

## *The Stone Center Counseling Service*

### **Tips for Parents:**

- **Remember that the Counseling Service is available to provide support to your daughter.** If you have concerns, you can call us to consult about how to proceed or what supports are available. Even though counseling is confidential, you can tell us anything.
- **Remember that your daughter might be experiencing a time of transition** – this could be true for first years, seniors, those going to or coming from abroad, transfer and exchange students. Transitions can stir up a person's sense of security as one is not quite sure of the rules or of one's place/niche.
- Keep in mind that as your daughter transitions, the entire family begins to transition and experiences significant shifts and changes. For parents in particular, you might also experience confusion, helplessness and a sense of void in your life as your daughter becomes more self-reliant or looks to others for support and advice.
- Being able to acknowledge shifts and changes is a good thing. **So** talk about it openly and freely, and when your daughter talks to you about her new experiences and the many feelings that accompany them, take time to listen. The more you listen, the more she will open up.
- **Having a room of one's own** – might still be important. So think twice before giving up the personal space at home, even if the younger sibling can't wait to have the room all to herself.
- **The developmental stage and task(s) for the traditionally aged student is one of identity and intimacy.** This will take many shapes and forms. So, just wait a while and be patient as they get a sense of who they are and who they want to be....
- **There is the education in the classroom and the education outside of the classroom.** Both will get your daughter prepared to navigate life. Learning how to manage conflict and to advocate for oneself is part of the overall education. Also, participating in extracurricular activities helps one to manage her time, organize her schedules and take on different roles and leadership positions, which will prepare her for the work world.

- **Developing greater self-reliant and autonomy skills** is also a part of the education outside of the classroom. So let your daughter begin to depend more on herself and less on you. Instead of doing it for her, encourage her to do it. Say, I know you can do it. Call me later once it's worked out. This could include scheduling appointments, managing finances, etc.
- Although it might feel at times that your daughter is leaving you and has little interest in remaining connected, **know in your heart that you remain very important to her!**
- **Check out our various websites; there is a host of information that you might find interesting.** Encourage your daughter to do the same.
- **If your daughter is calling home in distress, encourage her to get support,** whether at the Counseling Service, with her Resident Director, Class Dean, Cultural Advisor, Spiritual Advisor, etc.
- **Remember the On-line Screening tool which includes self screening for depression, anxiety, and eating issues.** It can be accessed via <http://www.wellesley.edu/Counseling>.
- **Make plans for Thanksgiving.** If you live far away and it is not financially feasible for your daughter to come home for Thanksgiving, discuss this with her and talk about options, i.e. visiting a family member who is closer, going home with a friend, finding out what is available on campus, and who will be around during the holiday. Thanksgiving is a family holiday and students who do not make plans to get off campus, can experience deep loneliness. Professional staff are on vacation during this holiday.
- **Ask your daughter how often you should talk, and what feels right for her.** Have an open conversation about this, giving the message that a mutual decision is what you value. It will give her permission to think about what she needs and is comfortable with and it will also assist you with the transition as your daughter grows and develops.
- And last but not least, I bet your daughter would love to receive a **surprise care package!**

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