

Homesickness

Each year thousands of students leave home for the first time to go to college. Most are filled with the enthusiasm and excitement of the college environment and their new-found independence. However, for many the excitement is quickly over-shadowed by homesickness and feelings of insecurity. Homesickness is one of the most common adjustment problems experienced by students, particularly new students, who are moving away from home for the first time.

Some students may start by being mildly depressed and anxious several weeks before leaving home in anticipation of a major change in their lives. Some will experience homesickness within the first days or weeks and still others may find themselves feeling homesick for the first time late in the semester, perhaps after the holiday break or even as late as the start of the second academic year.

Almost everyone experiences some homesickness at some point in his or her life. In a way, homesickness is a positive emotion in that it implies that there is a place that you find familiar and comforting, where there are friends and family you care about. On the other hand, homesickness doesn't feel very good. You feel sad, vulnerable, like you don't fit. Minor problems seem more like catastrophes and sometimes leave you feeling anxious and depressed.

Here are few tips to help you cope with homesickness.

- Acknowledge that you are feeling homesick. It is a very natural and common response for students who leave home.
- Remember that many other students are sharing similar feelings, even though they may not tell you about it.
- Talk with an older sibling, friend, or student who has gone away from home.
- Put up some photos of home, family and friends on your bulletin board. Mix the photos with photos of your favorite campus buildings, activities, or events and new friends you have made at Guilford.
- Get to know the Guilford campus and the surrounding Greensboro community. Take a friend and explore interesting things to do and places to see. Share what you have learned with family and friends back home.

- Remember to get enough food and sleep. Proper rest and nutrition are important to emotional as well as physical well being.
- Consider getting more exercise by using the gym.
- Seek some involvement in a student organization or activity. If you are living on campus, your residence hall is often good place to get involved.
- Keep in touch with the people back home but place a limit on telephone usage. Tell or write to them about your activities and experiences.
- Set up e-mail connections with friends at other colleges and universities. Share your experiences and activities with them.
- Plan a date to go home and make arrangements. This helps to curtail impulsive home visits and helps ease the adjustment process.
- Give yourself time to adjust. Overcoming homesickness is a gradual process for most.
- [If your homesickness persists or interferes with the academic performance or social relationships, consider talking with a counselor in the Counseling Center. \(336\) 316-2163](#)