

Dear Laramie County Community College Student:

This guide was developed to provide an overview of what you can expect when you are hospitalized for psychiatric and psychological issues and to address questions and concerns that you and your family, loved ones, or friends may have. We hope that you find the information helpful and supportive during this challenging time.

We are here to help you. Counseling & Campus Wellness (CCW) and the Dean of Students office (DOS) work together to provide many different types of support you may need when you leave the hospital. CCW provides support for the coordination of clinical treatment needs, and DOS provides support to address additional concerns you may be experiencing as a result of your hospitalization such as academic, financial, housing, roommate, and/or employment concerns. We work together to ensure your needs can be comprehensively addressed at this difficult time.

The other goal of this handbook is to provide you with guidance and tools to help you better understand and manage your mental health condition and symptoms, strengthen your resilience, and improve your mental health going forward. A hospitalization is never planned and can be disruptive and traumatic to your life as a student – however, with the support of your treatment team, your family/loved ones/friends, and Laramie County Community College, it can simply be a short detour on your ultimate path to success as an LCCC student.

We hope you will reach out and utilize the resources in this guide to support you as you continue to manage your health, well-being and academic pursuits.

Take care.

Aurie Garcia Munter, MA, LPC Coordinator, CCW

James Miller, Ph.D. Dean of Students

Laramie County Community College Student's Guide to Mental Health Hospitalization

Supporting the Journey

This booklet is a guide to help you through the process of a hospitalization for mental health reasons. The journey can be just a few days of "calendar time," yet for most students represents a very emotional time not measured by a calendar or a clock. As the quote alludes to, you also are now embarking on a journey that will ultimately make you stronger. But, the journey can be filled with "ups and downs." The tools and guidance in this booklet come from students just like you to help you with those ups and downs -- students who have been in the hospital, and/or have had friends in the hospital. Students and professionals created this guide which we hope provides useful information, and also reminds you that you have a whole campus of support behind you, and with you. It is our hope that this guide helps you stay safe, and contributes to your resilience as you leave the hospital. You are not alone. We are with you, always.

When the Japanese mend broken objects, they aggrandize the damage by filling the cracks with gold. They believe that when something's suffered damage and has a history, it becomes more beautiful.

Barbara Bloom

STUDENT LIFE OFFICE DEAN OF STUDENTS 307-637-2490

The Dean of Students can assist you while you are in the hospital. A staff member is available, at your request, to discuss your current situation, and to help navigate your return to campus life. They will also be able to contact your housing team, success coach, and others, if needed. All contacts are made with sensitivity to your right to privacy.

LCCC CARE Team Cheyenne Campus: 307-637-2490

The CARE Team is composed of CARE Team members from Counseling & Campus Wellness (CCW), Office of Student Accommodations, Campus Safety, and Faculty, and staff members. The CARE team addresses the needs of students who present disruptive or concerning behaviors, personal difficulties, and mental and or emotional instability. The CARE Team ensures that LCCC students receive needed care, streamlines and improves communication between the campus community, and follows up with students to ensure that connections and the disposition for ongoing resources are in place.

Orientation of Hospitalization Flow

Student admitted to area hospital

Hospital staff talk with student about LCCC resources and if the student would like to obtain permission to contact the Dean of Students Office (DOS). DOS is contacted and connects with student. DOS coordinates with various departments and provides support for:

- academics
- housing
- financial needs
- insurance issues
- employment concerns
- family involvement
- visa/international concerns
- referral to CCW (see below)
- social support

Hospital staff make discharge plan

- DOS sees student for follow up if needed
- Plan is faxed to CCW by hospital staff 307-778-1282
- DOS refers to CCW if clinical follow up arises

CCW assists every student to enact clinical discharge plan post-hospitalization

As needed, CCW:

- Schedules appointment with student
- Coordinates connections to treatment providers
- Provides clinical support while connections are made
- Follow up as needed to ensure student makes the connection

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Early Questions

Please note that the following topics may be helpful for students to think about now or in the future; it is best to check with your treatment team to see when addressing these questions might be helpful or not.

You have just been admitted to an inpatient adult psychiatry unit and probably have numerous questions. While every patient has his/her own circumstances, as a student at the Laramie County Community College, it is normal to have some specific questions and concerns about your hospital stay, such as the ones outlined below. Hopefully, this Guide will help you answer these questions.

