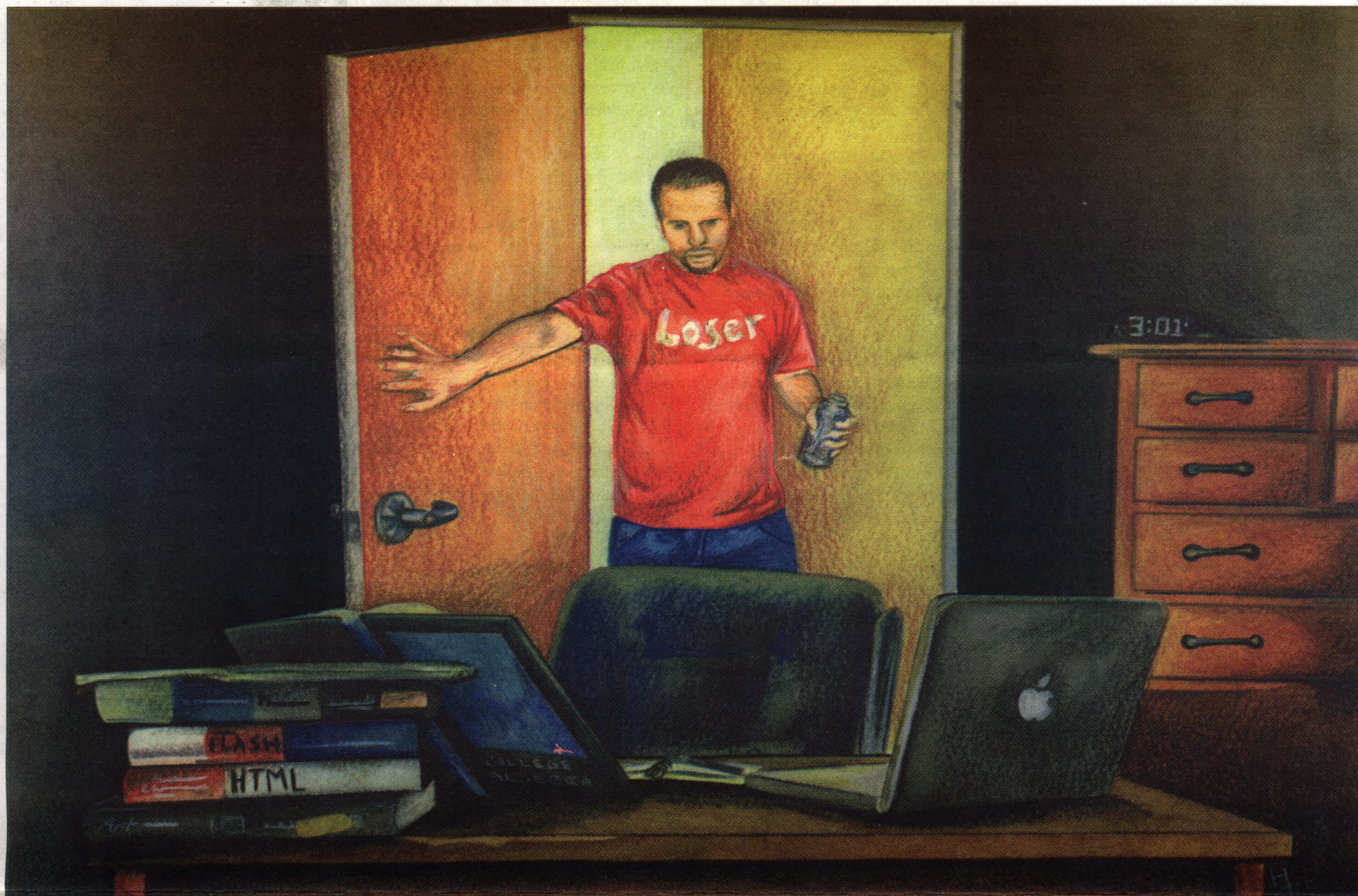


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Contributed Illustration/ KELLY JOHNSON

You Think You Know, But You Have No Idea: A SHU Student's Battle with Stress

Anonymous
Contributing Writer

It all happened so suddenly. I didn't even know what was happening to me. So many thoughts clouded my mind. I had no idea why I felt the way I did but I knew I couldn't be good. My initial thought was that this was it. Yup, I was definitely sick, I was probably going to die. I mean how else could I explain all these weird feelings, constant shaking and feeling as if I cannot stop, my heart racing so fast I could feel the beats against the inside of my chest, light-headedness, burning in my stomach, random pains throughout my left arm and chest, and of course, I could never breathe.

