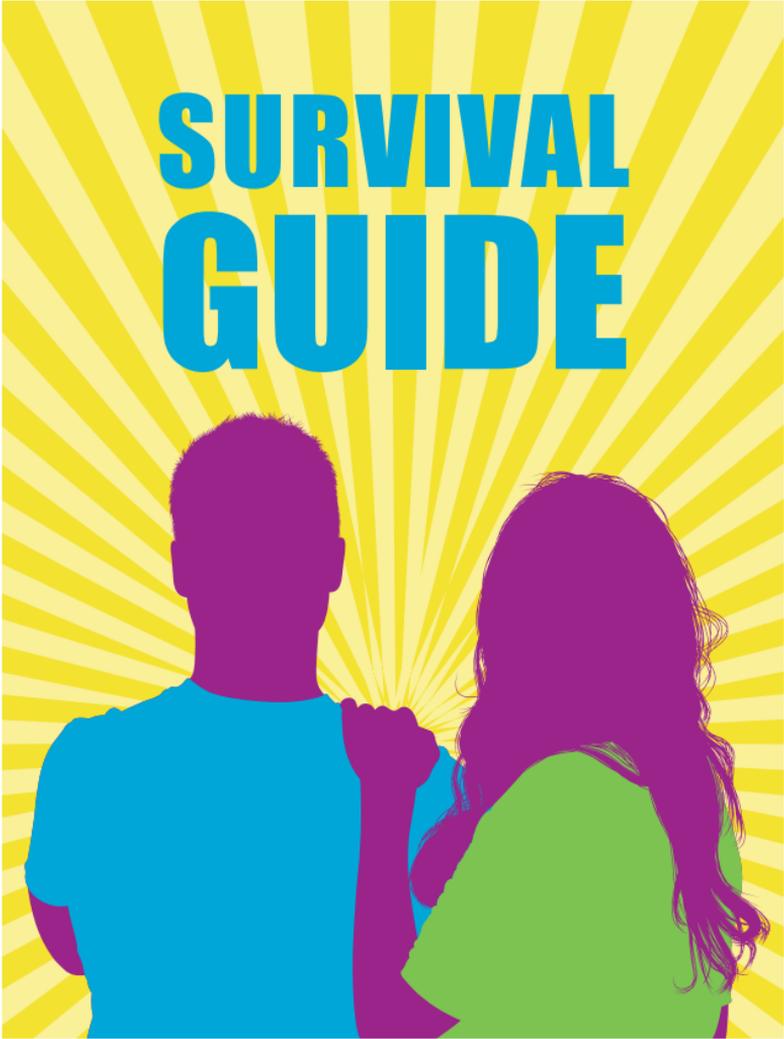


SURVIVAL GUIDE



COPE • CARE • CONNECT

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With the help of Professor Kelli-an Lawrance, Meagan Barkans, and the CHSC 3F20 class.

93%
of Brock students
felt overwhelmed in the past year.¹



Have you ever felt...

Stressed? Lonely? Sad? Inadequate? You are not alone; many students feel the same way! These are all normal reactions to feeling over-whelmed by the demands in our everyday lives. Unfortunately, these emotions can negatively affect our mental, physical and emotional health.²

So, what causes feelings of stress, loneliness & inadequacy?

These feelings may be triggered by both positive and negative, major or minor events in our lives.

- Doing poorly on an exam or class
- Interacting with new people
- Moving away to university
- Moving into a new residence or house
- Having a major dispute with a friend/parent
- Experiencing abuse, bullying or social exclusion
- Starting a new job
- Being promoted
- Beginning a new relationship³



Negative Strategies

Everyone has their own way of managing tough or stressful situations in their lives. Unfortunately, some strategies that you might use can actually hinder your academic performance, relationships, and wellbeing. Even though the strategies shown below are very common, ultimately they will not help you cope or overcome difficult situations.

AVOIDANCE

- × Oversleeping
- × Missing class
- × Procrastinating
- × Withdrawing from friends and family

SUBSTANCE MISUSE

- × Smoking cigarettes
- × Going out drinking
- × Taking drugs and medications

DISTRACTIONS

- × Watching TV
- × Excessively using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- × Spending hours playing video/computer games

VIOLENCE

- × Hurting yourself/others
- × Lashing out at others
- × Using physical violence^{4,5}



Do any of these sound familiar to you?

Being

RESILIENT

is having the ability to
“**bounce back.**”

Resilient people can *manage* and *adapt* to issues such as **stress & adverse situations**.⁶

REMEMBER,

People who are resilient still experience emotional pain, & difficulty with stress...



But being resilient will help you develop the skills necessary to work through those difficult times in a more positive way!⁷

Did you know...

