shower, get dressed as you would if you weren't in quarantine. Be flexible with the schedule, but continuity can be helpful!
- **Move:** Movement and exercise in all forms can help clear your mind, release tension and negative energy. Safer at home does not mean you can't leave your house and go for a quick walk, just be sure to maintain distance from anyone with the same idea.
- **Stay connected:** Utilize your social media and your phone to reach out to others- friends, family, peers from school or work-share laughter, positive things that have occurred throughout the day, or just how you're doing. If you're not sure who to reach out to, join chat groups that share interests, if you're a gamer, game with others online. Find ways to stay socially connected.
- **Take the opportunity:** This can be a time where people can just be bored with not as much to do, or it can be used as a time to reset. Are there things you've wanted to do and never had the time for? Maybe it's a good time for self-reflection and looking at how you connect with others and with yourself.
- **Be okay with not being okay:** It's okay to be anxious, to feel sad, to feel lonely, especially in a time like this. Remember that feelings are temporary and if we can identify the feeling, it can become more manageable. Be mindful that losing our sense of normalcy (which we all are) can cause grief. If you find yourself unusually irritated or sad and can't identify why, it is more than likely grief as we try to navigate these uncharted waters

If you find that you need help, please do reach out. Counseling services are still in place and we are able to see students virtually online.

Please also note that there are other resources available to you as well, which are listed below:

**For mental health emergencies : call 911**

**If you are in crisis, or in need of support, the following mental health resources are available to you:**

- **National Suicide Hotline 1.800.273.8255**
- **Manitowoc County crisis line: 920.683.4230 (8am-4:30pm)**

- **Manitowoc County crisis for nights, holidays and weekends: 1.888.552.6642**
- **Sheboygan County crisis line 920.459.3151 (24/7)**
- **National Crisis text line 741-741**

Take care of yourselves,  
Kristi