

Coping with Feelings of Homesickness

- **Acknowledge That You Feel Homesick.** Missing family and friends and feeling sad are natural responses to leaving home.
- **Talk about It.** Talk with your R.A., a friend, a parent, a brother or a sister who has experienced leaving home. The Wellness Center is also a great resource if you need someone to talk to.
- **Keep in Touch.** You may call home a lot during the first week or two. Share with your family the fact that you miss them. Then, try to decrease phone calls and increase writing letters and e-mail messages describing your activities and experience. Share how important it is for you to hear back from loved ones.
- **Bring Familiar Items.** Bring pictures of family, friends and animals. Bring plants, stuffed animals, old comforters, etc. to help ease the transition from home to college.
- **Give Yourself Time.** To expect to stop missing home immediately may be unrealistic. Realize that new situations take time to get use to and that you will probably always miss home to some extent. Over time, feelings of homesickness will decrease in intensity and number of episodes.
- **What Do You Expect From Yourself?** We would all like to be popular, well-adjusted and get nothing less than a 'B'. That doesn't happen, even for those who look like they have it all together. Give yourself permission to make mistakes and to not be perfect.
- **Invite People To Explore With You.** Ask someone you've eaten with, had class with or lives in your hall to go along with you as you explore the campus and Winona; this will help you feel familiar with the campus and the town and feel better about your surroundings.
- **Set Dates to Go Home.** This will help you plan special times to go home and give you something to look forward to. At the same time, this will help you stay on campus and feel more comfortable in your new environment.
- **Do Something.** Don't ignore your feelings by just wishing they would go away. If you bury your problems now, they will often return disguised as something else—stomachaches, lack of motivation, fatigue, depression, anxiety, etc.
- **Get Support & Get Involved.** The more places you go and the more things you do, the more people you will meet. Get involved in your favorite activity or try out a new one.