There were so many times I would just have to stop and take deep breaths in and out with no reason at all, except that I just couldn't seem to get enough oxygen to my lungs. But then again, I am probably overacting, and I calmed down. This whole routine would happen more and more as last year progressed.

One Monday afternoon in September of 2003, it started. I was just sitting there on the couch typing on my computer when I noticed that my stomach was burning, so badly that I was feeling nauseous. Then after the fact that it made me so uncom-

fortable I couldn't even talk on instant messenger anymore, I realized that my stomach had been bothering me all week. I thought it might have been the food I ate but, then I realized it was all week, I figured it couldn't just be food.

As usual I began to overreact and immediately started looking it up online. Then my suspicions were answered when all of symptoms matched that of an ulcer. Immediately I panicked and went to the doctor, but that proved to be dumb because he told me that I didn't have an ulcer but this other thing, and gave me prevacid and told me to stay away from spicy and greasy food.

After that uneventful doctor visit I just felt stupid for thinking I had an ulcer. I even calmed down since the pain seemed to subside with the medicine, well for a while. About two months passed and I realized at night again the burning came back. Like clock work in the morning and at night when I would try and go to sleep my stomach would burn and be accompanied by a feeling of hunger until I felt asleep. This time I just ignored these feelings I was not a hypochondriac.

I didn't even have time to think about these problems, when I had actual, real ones to deal with. Like the fact that I had to pay almost 400 dollars a month in rent,

my cell phone bill was due, oh my credit card also, and of course my savings was dwindling faster than I earned it. I knew eventually the dreaded call to mom and dad was approaching... another thing that made me tense.

As the semester came to a close things progressively got worse. My stomach routine continued, but now I noticed I pretty much always felt like I was shaking inside. My entire body felt like it was just shivering, but I wasn't cold. I didn't understand why, and I really couldn't think about it. I had enough stress from money and school; I didn't need this to add to it. So I just brushed it off.

Christmas break came and went and the spring semester was about to begin. I thought New Year, new attitude. I figured since when I was home I rarely felt off, that whatever was going through my body passed. However, my whole positive attitude came to a halt when the reality of, again, rent and other bills was still a part of my life. Every month when I pulled out my checkbook and saw the numbers get smaller I would feel sick.

About two weeks into the semester, it all started up again. The burning and shaking began their schedule. Except this time it was all the time, not just when I was trying to sleep. It was all day. This freaked

me out, but I couldn't think about it. I had priorities. So I just dealt with it and pretended like I was fine.

However, soon it was getting harder and harder to pretend like I was okay. As the month went on I noticed my heart seemed to race all the time, like I was nervous or something. But the thing was I wasn't, well I thought I was fine. I would just be sitting typing a paper, or laughing with friends, and I could just feel it -- beating against my chest constantly. Especially when I was trying to go to sleep, it just went so fast I swear it was hitting my chest bone.

This started to alarm me. Maybe this was more serious than I thought. But then again, I was a bit of nervous person, so maybe that was it. Whatever it was, I figured if I just went on with everything else it would just go away, or I would get used to it and hopefully I would just forget that it wasn't normal.

Then one day, it happened. I was walking to my room and it went black for a second. I felt dizzy and had to hold onto my dresser to keep up. Then I came too I guess, but I felt like I couldn't breathe. I just had to stand there for a second and take slow, long deep breathes, until eventually it subsided. I was totally freaked out and I just fell to the floor. I sat there with

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The College Epidemic: Sleep Deprivation

Francesca Bonaiuto
Editor-in-Chief

Common symptoms include drowsiness and heads drooping in class. The victims can be found downing caffeinated coffee and energy drinks at the SHU market or local Dunkin' Donuts before retreating to a two-hour class.

The culprit? It's called sleep deprivation, and it's a widespread epidemic across college campuses everywhere.

Sleep deprivation is one of those things we seem not to notice until it catches up with us. And then we rarely recognize it for what it is because we've been reducing our sleep cumulatively over a whole semester or longer.

Dr. Omar Burschtin, of The New York University School of Medicine Sleep Disorders Center, says that 90 percent of college students suffer from sleep deprivation. This is the result of everything from noisy bedrooms to all-nighters at the library.