Resiliency is a trait that can be learned and developed in **anyone!**⁷



Focus on your
**THOUGHTS,
BEHAVIOURS
& ACTIONS**

in order to **train yourself** to be able to **bounce back** from adverse situations.⁷

Find out how >>>

5 Ways to Develop Resiliency

1 Make Connections

- **Social support** is essential for health and well-being. Think about one person (like a family member, friend or your RA) that you can count on when things get tough. **Reach out to them now!**
- Develop and maintain positive **relationships** with family members, co-workers, and peers.
- **Get involved in your school community** by volunteering, speaking to another student in class, joining the gym or a club that interests you, and even talking to your professor or TA during office hours! ⁷

Staying
CONNECTED
helps decrease feelings
of loneliness

2 Have a Positive View of Yourself...

- Have **confidence** in your ability to overcome obstacles. Think about times in the past where you have gotten through difficult times in a positive way. What did you do to help yourself get through? Remind yourself that you are capable of getting through a tough situation again!
- **Trust and believe in yourself** to be able to accomplish the things you want. Try thinking about your past successes!
- When it comes to dealing with difficult situations, be confident and **positive** about yourself — remind yourself you **CAN** do it!⁷

Maintaining a **POSITIVE VIEW** helps decrease feelings of **inadequacy** and general **sadness**.

3

Accept That Change is a Part of Life

- If a really negative or unexpected change happens in your life, try these 4 steps to avoid feeling completely destroyed by it.
1. Accept that change happens to everyone.
 2. Write down all the positive qualities of this change.
 3. Try to keep the things in perspective. If you start to feel excessively distressed, ask yourself whether the situation will truly continue to be awful – tonight, next week, next month, next year. Focus on the fact that things **will** get better.
 4. Create a new goal for yourself to incorporate change.⁷



*It is important to remember that when one goal is no longer attainable, you have the ability to **strive** towards a new objective!*

4

Take Care of Yourself

- When you are happy and healthy, your body is better able to deal with challenges life throws at you.
- Staying active keeps your body and mind healthy. Try running, walking, cycling, rollerblading or anything that gets your heart rate above normal.
- Make time in your life for things that you enjoy, make you happy, and help you to relax. Try reading, playing a game with a roommate, listening to music, etc.⁷



Check out the next two pages for some relaxation strategies that might be new to you!

TAKING TIME FOR YOURSELF IS IMPORTANT!

How do you RELAX?

Try Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- Find a quiet place that you can stay in for about 15 minutes.
- Start with your toes, tense them for up to 30 seconds and then release.
- Move your wrists by rotating them in a circular motion. After that, lightly lift and release your shoulders.
- Next, move on to lightly tensing and releasing your neck and facial muscles.
- Continue to do this until you feel mentally and physically relaxed.⁸



Remember, you have to find what's best for you!

How do you RELAX?

Have you ever tried meditation?

- Close your eyes, breathe slowly and deeply.
- Let go of your everyday worries and focus on your breathing.
- Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold breath for 4 seconds, and exhale for 4 seconds (repeat 3 times).
- Focus on relaxing the areas of your body that feel tense.
- When negative thoughts come into mind, refocus on your breathing.
- Imagine something peaceful, for example waves crashing against the beach or walking your dog in the summertime.
- Stay in this state for around 3 to 5 minutes to feel refreshed and relaxed.⁸



Take some time and try it out!

5

Take Action!

- Avoid detaching yourself from difficult situations, pretending problems are not there, or wishing them to go away.

This may feel okay in the moment, but it ultimately won't help you get through the situation in a positive way.

Try to think of one small thing that you can do today that will help you to move forward, and then take that step.

- Remember that we sometimes need help to figure out how to **take action!** Brock has lots of people who can help you figure out your next step.⁷

Check out pages 17 & 18

Summing it up...

Looking back at your past experiences, your ups and downs, and your own personal strengths will help you learn a lot about which strategies to use in order to **build resilience**.

Think about how you dealt with challenges.

Be sure you know who you can count on.

Have faith and trust in yourself.

Always remember to identify strategies that work well for **YOU!**



NOTES

1. Write down the name of one person that you can always count on.

2. What is one thing that helps you to positively cope if you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, anxious, sad, or lonely?

3. Write down one thing you read in this booklet that you think you will try in the future.

4. Write down one campus resource that you would like to check out in the future.

COPE • CARE • CONNECT at Brock University

Student Health Services
Harrison Hall
905-688-5550 x3243
brocku.ca/health-services

**Brock Personal
Counselling**
905-688-5550 x4750
brocku.ca/personalcounselling

**Student Health and
Wellness Services**
Alumni Student Centre
(before Skybar Lounge, across from
Starbucks)
10:00 – 4:00
Monday to Friday

Drop-in Learning Centre
A to Z Learning Services
Library 231
brocku.ca/learning-skills

Campus Security
Emergency: 905-688-5550
x3200

Student Development Centre
Schmon Tower 400
905-688-5550 x3240
brocku.ca/student-
development-centre

The Zone/Track/Pool
Walker Complex
905-688-5550 x3387
brocku.ca/recreationservices

Meditation Centre
Mackenzie Chown A-block

 facebook.com/copecareconnect

 copecareconnect.ca

 youtube.com/user/copecareconnect

24 Hour Hotlines

COAST Niagara

mendthemind.ca/help
1-800-263-4944

Good 2 Talk

good2talk.ca
1-866-925-5454

Distress Centre Niagara

distresscentreniagara.com

St. Catharines and Area
905-688-3711

Fort Erie and Area
905-382-0689

Grimsby and Area
905-563-6674

Port Colborne and Area
905-734-1212



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Student Health Services

Brought to you with support from
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