When will I feel like myself again?

See page: 12 for recommendations on how to maintain a balanced healthy lifestyle during and after your hospital stay

What about my classes?

See page: 17, 18 for campus resources to help accommodate your academic needs during your hospital stay

See page: 19 for a checklist of items to discuss with your instructors when transitioning back into school

Should I call my friends and family? What should I tell them?

See pages: 7, 8 for a chart to track which friends, family, or other people you want to contact during your hospital stay, and significant points that you want to discuss with them

What am I going to do while I am here?

See page: 12 for examples of coping skills that can help you feel better during stressful situations

See page: 9 for a journaling page to help you express your feelings during this time **See pages: 24, 25** for coloring templates to engage with during your hospital stay

Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors. $African\ proverb$

Roles and Functions of the Hospital Staff

Nurses: The nurses do much more than give you your medications. They coordinate all of your care, communicate with the physicians and other team members about you, provide counseling and support, and are the people you should turn to whenever you have questions and do not know who can be helpful. A specific nurse will always be assigned to your care.

Social Workers: The social work staff members work with you to ensure appropriate communication with your family, your outside caregivers, and College staff and officials. Your social worker will lead your family meetings, and will be the primary person working with you on plans for discharge and follow-up care.

Attending Psychiatrist: You will have a faculty psychiatrist who is in charge of your care. He/she will see you briefly each day and will be kept informed of how you are doing by other staff, as well as be in charge of ordering your medications and other tests.

Patient Care Workers: These staff members assist the nurses in monitoring patients, taking vital signs, supervising meals and other activities, and maintaining everyone's safety on the floor.

Activity Therapists: In addition to running some of the group activities on the floor, the activity therapists are active members of your treatment team. They will assess you soon after admission and plan activities for you based on your individual needs.

In addition to the people listed above, you may be seen by consulting physicians about any medical problems you have.

There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in. *Leonard Cohen*

Concerns you may have

You may be wondering what exactly is going to happen while you are here in the hospital:

First, a member of the nursing staff will provide a general orientation. Feel free to ask this person any questions/concerns you might have. When you are admitted, you will be assigned an individual treatment team consisting of professionals who will take care of you during your stay. If you would like a written list of their names, you can ask your nurse.

During the day, you will meet with the members of your treatment team, including your doctors and social worker. You will also attend different groups organized by the activity therapy staff throughout the day. These can include anything from exercising in the gym to learning about various leisure activities that can help you when you are not feeling well. You will learn skills in these groups that you can use when you leave the hospital. To figure out which groups you are supposed to attend, check the whiteboard across from the nursing station or ask your nurse.

You will be checking in with your nurse throughout the day. If you have any questions, asking your nurse is a good place to start. He or she will also be the one who gives you your medication. Nurses change throughout the day, but they will always introduce themselves at the beginning of their shifts. You will also have the opportunity to meet other patients. Often, it is very helpful to talk to other people and realize that you are not the only one dealing with these types of concerns.

At the end of your stay, during the discharge process, a social worker will help you with what you are going to do once you leave the hospital (a discharge plan). This could include finding an outpatient psychiatrist or therapist, support groups, community resources, and more.

You have taken a very important step towards your recovery. You may be feeling overwhelmed; this is completely normal. Getting organized means having some important information all in one place. First, some very important things to remember:

- Your treatment is considered private and confidential. Staff will not give out any information about you.
- You are an important member of your treatment team. Ask questions any time you need to. The staff will encourage you to be an active participant in your treatment and discharge planning.
- If you are feeling unsafe for any reason, please notify your nurse.

A Quick Note About School

The most important thing for you right now is to get well and focus on your mental health. We cannot stress that enough! At the same time, for some students, it's actually helpful to work on academics or to think about your classes, so as you are able, and if it seems OK with your treatment team, go ahead and work on some of your assignments. You may need to have someone bring some work or materials to you.

You may request the Dean of Students Office (307-637-2490) be contacted so that notification can be sent to your college/school stating that you are unable to attend classes due to a hospitalization. A diagnosis and location will not be included in this notification. You will receive a copy of this notification in your LCCC student email.