Most students admitted that they are not sleeping enough.

"Between classes, school work, holding a job and trying to have a social life, I get an average of three to five hours of sleep a night," says Marcella Bonaiuto, junior, Rye, NY. "I am always exhausted and often find myself taking naps mid-

afternoon," adds Bonaiuto.

If college students whine about not getting enough sleep and continual drowsiness, why then do they continue to deprive themselves of it? Procrastination to avoid work and your basic messing around were overwhelmingly cited as responses.

"I take the cake when it comes to procrastinating," says Rachel Pastore, senior, New York. "I wait till hours before class to do my work," adds Pastore.

"There's always something to do, before you have to do it," says Matthew Flynn, junior, Wethersfield.

Late-night party going is also a big factor contributing to the loss of sleep for many students.

"I am out almost every night of the week," says Kathleen Elder, senior, Hopkinton, MA. "When I am stressed, you can find me at Bennigans. Going out is a social thing, but it's also a good way to get my mind off of work," adds Elder.

While most students seem to be able to function with irregular sleeping patterns, it's hardly a healthy habit to boast of.

Continued sleep loss can result in poor grades, illness and sometimes, even depression. Sleep deprivation is such an epidemic at all colleges that some universities are considering ways in which the problem can be assuaged.

Dr. Omar Burschtin calls for a "nor-

mal sleep architecture." "The body needs six to nine hours of sleep at night depending on whether you are a long sleeper or short sleeper," Burschtin says. The exact amount is different for everybody. During that time the body rests, and the brain lowers its core temperature and reduces levels of adenosine (the chemical that causes drowsiness). After a good night's sleep, the body is refreshed, the mind is energized and the thoughts of yesterday are sorted and organized.

For those trying to avoid sleep deprivation's short and long term effects, Dr. Burschtin offers several suggestions:

1. Try a "worry book." By taking time during the day to write down their worries in a journal, students can fall asleep knowing that they've already worked through the day's problems.

2. Stick to a very strict sleeping schedule. When people are tired from a poor night's sleep, they have a tendency to take naps during the day. This makes it more difficult to get to sleep that night, setting up a cycle of insomnia. Try going to bed a few hours earlier.

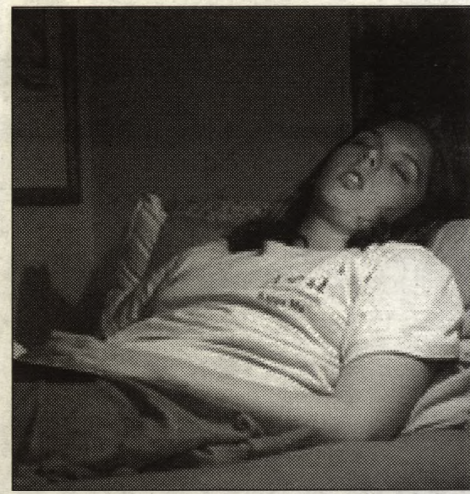
3. Students should also stay away from caffeine and alcohol. Both affect brain waves, causing frequent subconscious arousals during sleep.

4. Don't exercise after 7 pm either,

as it raises the temperature of both body and brain, interfering with the ability to fall asleep.

5. The bedroom should be only for sleeping, and whatever students do in terms of social life, working and eating should be done outside of the bedroom.

Burschtin admits that this can be difficult for dorm students, who live and sleep in the same room. But he suggests that they arrange their lives so that the bed is separated from activity.



Contributed photo

Nodding off regularly in the Afternoon? Try getting a good night sleep

The Story you Don't Know: A SHU Student's Battle with Stress

Continued from page 1

my back against the closet and just thought about everything. I just couldn't deal with it, the bills, school, rude people, and feeling the way I did. It just hit me, I was miserable and I think there might be something wrong with me. I didn't know what to do. I don't even know why I feel this way. I am a 20-year-old girl, who shares an apartment with her friends, who usually has a good time, what was the problem? Yet all I wanted to do was go away.

That night my roommates came home and asked me how I was (just in general), I wanted to say something, but I didn't. I lied and said I was great. Now, I started a new routine, the one where I pretended everything was all good, when really I was falling apart. But why whine, I was never a whiner. And I hated when people complained about how awful their life was or how sick they felt, when in reality things were fine. So I just went on with things on the outside as if everything was peachy.

