



While You Wait

While you are waiting for your counseling appointment, here are some things you can do to get started on feeling better.

1. **Exercise.** Most people have heard about the benefits of exercise for maintaining physical health, but exercise can also be a tremendous stress reliever. While you are waiting, consider going to the fitness center and either walking on a treadmill for a little while, or doing a regular work out.
2. **Pray/Reflect on Your Spirituality.** Connecting with your faith during times of stress can be essential to feeling better. Consider going somewhere peaceful on campus, like the chapel, and pray or meditate while you wait for your session.
3. **Relax.** There are countless relaxation and breathing exercises on YouTube that you can check out. One of the favorites for our staff is called 4-7-8 Breathing. Start by going somewhere quiet (or hanging out in our waiting room), then sit comfortably and close your eyes. Take a moment to settle in, and then focus on your breathing. Once you are settled, breathe in for a count of 4, hold it for a count of 7, exhale for a count of 8, and repeat. The pace should be one that is comfortable for you and should stay consistent. If your mind wanders away from your breathing, just calmly come back to it and start again. Do this until you feel more relaxed.
4. **Sleep.** Getting enough sleep is essential for feeling well, and stressors can seem more overwhelming when we have not slept enough. If you are waiting for more than an hour for your appointment, consider taking a nap in your room, but make sure to set your alarm to come back!
5. **Write.** Writing is a great way to relieve stress, but it is also a great way to organize your thoughts and courses of action. While you are waiting, consider taking out of a notebook (or finding a computer), and writing out what you need to say to your counselor about what is going on. If there are problems that need to be solved, also write out the options you can see at this time and bring this with you to your session.
6. **Eat.** Sometimes when we are stressed our eating habits can get out of balance, and this can negatively impact how we feel and how we deal with stress. If you haven't eaten enough today, consider stopping at Salmo or Fisher and getting a healthy snack while you wait.
7. **Talk.** Being able to talk to someone who understands us and can offer support is invaluable during stressful times. While you are waiting, considering calling someone that can be supportive (a friend, family member, clergy, RA, faculty member, etc.) and letting them know you need to talk.



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8. **Read (or watch or play).** Sometimes what we really need is to get our mind off things for a bit. Considering picking up a book, watching a favorite TV show, or playing a fun game while you wait for your appointment.
9. **Create.** Being creative is an incredible way to reduce suffering. If you like to make art, play an instrument, or something similar, consider reconnecting with that while you wait for your appointment.
10. **Remember.** When we are feeling overwhelmed or hopeless, it can seem like those feelings will last forever. Remember that the feelings are temporary, and that help is on the way very soon.