

ATTACHMENT 7 - WARNING SIGNS OF POOR ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE LIFE

Top Ten Signs Of Poor Adjustment To College Life

1. Isolation – It is not healthy to be uninvolved with other and campus activities. Isolation can breed negative thoughts and feelings and is often an indication of anxiety and depression.
2. Irritability – Feeling angry or antagonistic toward others can be a sign of many different types of problems. When ignored, such feelings can escalate into many other problems.
3. Poor class attendance – Attendance in class ought to be a top priority for students. When it is not, it is often due to other problems such as those listed here.
4. Too much partying – Excessive alcohol and drug use can pervade a student’s life and interfere with personal and academic goals.
5. Going home every weekend – The college years are a time to develop independence and autonomy. This cannot be accomplished when a student never really leaves home emotionally, which in turn limits relationship development.
6. Sleeping and eating poorly – Most individuals do not function well as students when the body is not appropriately nurtured.
7. Stress – While some stress is inevitable, prolonged periods of high stress resulting from any of the items in this list are serious warning signs. It means that, sooner or later, the body and emotions will begin to break down.
8. Poor communication skills – Lack of assertiveness or aggressiveness in communications with others will nearly always produce other problems and interfere with many aspects of college life.
9. Relationship problems – All people experience tensions and conflicts in relationships. When most of all relationships are filled with such things it affects other areas of life and can produce anxiety and depression.
10. Poor concentration – Academic life requires students to focus and concentrate. Students who find this difficult because of distractions are likely to experience problems in adjustment to the academic and social demands of college life.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) generally are of three types:

Intrusive:

- Dissociative states
- Flashbacks
- Intrusive emotions and memories
- Nightmares and night terrors

Avoidant:

- Avoiding emotions
- Avoiding relationships
- Avoiding responsibilities for others
- Avoiding situations that are reminiscent of the traumatic event

Hyperarousal

- Exaggerated startle reaction
- Explosive outbursts
- Extreme vigilance
- Irritability
- Panic symptoms
- Sleep disturbance

Intrusive memories and emotions interfere with normal thought processes and social interaction. Flashbacks feature auditory and visual hallucinations. For example, the sounds and images of combat often comprise the content of flashbacks experienced by military veterans. Flashbacks can be triggered by ordinary stimuli such as low-flying airplane or a loud noise, anything that brings to mind an aspect of the event. Nightmares and night terrors also feature aspects of the traumatic event.

Dissociative symptoms include psychic numbing, depersonalization, and amnesia.

People with PTSD commonly avoid stimuli and situations that remind of them of the traumatic event because they trigger symptoms.

People experiencing hyperarousal symptoms are always on the alert for danger of threat and are easily startled.

Complications

Complications can develop in people with chronic PTSD and delayed onset PTSD. These include the following:

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| Alcohol and drug abuse or dependence | Low self-esteem |
| Chronic anxiety | Panic attacks |
| Depression and increased risk for suicide | Phobias |
| Divorce and separation | Unemployment Guilt |