For additional information on managing academic responsibilities, see pages: 17, 18, 19



Crisis brings opportunity and change. *Chinese Proverb*

Notifying People

Room Number:	Phone Number:	
about your hospitalization. You that you are in the hospital. Th	so, call the friends and family memb u might not be sure if you want to t nat is okay. You do not have to tell a time for yourself before calling any	tell your friends and family anyone if you do not want to.
adviser or another supportive not be done to obtain ongoing treatment team and is part of	Il and supportive to you then you me staff member within your school/constitution assignments unless this is specification your hospital plan for recovery. You well enough to be discharged.	ollege. However, this should ally discussed with your
is also important that you chec arrived safely back into your h notification to Housing staff as	you might want to let your Hall Dire ck in at your Community Center to ousing area when you are discharg s well. If you live off-campus, you m now so that s/he knows where you	let them know you have ed. DOS can assist with nay also want to let your
	ership responsibilities, you may als visor that you will be missing work	_
Even if you do not want certain somebody else to let them kno	n people to know you are in the hosow that you are safe.	spital, you might want
I want these people to know t	hat I am safe:	

Family and Friends Contact Sheet

BEFORE THE CONVERSATION
I want to contact
I want to talk to him/her about
I am concerned about talking to this person about:
This is what I'm going to say:

AFTER THE CONVERSATION		
We talked about:		
Currently I feel:		
My next steps/plan related to my conversation is:		

Journal Section

While in the hospital, journaling may be a useful tool for some students. This section is your opportunity to explore your feelings and thoughts. As always, it is best to check with your treatment team to see if journaling will be helpful for you.

Journal Page
Date:
My goal for the day:
Activities I did today were:
My visitors were:
I talked to my doctor(s) about:
Letill have those guestions and concerns
I still have these questions and concerns:

How Can I Cope and Stay Well After Hospitalization?

There are a lot of things you can do to stay healthy. This hospitalization will teach you many different kinds of skills to manage your illness once you leave the hospital and return to your life as a student. The hospital staff has numerous suggestions about coping skills you can try. They will help you think of activities you can do even with your busy schedule. Although it may be challenging to manage these responsibilities along with your health, there is a way to find balance.

Staying Well as a Student:

- **Learn** as much about your "mental health life" as you can. Work with your provider to figure out the warning signs that might mean a new episode is coming.
- Try to maintain **regular sleep** as much as possible. It might be very hard during highstress times like finals, but is still vital. Discuss any sleep problems with your provider.
- Always take your medications as prescribed. Know why you are taking them and what side effects you might experience. Discuss any side effects with your doctor before making any changes to your medication.
- Have regular appointments with a mental health provider that you are comfortable
 with. Don't be afraid to change therapists if you need to. Always keep your doctor in the
 loop about what is going on in your life.
- Engage in pleasurable and light-hearted activities outside of your academic responsibilities. For example, see information on the Wellness hub and Headspace as well as other forms of balance on the CCW Website: _ https://www.lccc.wy.edu/services/counseling/index.aspx
- Take the time to do the things you enjoy in life that are outside of your classes.
- If you are unable to afford your medical care expenses you may contact the Office of Financial Aid and ask about Special and Unusual Circumstances appeals https://www.lccc.wy.edu/services/financialaid/specialCircumstances.aspx

Which Coping Skills Work Best for Me?

During your hospitalization, you will start thinking about what YOU can do to help yourself when you are not feeling well.

What makes you feel better when you are experiencing distress?

Films and television shows

• Watch favorite films or TV shows

Music

- Listen to music
- Play or make your own music

Books/Magazines

- Check out books/magazines from the library or online
- Read books/magazines

Favorite places on campus or in Ann Arbor

- Explore new or old places to visit in Ann Arbor
- Share these places with a friend

Sports, hobbies, socializing

- Write in a journal
- Color or draw see pages: 24, 25
- Play card/board/video games
- Engage in physical activity

Creating a Hope Box

Your hope box can contain anything that might help you put aside painful thoughts or negative emotions and instead remind you of things in life that you enjoy. Decorating the box can be fun, as well. Here are some ideas for things to include:

- Photos or letters from people you care about
- Poems, books, or other passages that you enjoy
- Movies or music you like
- Note cards with uplifting words or thoughts, things that have kept you going in the past, or memories of happy times
- Special trinkets or mementos
- Your safety plan

Your box can contain actual objects or be a collection of links or digital files on your computer, cell phone, e-reader, or other device.

