

## ***Coping with College Series***

### **Finding Your BALANCE!**

by Marcy Hunt-Morse

*“You have a four-fold life to live: a body, a brain, a heart, and a soul....These are your living tools. To use and develop them is not a task....It is a golden opportunity.”*

- William H. Danforth

William H. Danforth lived his life by a four-fold philosophy: to find balance between one's mental, physical, social, and spiritual capacities. The mental represents our intellect, the physical represents our health and well-being, the social represents our relationships with others, and the spiritual represents our personal values and beliefs. As a college student it can be extremely challenging to achieve and maintain balance between these four areas. Some students may develop one area more fully than another. For example, a student may invest a lot of time and energy into socializing with peers, but give little time to academics, health or spiritual well-being. Over time this student might begin to feel the effects of this imbalance in terms of increased feelings of stress or anxiety. Grades might drop or physical illness might occur with more frequency due to poor sleep, eating, and exercise habits.

Does this sound familiar? If so, take a few moments to answer the following questions: How much time and energy are you giving to your academics? How much time and energy are you giving to the maintenance of your physical health? How much time and energy are you giving to your social life? How much time and energy are you giving to your spiritual development?

A challenge to each of us is to attend to one of the areas that we might have neglected in the past few weeks. For example, if you have not been attending to your physical health, set a goal of going to bed 30 minutes earlier or going for a 20 minute walk. If you have been neglecting the mental/intellectual area, go visit a professor or advisor you have been meaning to visit or read a news magazine or newspaper. If you have been neglecting a friend or person on your hall because you've been "too busy," call them up and grab lunch or dinner together. If you have not attended to your spiritual needs, find an hour for some quiet reflection time.

As you begin to attend to and incorporate new experiences to help you grow within the mental, physical, social, and spiritual areas you will be well on your way to discovering your personal balance. For those of you who may feel overwhelmed by the current demands in your life or would like more information

or assistance in finding your personal balance, contact Student Counseling Services at 438-3655.