Even though I was doing a really good job of convincing my friends and family that it was all good, I was far from convincing myself. The feeling sick only got worse and constant. Everyday more than once I would have to catch my breath, my heart would race, and now at least once a day I would get these very sharp pains running through chest and arms. I knew there was something wrong, but I couldn't handle it. Sometimes I would sit there and think of how awesome it would be if I could just leave for a while. Like wouldn't it be awesome if I just fell down the stairs and either broke some bones or went into a coma for a bit. That would just be awesome, I thought. Then I wouldn't have to deal with anything. One time my dreams took on a life of their own and I stood at the top of the stairs and thought, "How bad would it hurt if I fell?" I mean, there would be no more pain from that, than what I feel

everyday.

Before I knew it half the semester had gone by and I wasn't any better. But no one knew. Why worry anyone, especially my parents. They had enough to think about, I figured since I wasn't dying why tell them. But that was just it, I didn't even know anymore. Now that idea crossed my mind, I thought I might actually be dying, maybe I was sick. The thought of that just made me tenser, so I shot that idea out. I think part of the reason I didn't tell anyone was because I didn't honestly want to know or deal with it.

It was spring break, and I couldn't wait to go home. After all when I was home last time my symptoms went away. I was never so excited to see my family. I figured they would calm me down. So when I got home I again put on the "I am great façade" and tried to be as normal as possible. However, this time at home was not relaxing. Every spare moment I got I used to catch my breath trying to breathe. My heart felt like it was going to jump out of my body; it was going so fast, and the chest pains only got more frequent and more severe, when they occurred, which they too now were causing me not to breathe. Yet, I didn't tell a soul. I just kept it all to myself again. I kept the thought that every night I went to sleep I wasn't sure if I was going to wake up a secret. I couldn't tell my parents, it would make them even more nervous than I was.

But one morning I woke up in my bed. I decided I wasn't going to school. I felt like I didn't want to see anybody. I didn't want to deal with it. Instead I wanted to be alone. I wanted to sleep; I really wanted to go away. At first I just told my mom I was tired and I would just drive back the next day. Since I was good about going to class she didn't think anything of it. Then the next day would come and I would give an excuse like "Oh, I think I'm coming down with something, I'll go back

soon." At first my parents bought it but then, they started asking questions, since I had stayed home an extra week. I quickly dismissed them with some lame excuse and would run up to my room and pretend like I needed a nap.

It was all crashing down on me. How long could I go on like this? Eventually I will have to deal with it. "No," I thought. "I couldn't. I just need a few more days and I am sure I will feel better." But I knew that was I lie. I just lied down and again imagined what it would be like if I somehow had to be hospitalized for some period of time. How nice would that be. I wouldn't have to deal with bills, school, or the fact that I had no clue what was wrong with me.

If only I just....died, yeah then it would be okay. As soon as those words engulfed my thoughts, it hit me! "You have to tell someone how you feel." How could dying be an option? I was afraid to die, why would I possibly think that? The thought that I saw dying as an option terrified me more than the fact that I didn't know what was wrong with me. That's when I finally did something about it.

The next day I sat with my mom and got up enough courage to admit everything. My mom didn't know what to do. She was so worried I could tell. But we agreed I needed to go to the doctor. When the nurse called me in to the room, she asked me if I was all right and I said I think so. Again, I lied obviously. She went to take my heart rate but got this weird look on her face, she asked me if I was nervous and I said no. She got this look of panic on her face and excused her self. She then came in with an EKG and immediately hooked me up to it. A little while after that the doctor came in. He said my heart was going so fast that the nurse couldn't count it. He also said that my blood pressure was extremely high.

He began asking me a bunch of things. How I was feeling, what was happening in

my life, stuff like that, and then he looked at me and told me I was over-stressed. I just sort of looked at him, like are you serious? I am sick because I am stressed. Then he told me the scariest thing ever. He said that if I didn't come in when I did, I probably would have had a heart attack and maybe even died. My heart was going entirely too fast and with my blood pressure the way it was, my body couldn't handle it for much longer. He said the chest pains, and shortness of breath were signs also. Although he was pretty sure it was stress he did send me on a bunch of other tests, but it all came back to stress. He immediately put me on prevacid for the acid in my stomach, Zoloft for my anxiety, and Xanax for times when I was so stressed I couldn't breathe again.