You can also download a FREE "Virtual Hope Box" app for your Android or Apple phone or tablet.

Discharge Plans

It is very important that you work closely with your treatment team on all plans for what to do following discharge. The following notes might be helpful:

I was admitted to the hospital on:
I will be/was discharged from the hospital on:
If you do not currently have an outpatient psychiatrist and/or therapist, your social worker will assist you with this. You will leave the hospital with a detailed plan of what you need to do, which often includes various appointments with treatment providers.
MY PSYCHIATRIST:
I have an appointment scheduled with him/her on:
The location of this appointment is:
The phone number of the office is:
MY THERAPIST:
I have an appointment scheduled with him/her on:
The location of this appointment is:
The phone number of the office is:
***Instructors may require a medical note to excuse your absence. Ask your hospital socia

***Instructors may require a medical note to excuse your absence. Ask your hospital social worker to help you get a note from the medical staff. The letter is very general and will not give any details about your hospitalization. The Dean of Students office can also help you navigate the conversation with your Instructor.

My First Appointment with Outpatient Providers

When I have my first appointment with my outpatient psychiatrist or therapist, I discuss these issues.	want to
Thoughts about diagnosis:	
Thoughts about medications:	
Other questions for my outpatient provider(s):	

Discharge Checklist

If you are about to be discharged from the hospital, there are a few last minute things that are helpful to do.

Make sure you have your appointment schedule. You understand where they are and how to get there, and you have a phone number (in case you need further directions or need to change times).
Be certain to get a medical note from your hospital doctor for academic purposes.
Obtain any information on community resources. Resources are also listed towards the end of this guide (see page 23.)
Be aware of what medications you are taking, why you are taking them, and the side effects you might need to look for. Ask your nurse for further questions.
If medications are being ordered from the hospital pharmacy, make sure you have these medications before you leave and that you have any prescriptions you might need. You may utilize the Tuesday Night Health Clinic to see a physician (See page 20 for more information).
Ensure that you have all of your belongings before leaving the hospital.
Ask any remaining questions you have about your mental health condition and needs. Be certain you leave with a full understanding of what your next steps will be. Know what you are supposed to do if you experience a return of symptoms. Make sure you know how you are going to get home (friend, bus, taxi, etc).

My Personal Crisis Plan

These are feelings and symptoms I might experience for which I need help:

will call these people:
Name:
Phone Number:
Name:
Phone Number:
Name:
Phone Number:
will do the following:
My psychiatrist's name (and phone number):
My therapist's name (and phone number):

CCW After Hours Phone Number - available 24/7: 1-833-434-1217
Cheyenne Regional Medical Center Emergency Room: 307-634-2273
LCCC Campus Safety: 307-630-0645 (Note: campus safety can reach the DOS staff member on call)

Academic Considerations-Resources

Once you leave the hospital, it may seem like you have endless things to do. It is completely normal to feel overwhelmed.

The First Steps:

- The most important thing is that you take care of yourself. While you may want to LCCC right back into classes, homework and everything else you have to do, it is essential that you put yourself first and manage your health.
- Take some time to rest.
- Do something relaxing that you enjoy.
- Don't push yourself to do anything. There will be time to get everything done. Be patient with yourself and what you are able to do.
- Don't force yourself to make any big decisions about anything.

Support for Returning to Academics:

Academic accommodations may be helpful to you as you return to the rigors of your studies. If your illness continues to impact your ability to perform academically at your usual level (creating a disability either temporarily or ongoing), you may want to consider having a discussion about this with a staff member at Office of Student Accommodations (OSA) on campus. You may be eligible for academic accommodation/s. Receiving an accommodation through OSA does not appear on your transcript. Such accommodations could help you regain/maintain your good academic standing. Information related to your diagnosis is not given to your instructors. You do need to have your doctor complete paperwork (available online) to see a specialist at OSA for this assistance. While records are required, you can begin the accommodation process without them. Please reach out for support whenever you are ready.

Office of Student Accommodations

Pathfinder Building Suite 207, Cheyenne Campus Student Hub, Albany County Campus Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 307-778-1223

https://www.lccc.wy.edu/services/disability/index.aspx

Academic Plan

When you are ready and have time it is often helpful to make a plan.

