Mental health issues are overwhelmingly present on college campuses and in young adults aged 18-25 years. In the past year, more than 80% of college students felt overwhelmed by all that they had, and 45% felt that things were hopeless. Mental health issues are stigmatized and largely ignored. These issues manifest themselves in many different ways. Some of the most prominent disorders are depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and addiction. This month, we hope to provide information on these mental health issues, as well as provide resources for students and graduates alike.
“Your present circumstances do not determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.” - Nido Quebin

“Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all.” - Bill Clinton

“Dental Cavities More common in Kids of Moms With Chronic Stress”

The *American Journal of Public Health* recently published an article measuring the effect of maternal stress on their children’s health. This study examined the link between maternal stress and cavities using numerous biological markers. The link above leads to the *PsychCentral* write up of the article.

“If Placebo Eases Depression, Real Meds Will Too”

The University of Michigan Medical School found in a study, that “when it comes to treating depression, how well a person responds to a sham or fake medicine can be a predictor of how well they will respond to actual medications.”
MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

1 in every 5 adults in America experience a mental illness.

One half of all chronic mental illness begins by the age of 14; three-quarters by the age of 24.

Nearly 60% of adults with a mental illness did not receive mental health services in the previous year.

**Anxiety**

18% (42 million) American adults live with anxiety disorders. Everyday life involves some anxiety, especially for those in school or starting their careers. This everyday anxiety is only temporary, though. When anxiety worsens, it needs to be addressed. Anxiety can manifest itself in different ways. It can turn into Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, and many others. These are detrimental to the success of an individual. See common signs and symptoms.

**Depression**

6.9% (16 million) American adults live with major depression. Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease. Similar to anxiety, sad spells can plague everyone, but become problematic when they grow permanent. There are many kinds of depression, such as Major Depression, Persistent Depressive Disorder, and Bipolar Disorder, to name a few. Any form of depression can get in the way of leading a healthy, happy, and successful lifestyle. See common signs and symptoms.

**Eating Disorders**

95% of individuals with eating disorders are between the ages of 12 and 25. Only 1 in 10 individuals with eating disorders receives treatment. Eating Disorders are not strictly centered around food or weight. A sense of control is a main driving force behind many eating disorders. Any eating disorder can begin to affect daily activities and normal body functioning. Eating disorders need to be addressed as soon as possible. This includes Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, Binge Eating Disorder, and OSFED (Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorder). In reality, any eating abnormalities that can affect daily life and bodily functions should be addressed immediately, even if not listed above. Learn more here.

**Addiction**

Among the 20.7 million adults in the U.S. who experienced a substance use disorder, 40.7% (8.4 million adults) had a co-occurring mental illness. The comorbidity can be attributed to intersecting factors like genetic susceptibilities, early exposure to stress or trauma, and underlying brain deficits. Visit the NIH or SAMHSA for more info.

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Nursoons by Carl Elbing

www.nursoons.com
MENTAL HEALTH HELP AND RESOURCES

Tennessee Statewide Crisis Phone Line
If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, Call 855-CRISIS-1 (855-274-7471)

Nearest Walk-In Center:
Frontier Health
301 W. Watauga Avenue
Johnson City, TN 37604
877-928-9062

Self Help:
- Exercise
- Practice Art Therapy
- Practice Yoga
- Listen to Guided Meditations
- Visit animals
- Talk to someone friendly
- Drink herbal tea
- Practice breathing exercises
- Journal

ETSU Student Counseling Center
- All currently enrolled students are eligible for services.
- Counseling services are free of charge.
- Psychiatric services are provided for a minimal fee.
- Services Provided:
  - Coping with stress
  - Managing anxiety
  - Improving mood and overcoming depression
  - Enhancing self-esteem
  - Surviving grief and loss
  - Adjusting to college
  - Concerns about the future
  - Improving relationships with partners
  - Dealing with emotional trauma (e.g., abuse, assault)
  - Understanding sexual orientation and identity
  - Coping with family and childhood issues
  - Overcoming substance abuse
  - Reducing behavioral addictions

ETSU Mental Health Help Line: (423) 439-4841; Press “2”

ETSU Student Counseling Center is located in the D.P. Culp Center on the 3rd Floor, Room 345
1. This question is complex and can be interpreted in different ways. I guess that one of the biggest challenges that everyone faces in being successful in school and in the workplace is that the “deliverables” remain constant (you are expected to do X, Y, or Z in school or in the workforce) while the “distractions” vary. The things that happen in your life that interfere with your ability to do X, Y or Z are not predictable and often not under your control. Feeling out of control and overwhelmed is a huge challenge that can cycle out of control if you don’t actively intervene.