That night when I went home, I couldn't believe it. I was only 20 years old and I was suffering from stress. I never thought someone as young as me could become that sick from stress. When you are 20 you never think you could die of a heart attack, brought on by stress. But there I was being treated for it.

It has been a year now, and fortunately I am feeling okay. Sometimes I let my anxiety still take over, but I am quick to realize it now and I take care of it as soon as possible.

I learned that if you don't handle stressful things the right way, it could have negative consequences. Now I am also honest with how I feel. If I am feeling sick or something is making me tense and people ask I tell them. I realized that it helps a lot too, not keeping everything bottled up.

Thankfully because of last year as horrible as it was, I learned how to deal with stress in a healthy way and now when people ask me how I am, I can honestly say, "I'm fine."

The Naked Truth on Stress

Ariane Rasmussen
Contributing Writer

Every single person has been a victim of stress at one point or another whether aware of it or not because stress is simply a part of living. So the question raised in many of our minds is where in the "stress cycle" are most of Sacred Heart University's students?

Stress is defined by Dictionary.com as a mentally or emotionally disruptive or upsetting condition occurring in response to adverse external influences and capable of affecting physical health, usually characterized by increased heart rate, a rise in blood pressure, muscular tension, irritability, and depression."

According to the Wrong Diagnosis website, which has collected data from several medical sources, stress symptoms can include anxiety, overwhelming worry, difficulty with decisions, difficulty thinking clearly, loss of confidence, loss of hope, loss of sleep, headache, sleep disorders, irritability, upset stomach, job dissatisfaction, low morale. Severe stress can also result in palpitations, over-breathing, muscle tension, back ache, aches and pain, poor posture, sweating, and even digestive symptoms due to the high levels of anxiety.

To our relief, in ordinary levels, emotional stress is not considered a formal psychological disorder. However, extremely high levels of stress can be dangerous leading to the symptoms mentioned.

Every college student interviewed agreed to have been under some type of stress at some point throughout the school year. They all also agreed that stress levels increase with grade level and that several factors contribute to it such as school, work, sports or clubs, family and friends. However, most of them also believe that school causes them the most stress since the average student has five to six classes per semester to balance with other things.

"I think school is the factor that affects stress levels the most, but sports, family, friends, and work also add up to it," said Erin Nash (junior, Mahwah,

NJ).

Jackie Ford (Junior, Hicksville, NY) comments, "I have to say that the most stressful factors for me are school and work. The things that have caused me stress are registering for classes, studying for mid-terms and finals, and getting into the teaching program."

Tavio Hobson (junior, Seattle, WA), agreed, "School causes most of my stress, especially exams."

On the other hand, Anthony Canonico (freshman, Mamaroneck, NY) said, "The stresses I have dealt with this far in college were all brought upon myself. The professors here are very fair for the most part on work load size and the only stress I have come across has been a byproduct of procrastination."

When it comes to procrastination and its effects on stress, Kristen Fitzpatrick (freshman

Long Island, NY) commented, "I think everyone is stressed in college at some point or another and it could be because most people were always forced to go to class and do their work when at home. But now in college it's different. Most of us don't have anyone telling us what to do so we procrastinate often."

Sports, outside jobs, and extracurricular activities also play a major role in the stress levels of SHU's students.

"Trying to balance sports, school and social life is a difficult task. I am in the Golf Team and that can be very stressing at times. I end up missing a lot of classes and a lot of work because of tournaments. After the tournament, I have to try to make up everything I've missed which can be challenging and stressful," said Alexandra Heyes (freshman, Dunrobin, Ontario, Canada).

Nash adds, "Being on a sports team – Sacred Heart Women's Rowing Team – I know that our team has a fall and a spring season and the spring season is the most important for us. What is really stressful is that our biggest and final race usually falls in the middle of finals week or the week right after it. As a result, our whole team is stressed out about school, grades, and the

team around this time."

Fitzpatrick said, "I've dealt with plenty of stress in college so far from balancing my work, classes, and my other activities that I am involved in can become very stressful at times. I know I'm involved in many things on campus and it can get a little stressful sometimes. I'm a part of Greek life and I work 4 times a week and it can be very stressful at times, but I love being a part of many things so stress from my work and clubs doesn't bother me."