The first thing to do is list your courses and how to get in touch with your Instructors:

Course Name	Instructor Name	Instructor E-mail

Next, e-mail each instructor requesting an appointment. You could also go to office hours, but since other students might be there then, you might want private/individual time. When you meet with your instructor, you don't have to give any information about your condition, if you do not want to. Tell them whatever you feel comfortable saying. Remember that you will have a note from the hospital confirming you were there, but it will not include any information about your condition or why you were there.

Instructors are usually very helpful. However, if you run into any issues or unexpected difficulties, contact:

Dean of Students Student Life

1400 E. College Dr. Cheyenne, WY Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. 307-637-2490

My Instructor Meeting Checklist

When you meet with your instructor following these suggested guidelines: ☐ If requested provide your instructor with a medical note explaining your recent hospitalization. ☐ You may also request that the Dean of Students Office contact your instructor on your behalf to inform them about your recent hospitalization. Contact your instructor during office hours to schedule an appointment and discuss recommended strategies that can be utilized to successfully complete the course. ☐ Explain any concerns that you have about class work with your instructor. ☐ Ask your instructor about obtaining lecture or discussion notes or other materials from days that you missed. Ask your instructor about arranging deadlines for assignments that you missed during your hospitalization.

You don't always have to be doing something. You can just be and that's plenty.

Alice Walker

Where Do I Go From Here? Resources After Your Hospitalization

Clinical Resources

Counseling & Campus Wellness (CCW)

Pathfinder Building Suite 207 1400 E. College Dr. Cheyenne, WY 82007 (307)778-4397 CCW After Hours (833)-434-1217

Student Health Clinic

Clinic Hours: Tuesday Nights 6-8pm Walk in (No appointment needed): CCC Building 1400 E. College Dr. Cheyenne, WY 82007 (307)778-1683

Additional Campus Resources

Dean of Students Office

Clay Pathfinder Building, Room 207 Cheyenne, WY 82007 307-637-2490

The Dean of Students staff possesses an effective understanding of College policies, procedures, and community life and can work with individual students, student groups, parents, staff, and faculty to address conflicts, eliminate barriers impacting the pursuit of a student's educational and personal goals, and identify and connect with campus and community resources that promote resiliency and success. Staff members work with students to identify and plan strategies to address areas of concern or unmet needs.

Office of Student Accommodations

Clay Pathfinder Building, Room 207 Cheyenne, WY 82007 307-637-2490 https://www.lccc.wy.edu/services/disability/index.aspx

OSA offers assistance to students with medical and mental health diagnoses as well as learning differences. The services are free and confidential to LCCC students. The accommodation process is easy and information is available on the website, including forms for your physician to complete. Academic accommodations, screening for clarification of learning differences, tutoring, coaching, mentorship, and loaned equipment are just some of the services available.

Office of Financial Aid (Student Hub)

Cheyenne - Clay Pathfinder Building, Room 111

Laramie - Albany County Campus Building, Room 101
307-778-1265

https://www.lccc.wy.edu/services/financialaid/index.aspx

The Office of Financial Aid may be able to assist students who are experiencing unusual circumstances. Resources vary from year to year and students who are experiencing difficulties should contact the Financial Aid office and request a Special Circumstances Appeal to determine what funding may be available.

Student Clubs & Organizations

Student Engagement & Diversity Crossroads, Building, Room 107 E Cheyenne, WY 307-778-1119 https://www.lccc.wy.edu/life/clubs/index.aspx

Campus Activities Board plans cultural, co-curricular, and social events all semester long for the student body and is run out of Student Life. Stop by CCC 107 to check out all the exciting events. Clubs and organizations can access important club documents and information through the Campus Involvement Site. Clubs can also use the Campus Involvement Site to promote their events, which will appear on the mobile app **corq.**

There are many other opportunities at Laramie County Community College to get involved in campus life! Join a student organization

Additional Web Support

LCCC Wellness Hub: connectwellnesshub.com

Our Wellness Hub is an easy-to-use online and mobile experience. Students can access reliable, evidence-based, information tailored specifically to their needs and issues.

Online tools and self-assessments.

Student-curated educational content including videos on a range of behavioral health and substance use issues.

