

Coping with College Series

The Top Ten Ways to Combat Homesickness

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Those tell-tale signs are appearing. You start to miss your kid brother's pranks that frequently involved frogs or some hideous member of an insect species. Or you start to feel more forgiving about the missing clothes, CD's or yearbooks that magically found their way into your sister's closet. "What's wrong with my mind?" you ask. Fear not! It's probably just homesickness.

Homesickness happens to most people at some point in their lives. But it's down right annoying when you're supposed to be testing your wings, enjoying the exciting days of college. Yeah right!

In the spirit of David Letterman here is a list of *Top Ten Ways to Combat Homesickness*:

10. Stay on campus as much as possible your first month of school. Friendships get made at this time and it's harder to get involved and make friends in October if you've returned home every weekend in September.
9. Approach one new person on your residence hall floor each day and try to get to know them. You'll be surprised at how pleased other people are to be noticed by you, and you may stumble onto someone whom you'd like as a friend.
8. Suggest that a group of people from your residence hall floor go to supper together. Your "floor" might develop a habit of going down to dinner at about the same time each evening. That way you'd know there would be friendly faces in the cafeteria, even if you were running late some evening.
7. Volunteer for some project, job, or club on campus. Having some responsibilities can make you feel connected on campus. Besides, you may meet some great people!
6. Try to "get up and get going" even if you're not feeling enthusiastic. Sometimes the feelings follow the actions and withdrawing in your room may make you feel worse.
5. Instead of going home this weekend, discover some fun things on campus or Bloomington-Normal (the Constitution Trail, Gold's Gym, the David Davis Mansion, Blue Moon Coffee house) and write to friends or family about your discoveries!
4. Talk to your roommate, or a trustworthy friend about feeling homesick. You may hear how they coped!
3. Attend the Coping with College workshop series, sponsored by the Student Counseling Services.
2. Remember, it takes time to develop friendships. Be open to new people and experiences and friendships will form, but it won't happen overnight!
1. Be patient with yourself. Leaving home and starting college is like swinging on a trapeze; it's scary to let go of one bar before you've firmly grasped the next, but it gets easier with practice!

Welcome to Illinois State! Look for our "[Coping With College](#)" Column in the *Daily Vidette*! And have a great semester.