"Stress is one of those little words that is not going to go away during your lifetime"

Leadership positions in clubs also call for more stress. President of the International Club Lukasz Glinka (junior, Bridgeport) said, "I was extremely stressed when I was organizing the Fashion Show. The stress just became overwhelming as everything collided – everything coming together at the last minute including school work and the Fashion Show preparations. It was overwhelming, but after it was all over and finished the stress went away."

When addressing the topic of increasing stress levels and grade levels, all SHU students saw a correlation between the two.

Elona Shape (freshman, Bridgeport) said, "I do think that the stress level increases as your grade level does because you have to worry about your credits and classes in order to graduate."

Glinka emphasized, "Being a junior now, I have to agree that the stress levels increase as you move up because the classes become harder. Students are also trying to get internships and part-time jobs and as seniors you also have to worry about doing your senior project."

Ford said, "I feel that as you get older not only are you getting more work, but you are also closer to entering the 'real world.' To me, that alone is stressful."

Although SHU students deal with stress throughout their college years, all of those interviewed agreed that their stress doesn't last too long showing that most SHU students are under the normal amount of stress. As simply said by Heyes, "Everyone deals with stress. There is no way to avoid it." However, there are ways to cope with it effectively or try to lessen it.

Nash said, "I cope by listening to music, being with my friends, and rowing on the water because when we are on it that is the only thing I focus on. I forget about everything else for a couple of hours."

"I talk with my friends and family at home and being a part of Phi Omega Tau allows me to always have a support system to talk to and vent out my stress," said Fitzpatrick.

Ford commented, "I usually try to relax, have fun with my friends, and I try to tell myself that things could always be worse and that it's not worth it to be stressed out all the time."

Canonico said, "My way of releasing stress is through sleep, and the gym. The gym is a great way to clear your mind and feel refreshed, anytime you physically push yourself you feel great."

According to the Wrong Diagnosis website, ways of handling stress effectively or trying to lessen it include life balancing, resolving the underlying causes of the emotional stress, time management, talking to friends, counseling, participating in social activities or exercising to divert the mind from the source of stress, relaxation therapy, and massage among many other things.

"Stress" is one of those little words that is not going to go away during your lifetime and that is bound to come back into your life every once in a while, but trying to deal with your stress to effectively lessen it or get rid of it is what is truly crucial.

College Alcohol Use: A Full or Empty Glass?

Francesca Bonaiuto
Editor-in-Chief

Every semester has its high's and low's with the amount of work load distributed to students, but the time is approaching again when students are being bombarded with end of the semester work and you can find them at the bar rather than the library.

Many students believe that they drink more during finals and graduation time because alcohol alleviates frustrations and helps with relaxation.

"There are many reasons to drink, but a lot of times I drink to forget about the thing that's bothering me," says Vincent Miata, Senior, Rye Brook, NY.

According to The National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), Research indicates that stressful events may profoundly influence the use of alcohol. The 2004 health survey of Undergraduate population highlights that 72.6% of students who drink, drink to relax or relieve tension.

People may drink as a means of coping with certain stressful feelings such as academic workload, financial problems, social anxiety, relationship problems, expectant pressures, etc. However, it is important to be aware that using alcohol in reaction to a stressful event or feelings may increase the risk of alcohol abuse.

There are several risk factors for the abuse of alcohol in response to stress:

- Using alcohol to 'deal' with stress
- Experiencing the stressful event or feeling as severe, chronic, intense or unavoidable
- Lacking social support or other resources for coping with stressful events or feelings
- Having a family history of drinking in response to stress
- Believing that alcohol will help to reduce stress
- Having unhealthy or other problematic drinking behavior preceding the stressful event or feeling
- Feeling helpless or having no con-

trol over the stressful event or feeling

- Trying to avoid or numb feelings in reaction to the stressful event

"Last week, my hard-drive crashed with my senior project on it. I went to the



Contributed Photo

College students drink to relieve their daily stresses

packi and got a 30," says an anonymous source. "It wasn't the smart thing to do, but it distracted me for the time being."

Drinking to alleviate problems of a stressful situation can do more harm

than good.

More research indicates that 25 percent of college students report academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers, and receiving lower grades overall.

According to statistics from Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), 58 percent of students drink when they are upset or stressed. Furthermore, students with low grades of D or F drink three times as much as those who earn A's.

Drinking on occasion is okay, but don't let it be a reason to cope with your daily stresses. Research concludes that people who use alcohol as a stress remedy have early signs of alcohol dependence even after college.