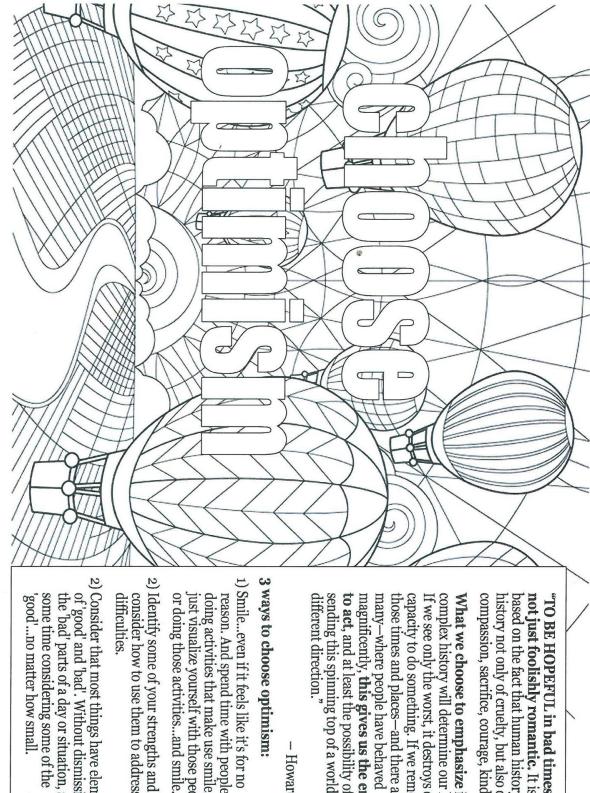
A list of available campus services and resources.

Headspace: headspace.com/login

Think of Headspace as your mind's best friend. Headspace is available whenever you need it, wherever you are, and can assist you in getting through tough times and in finding daily joy.

Crisis Numbers

Emergency Response:	911
Laramie County Sherriff's Office Non-Emergency	307-633-4700
Cheyenne Regional Medical Center Emergency Room	307-634-2273
LCCC CCW After Hours Counseling:	1-833-434-1217
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:	988



compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. history not only of cruelty, but also of based on the fact that human history is a "TO BE HOPEFUL in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is

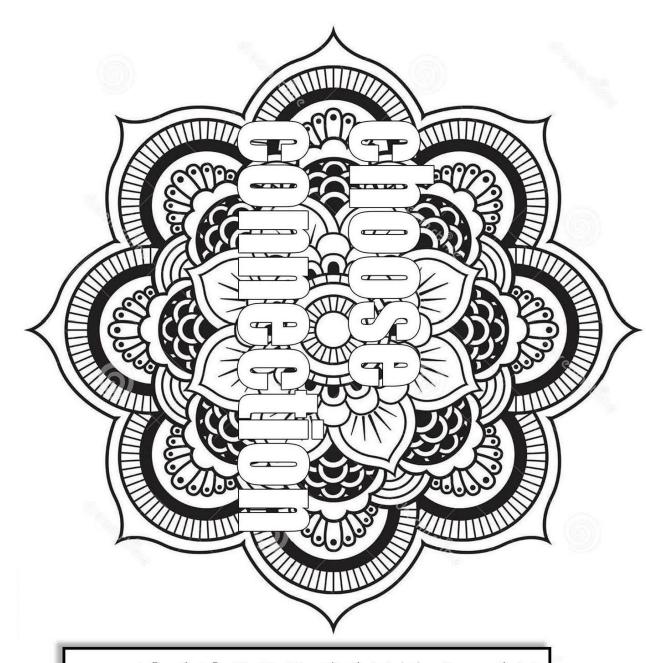
sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction." magnificently, this gives us the energy capacity to do something. If we remember If we see only the worst, it destroys our complex history will determine our lives. What we choose to emphasize in this to act, and at least the possibility of many—where people have behaved those times and places—and there are so

Howard Zinn

3 ways to choose optimism:

- 1) Smile...even if it feels like it's for no just visualize yourself with those people, doing activities that make use smile...or reason. And spend time with people or
- 2) Identify some of your strengths and difficulties. consider how to use them to address your
- 2) Consider that most things have elements of 'good' and 'bad'. Without dismissing the 'bad' parts of a day or situation, spend some time considering some of the 'good'...no matter how small





with people who refuel you. Prioritize time to connect

people who aren't your age. "Become friends with

whose first language isn't Hang out with people the same as yours.

This is how you see the world. social class. doesn't come from your Get to know someone who

This is how you grow." -Unknown

