

AUM NIBUS

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May 2014

Warhawk Issue - 13

More Than College Blues

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Imagine having a huge, unbearable weight placed on your back everyday from the moment you woke up, one invisible to the rest of the world. Usually, you could manage to act completely normal around others as it anchored you down and caused you pain. After carrying it long enough, you steadily become numb and begin to ignore other feelings altogether. This is how depression affects people.

Depression is more than just feeling a little sad or down; it's a serious illness that affects your actions, thoughts and even health for a prolonged period of time. College is all about change. Students are in various stages of transition—living in a new environment, being surrounded by new people, or even receiving new workloads—and sometimes this leaves them in a very vulnerable state. Pressures, anxieties, financial struggles—there are many factors that can cause a student to suddenly feel overwhelmed. These are prime instances for depression to set in. Sometimes it comes in the form of extreme apathy or an empty feeling. In other instances, it can be a constant feeling of guilt or hopelessness. Whatever feelings depression triggers, it will not only impede on students' academics, but every aspect of their life as well. Luckily, an early diagnosis and treatment of depression can relieve and even prevent it from returning. Hence, it's vital that students immediately get the help they need.

AUM offers free advising to all enrolled students through its Counseling Center whose staff is committed to professionally helping students in a safe and confidential environment.



AUM's Counseling Center offers free advising to all enrolled students. Courtesy of Time Magazine.

Finding the roots of clinical depression isn't always simple: there are a number of causes as well as many different treatments. "Sometimes it goes further than just talking to someone," says Alicia Washington, the Student Service Coordinator for AUM Counseling Center. "It may be chemical imbalances where students may need to take drugs for it, but counseling is always the first step."

In counseling, students undergo steps to better understand behaviors, feelings, situations and relationships that may cause them difficulties and thus can help them identify the root of their depression. There are many aids available to self-assess yourself; however, the best approach is to speak with a professional.

"During the session we figure out if the student meets the criteria of depression," Washington says. "It depends on where the depression stems from. Sometimes a student is so overwhelmed for such a long period of time, the stress actually causes depression. A solution to that may be

