

Coping with College Series

Coping With Winter

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Usually when this time of year rolls around, we all find ourselves yearning for milder, warmer weather. Research suggests that the lack of sunshine during the winter months contributes to feelings of sadness, which can sometimes slow people down. Sometimes cold weather also sometimes prevents us from engaging in activities that we enjoy. For some college students, these factors can lead to trouble in focusing on their studies.

What can you do to stay energized during this time of the year? The following are a few tips that can help you during these winter months.

- **Put your alarm clock across the room from your bed.** That will make you get out of bed to turn it off, and prevent you from easily hitting the "snooze" button, which can sometimes be very tempting. Trying this strategy might help decrease the chances that you will let classes slide by not attending. Although a warm bed can be appealing, the consequences of not attending classes are not appealing at all.
- **Write a list of things that you need to do each day and cross each off as you accomplish it.** This will give you a sense of completion and satisfaction. This time of the year can affect your motivation level. Being able to see your "Things To Do" list get shorter will allow you to feel proud of yourself.
- **Reward yourself after you accomplish major tasks.** Watch your favorite episode of "Friends" or take time for a relaxing bath or shower. Just as the previous tip will increase your motivation, being able to reinforce yourself for doing a good job will also make you feel positive about your accomplishments. This will increase the chances that you will want to complete more tasks.
- **Review your goals and priorities for the semester frequently.** This will remind you of what is important to you and prevent you from deviating from these.
- **Exercise regularly.** Do not neglect this because of the cold weather. If you normally exercise outside make appropriate adjustments in your clothing and scheduling or find something enjoyable that you can do indoors. Exercise can increase your energy level, thus increasing your motivation.
- **Pay attention to your diet.** Make sure that you are eating appropriately; healthy eating habits can give you energy and stamina. Include your favorite fruits and vegetables in your diet. If you have any questions about your diet or eating habits, contact the Nutrition Mission through the Health Promotion Office on campus.
- **Keep your windows uncovered during the day.** The sun light can give you a boost when you start to experience a lack of motivation. Make sure that you study in an area that has enough light. Also, spend some time outside when it is sunny. Remember that light deprivation can sometimes lead to feelings of sadness.
- **Spend time with friends.** Sometimes it helps to just chat with those close to you. Friends can also be a good motivator when things start feeling difficult.

Also, remember that Spring Break is right around the corner. Think of this time as one that can invigorate you. Choose an activity or trip that is relaxing, but also safe. It is essential that you

come back healthy in order to give yourself the best chance for completing a successful semester. If these tips are not enough and you think you need additional assistance, contact Student Counseling Services at 438-3655.