

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH HISTORIES OF MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

While Earlham College provides limited support services, students are encouraged to proactively address their mental health concerns prior to coming to campus. Students preparing for the transition to college who either have had past mental health concerns or who are currently dealing with mental health challenges are encouraged to do the following:

- Start planning now for a healthy transition to college. Have an up-to-date treatment plan with your current mental health professionals and follow it.
- If you have put off getting help, don't wait any longer. The stresses inherent in leaving home, coupled with the transition to college and the related adjustments, may result in the worsening of your symptoms.
- Meet with your psychiatrist, medical doctor, and/or mental health professional(s) to review medications you currently might be taking, discuss anticipated stresses related to the transition to college and leaving home, and develop relapse prevention strategies.
- Contact Earlham Counseling Services to talk to a counselor who can help you develop a plan for transition. Counselors can provide short-term counseling and crisis assistance, and help you connect with other campus and community resources.
- If you have been meeting weekly with a mental health professional prior to coming to college, plan to connect with an off-campus mental health professional with whom you can continue to meet weekly for as long as you and the professional decide is needed. Earlham counselors may not be able to meet weekly with you for an entire semester due to limited resources and scope of practice.
- Consider continuing to meet periodically with your home town mental health professional during your first semester (or longer), even if the contact can be only by phone. Contact with someone whom you already know will lessen the stress of meeting with someone new, and dealing with all the other changes that going to college brings.
- Take your medication as prescribed. The transition to college is not the time to see if you no longer need your medication. Be careful not to self-medicate using alcohol, other drugs, or food.
- Develop a stress management plan, and get adequate sleep. Increased stress and lack of sleep often are factors in the recurrence or exacerbation of a mental health concern.
- Know what you will do if your symptoms begin to recur or intensify. Write down your plan if that is helpful, and keep it handy, rather than trying to remember it while also dealing with renewed symptoms.
- Respond quickly if your symptoms recur or intensify, rather than waiting to see what happens. This can help you to feel better more quickly and minimize the possible negative impact of a relapse on your academic and social activities.
- Become familiar with other campus and local community mental health resources prior to coming to campus. The Earlham Counseling Web pages as well as the Richmond/Wayne County Web pages (<http://www.waynet.org>) are excellent resources if a visit to campus and the Richmond area is not possible.
- If appropriate, register with Earlham's Center for Academic Enrichment, especially if academic accommodations are needed or requested.

Contact Earlham Counseling Services via the webpage, by calling (765) 983-1432, or by e-mailing [sanfoje@earlham.edu](mailto:sanfoje@earlham.edu).