Incorporate alternative ways to cope with stress: Exercise, take a walk, take a bath, listen to some relaxing music, or call a friend.

Don't let your six-pack be your support group...

How Stressed Are You?

Rate yourself as to how you typically react in each of the situations listed below. There are no right or wrong answers.

- 4 = Always
3 = Frequently
2 = Sometimes
1 = Never

Enter a number in the box for each question. When you complete the questionnaire, add up your total number of points and type it in the box. An answer key is provided below.

- ☐ 1. Do you try to do as much as possible in the least amount of time?
- ☐ 2. Do you become impatient with delays or interruptions?
- ☐ 3. Do you always have to win at games to enjoy yourself?
- ☐ 4. Do you find yourself speeding up the car to beat the red light?
- ☐ 5. Are you unlikely to ask for or indicate you need help with a problem?
- ☐ 6. Do you constantly seek the respect and admiration of others?
- ☐ 7. Are you overly critical of the way others do their work?
- ☐ 8. Do you have the habit of looking at your watch or clock often?
- ☐ 9. Do you constantly strive to better your position and achievements?
- ☐ 10. Do you spread yourself "too thin" in terms of your time?
- ☐ 11. Do you have the habit of doing more than one thing at a time?
- ☐ 12. Do you frequently get angry or irritable?
- ☐ 13. Do you have little time for hobbies or time by yourself?
- ☐ 14. Do you have a tendency to talk quickly or hasten conversations?
- ☐ 15. Do you consider yourself hard-driving?
- ☐ 16. Do your friends or relatives consider you hard-driving?
- ☐ 17. Do you have a tendency to get involved in multiple projects?
- ☐ 18. Do you have a lot of deadlines in your work?
- ☐ 19. Do you feel vaguely guilty if you relax and do nothing during leisure?
- ☐ 20. Do you take on too many responsibilities?

TOTAL Answer Key

If your score is between 20 and 30, chances are you are non-productive or your life lacks stimulation.

A score between 31 and 50 designates a good balance in your ability to handle and control stress.

If you tallied up a score ranging between 51 and 60, your stress level is marginal and you are bordering on being excessively tense.

If your total number of points exceeds 60, you may be a candidate for heart disease.



A Ten Step Guide to Coping With Stress

1) Avoid nicotine, alcohol and caffeine.

They are all stimulants, so therefore they cannot calm you down. If you're stressed, steer clear of them and keep yourself well-hydrated by drinking water instead.

2) Work off stress with physical activity.

Pressure or anger releases adrenaline in the body. Exercise helps to reduce it, and produces 'good mood' substances in the brain. So go for a brisk walk around the block when you feel tense, and try some regular exercise after work.

3) Relax with a stress reduction technique every day.

Try self-hypnosis – it's very easy and can even be done at your desk. (eg 'I deserve calm in my life', or 'I have a choice in every situation'). Repeat it to yourself whenever you feel tense.

4) Get enough sleep.

Sleep is essential for the body to function properly. Sleeping pills are not necessary if you change your life-style. If you've habitually skimped on sleep, you probably won't even remember how it feels to wake up fully rested.

5) If you're ill, rest.

Don't just carry on regardless. Working will tire the body and prolong the illness. So recognize that you have limits and don't carry on as if you were firing on all cylinders.

6) Agree with somebody; once in a while!

Life shouldn't be a constant battleground. So even if you disagree with someone, avoid conflict by just agreeing or keeping quiet. After all, they have a right to their opinion, just as you do.

7) Learn to accept what you cannot change.

A well known prayer asks for the serenity "to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference". This philosophy will help you avoid unhappiness, cynicism and bitterness.

8) Listen to your body.

When you are tired, hungry or thirsty, do something about it. Also recognize stress and anger in your day and counter it immediately with a brisk walk, ten minutes' in deep relaxation or whatever works for you.

9) Learn how to say 'no'.

Simple, but effective. Where a 'no' is the appropriate response, say it without guilt.

10) Manage your time.

Take one thing at a time. Don't overdo things. Create time buffers to deal with unexpected emergencies. And, recognise that your day to day problems and responsibilities are the things that cause stress in your life. Tackle them with a system that works for you.

A simple method is to:

- List the things that you need to do.
- Put them in order of importance
- Decide what you need to do yourself, and what can be delegated.
- Decide which needs doing today, next week or next month
- Decide what doesn't need doing after all, and drop it from the list.



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