

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Is What to Do When College Is Not The Best Time of Your Life *for You?*

Put a check mark beside each question you answer “yes” to. Be honest. This questionnaire isn’t meant to make you feel bad about yourself. And it isn’t designed to trick you into feeling negatively about college. It’s designed to help you clarify whether you’re having the college experience you hoped for—and that you still *could* have if you made a few changes.

GENERAL

1. Is college a disappointment? Is it less fulfilling or fun than you thought it would be?
2. Are you having more trouble fitting in or getting adjusted than you expected?
3. Do you think about transferring or dropping out?
4. Do you feel you’re not ready to be in college or in *this* college?
5. Do you feel lost, confused, overwhelmed, stressed out, or sad a lot of the time?
6. Do you get anxious or depressed when you think of returning to college at the end of a vacation or visit home?
7. Does it seem as though everyone else is enjoying college more and adjusting to it better than you are?

HOMESICKNESS

1. Are you missing your parents, old friends, and home more than you expected?
2. Do you go home instead of staying on campus more than once or twice a term?
3. Are you picking fights with your parents over minor issues?
4. Do you always feel depressed or irritated after phone calls home?
5. Do you revert to childish behaviors when you're at home?
6. Are you using romantic relationships or sex to deal with loneliness?

ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

1. Is the academic work harder or more time-consuming than you expected?
2. Do you feel anxious or unbearably restless before getting down to work?
3. Does it take forever to start or complete papers?
4. Do you surf the net, watch TV, smoke pot, or just daydream to avoid doing schoolwork?
5. Do you fall asleep when you try to study or read?
6. Have you decided to make academics a lower priority than socializing?
7. Are you more than two weeks behind in your work?
8. Do you begin most assignments just before they're due?
9. Do you skip classes more than once a week?
10. Have you had incompletes at the end of the term?
11. Have you had to drop a class because you fell too far behind in the work?
12. Have you exaggerated an illness or emotional problem to get an extension?

13. Do you conceal your grades from your parents?
14. Have you changed your educational or career goals because of poor grades?
15. Are you starting to hate college because of the academic pressure?

FRIENDSHIP

1. Do you feel lonely most of the time?
2. Have you been unable to make one or two friends at college?
3. Do you feel you're a better friend to other people than they are to you?
4. Do you do favors all the time for people in order to get them to like you?
5. Do you have to drink or use drugs in order to feel comfortable socially?
6. Do you act aloof or have a chip on your shoulder to avoid rejection?
7. Do you constantly find fault with your friends or feel disappointed by them?
8. Is it hard to "be yourself" when you're with friends?

LOVE AND SEX

1. Do you think that most college students are more sexually experienced than you?
2. Do you feel uncomfortable with your sexual preference or your sexual desires?
3. Do you worry about your sexual performance or the way you look naked?
4. Are you unable to enjoy sex a lot of the time?
5. Are you attracted to partners who are rejecting or inconsiderate?

6. Do you often settle for being the confidante rather than the romantic partner of someone you like?
7. Do you avoid breaking up when you know you should?
8. Do you feel worse about yourself after spending time with your girlfriend or boyfriend?

DEPRESSION

1. Have your grades gone down because of depression or have you become depressed because you're floundering academically?
2. Do you feel depressed, sad, or blue more than once in awhile?
3. Have you become generally more pessimistic, negative, or hopeless?
4. Are you having more trouble than usual concentrating or remembering things?
5. Is it hard for you to fall asleep or stay asleep most nights?
6. Do you feel like staying in bed even after a night's sleep?
7. Have you lost your appetite or, conversely, do you compulsively overeat?
8. Is your energy abnormally low or are you worn out too easily?
9. Are you more irritable, impatient, or unsociable than usual?
10. Do you use alcohol or drugs to improve your mood?
11. Are you tormented by self-doubt, guilt, regret, or shame?
12. Do you obsess about things you should or should not have done or said?
13. Are your thoughts racing or are you too hyper to fall asleep?
14. Do you feel like life isn't worth living like this?
15. Do you have thoughts about killing yourself or wish you could die in an accident or from an illness.
16. Have you thought of ways to kill yourself or made plans to do so? IF **YES**, STOP THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AND GO TO THE STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE OR EMERGENCY ROOM—NOW!

ANXIETY AND INSOMNIA

1. Are you worried, stressed out, or anxious almost all the time?
2. Do your anxiety symptoms make you worry that something is wrong with you?
3. Do you avoid crowds or enclosed places because you're afraid of being trapped?
4. Do you get palpitations, chest pain, or tightness when you're feeling stressed?
5. Do you avoid parties or other gatherings because you feel too self-conscious?
6. Are you paralyzed by the idea of giving a presentation or talk in class?
7. Do you have trouble getting thoughts, words, or bits of music out of your head?
8. Do you have trouble sleeping most nights?

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

1. Do you drink or smoke pot more than a couple of times a week?
2. Do you almost always drink to get drunk?
3. Do you need to get intoxicated in order to socialize?
4. Have you tried to avoid alcohol or drugs to prove you don't have a problem?
5. Do you worry that your alcohol or drug use might have gotten out of hand?
6. Have you missed classes, injured yourself, gotten into fights, blacked out, engaged in reckless sex, or driven a car after drinking?
7. Do you use cocaine or hallucinogens regularly?
8. Have you ever used methamphetamine, opiates, ecstasy, or other "hard" drugs?

9. Do you use medical or psychiatric drugs to get high?
10. Do you routinely use other students' stimulants to study or cram for exams?

BODY IMAGE, EATING DISORDERS, AND SELF-HARM

1. Do you often obsess about your weight or avoid socializing because you feel fat?
2. Do you look in the mirror, pinch your stomach or thighs, and feel disgusted?
3. Do you hate the way you look?
4. Do you skip meals, cut out foods, or diet obsessively to lose weight?
5. Do you vomit or use laxatives if you feel you've eaten too much?
6. Do you use stimulants or abuse ADD medication to control your appetite?
7. Do you cut or burn yourself?
8. Do you feel more emotionally alive when you inflict pain or injury on yourself?

After you've finished the questionnaire, add up the check marks, and write down your total score and your score for each section.

If your total score is at least 10 or your score in any section is at least 3—welcome to *What to Do When College Is Not the Best Time of Your Life!* You're one of the many students for whom college sometimes (or frequently) sucks. Don't be embarrassed: you're in good company. And don't give up. *What to Do When College Is Not the Best Time of Your Life* can help you turn things around. It will help you clarify why you're getting less out of college than you hoped for. It will give you suggestions on how to make things better. And it will let you know when to get expert help.

So read on. (It would be nice, of course, if you'd buy the book.)

WHAT TO DO WHEN COLLEGE IS NOT
THE BEST TIME OF YOUR LIFE