2. Have a strong personal support network—family, friends, faith community. Knowing that there is some stability in your life can make the rocky times easier to bear. Have a hobby that “takes your mind off of it.” Something that allows you to focus your mind in a new direction can be essential for relaxation. Positive feedback (good feedback, good performance review) is great at alleviating stress! If you have to be busy, it is good to know that the quality of your work is understood and appreciated. Never hesitate to seek professional help— that is why they are there.

3. Don’t be there alone. Reach out to someone. Talk to folks. Engage with other people. If necessary, seek professional help. Stay away from habits/substances/things that you know are self-destructive. Seek out, and feed on, people with positive energy—stay away from people with negative energy. At least every few days do something that takes your mind completely off the cause of the stress—a hobby, a sport, a musical instrument, a meeting. Celebrate your successes. If all else fails, consider changing your job. But, again, if you feel overwhelmed in the short-term—immediately seek professional help.
Dr. Dan Jones is the new director of the counseling center at ETSU. He comes to us from Appalachian State University where he held the same position as director of their counseling center. We had the opportunity to sit down with Dr. Jones to talk about mental health on college campuses and in young adults. Welcome, Dr. Jones!

What do you think is the biggest contributor to mental health issues on college campuses and in young adults?
I think it’s mostly stress from different sources, i.e., academic demands, financial, relationships etc. Stress leads to anxiety, depression and so many other issues that students struggle with.

What is the most common mental health issue you see on college campuses?
Students do not label it the same way we do as mental health professionals, but the number one presenting problem is Anxiety. For about 25 years, the number one diagnosis was depression, but in the last 3 or 4 years, it has been anxiety. The top three are anxiety, depression and relationship problems. This is probably so because students are under more pressure to succeed. A lot of students today are characterized as millennials, and that is often associated with parental care taking and problem solving. A lot of students today have not learnt self-soothing skills, self-comforting skills, and problem solving skills that allow them to have more grit to deal with the problems that they face. Part of the work of the counselling center is helping students develop these types of skills to be more resilient.

Do you think that students are using the counseling center to its full potential?
Yes, students really patronize our services. We are a busy place, and we have lots of clients who come to see us for many different reasons. Besides the counseling clinic, there are other services for students such as psychology clinic, Johnson City medical center and the federal TRIO program.

Why do you think that so few individuals seek help?
There is some stigma attached to mental health issues. Seeking help for a mental health issue should not be seen as a sign of weakness but rather a sign of strength.

What are some things that students can do to help relieve the stress or anxiety that comes along with large course loads and responsibilities?
Engage in extracurricular activities, hobbies, join religious groups, talk to a friend, come talk to a counselor.

What advice do you have for students and individuals feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or stressed?
They should get help as soon as possible. They can come over here and talk to our counsellors or seek help at any of the other health centers around.

Any final thoughts?
Mental health is kind of a front runner issue currently across the country in universities because there is lots of publicity and press about suicides and shootings. Mental health counseling is preventive of those kinds of things. We are not only involved with treatment of people who feel suicidal or self-harm themselves, sexual assault or rape and the kinds of emotional trauma these things bring, but also concerned about prevention and stigma reduction. As you go into health care management, you may have times when things are not going well with your business and may need to get a consultant. There is therefore nothing wrong with seeking help for any mental health issue.
Where do you work?
Wellmont Health System, Wellmont Medical Associates. Also with Emergency Medical Service (EMS)

What is your position?
Practice Manager of Urgent Care and Family Practice in Johnson City / Officer within EMS

How has your master’s degree helped you (personally and/or career wise)?
My master’s degree has given me knowledge and skills to complete budgets, analyze practice statistics, and identify processes that need to be lean and changed, as well as the tools to properly motivate my employees to stand out among other practices.

Future plans?
Thinking about obtaining my doctoral degree in Executive Health Leadership from Chapel Hill--- possibly going to medical school or physician assistant school.

Frontier Health:
Frontier Health has a part-time student internship available, and ETSU already has a contract with the behavioral health services department there. Visit this link to see more. (Choose Part Time and scroll to see the Student Intern Position)

Mountain States Health Alliance:
MSHA is very open to having student interns; in fact, they have a page dedicated specifically to students who wish to pursue internships with them. Visit this link to learn more. ETSU also already has a contract with MSHA.
November 2015 Dates to Remember

11/1 – Family Weekend Brunch with First Lady

11/17 – Breakfast with the Expert, Tony Keck, Sr. Vice President and Chief Development Officer, Mountain States Health Alliance

11/18 and 11/19 – UAC Learning Lab: Making Stress Your Friend

11/20 – Re-Generation Story Slam

11/21 – Astronomical Observatory Open House

11/25 – 11/27 Thanksgiving Holiday!