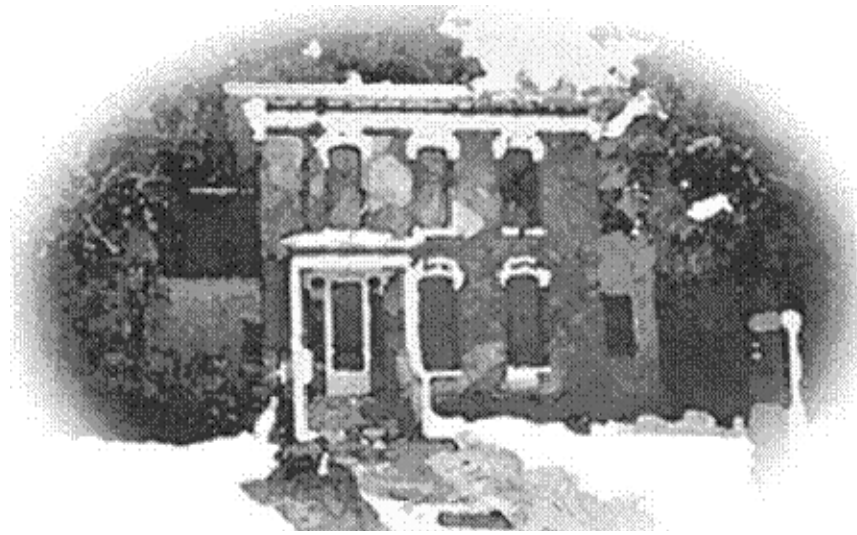


Adult Student Tips for Success & Resources



Compiled by The Margaret Sloss Women's Center

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TEN STEPS TO SUCCESS AS AN ADULT STUDENT

Students returning to school have a high success rate, because they bring more life experiences to the education. They are usually more self-motivated and tend to value the privilege of attending college more. Here are a few guidelines to follow on your way to success!

HAVE A GOAL

Having a goal is important. Are you furthering your career? Changing careers? Broadening your education? Having a goal in mind eases the stress you experience as you attend classes. With a goal and a reason for enrolling college, you can justify your decision with less pain and complaints.

KNOW THE IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

Make use of the student services available at ISU. Some of these include counselors, advisors, instructors, student organizations, tutoring, childcare, psychological and medical help, career planning programs, study groups, part-time campus employment, financial counseling and personal advancement through lectures, committees and conferences.

EVALUATE YOUR WORK HABITS

Take a serious look at how you use your time. This will be important when you are trying to work, study for an exam, and spend quality time with your family or friends. The Academic Success Center (28 Student Services Building, 294-1020) can assist you with time management.

MEET YOUR NEEDS

As an adult learner you will find that you will enjoy school and learn more if you make sure you find out about the course and instructor before the first day of class. Instructors teach very differently and students have different learning styles. What is a stimulating and exciting class to one student may be overwhelming and frightening to another. Talk to students who have had the course if possible, find out from the instructor what the course and classroom are like.

DEAL WITH PROBLEMS

Clear up problems as soon as you recognize them at school as well as in your personal life. We encounter enough challenges and problems in our lives without creating more by ignoring or denying the current ones.

BE PREPARED FOR ADJUSTMENT

Ask yourself, "What do I want out of life?" Don't get lost in an avalanche of papers, tests, deadlines, commitments and your daily routine. Take a step back and keep track of your goals. You may need to adjust your pre-college lifestyle to accommodate your new schedule. Ask for help from classmates, counselors, family, and friends. These people understand that you are changing your life and may need some understanding and support.

GRADES

As an adult learner the material you learn in the classroom should be more important than the grade you receive. Information that leads you to your new career goal is more important than whether you receive an A or a B. Do not get frustrated by constantly putting yourself into competition with other students or yourself. Grades are important, but don't let them make your life miserable.

CONFIDENCE

Overconfidence as well as lack of confidence can be a detriment in your approach to your peers and instructors. You do have an advantage as an adult student with life experiences. Never assume that you cannot learn from those younger than yourself or that you have nothing to offer them. Never assume that you can't relate to people who are not your age. Keep an open mind to new experiences and people and you may be surprised.

PATIENCE

Be patient with yourself and your progress. You will be eager to have your efforts rewarded. You have spent money, time, and energy and you expect results. The time and energy will be rewarded when the goal has been achieved. The wait is worth the reward.

RELAX

You are working toward a goal. Remember that anything worth having takes time. Enjoy the process as you prepare to achieve your goal.

TOP 10 WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF BEING AN ADULT STUDENT AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

10. Embrace technology. Jump right into the world of computers by signing up for short-courses through the Computation Center (Durham Center). These courses are free for students. They cover everything from using email and the Internet to word processing. You will be amazed by the amount of information you can access through ISU's homepage (www.iastate.edu). Hop on one of the AccessPlus Kiosks and explore what you can learn about accessing your personal information and general campus information. Open and use your personal email account.

9. Use your campus resources. Asking for help is a sign of strength! Successful people know when to ask for help. Try to discover your learning style (Student Counseling Services, 3rd Floor Student Services Building, 294-5056) and use it to your advantage. Seek information to brush up on your study skills. Sign up for the adult student section of Psychology 131, Academic Skills Development to quickly gain academic skills and information to help you succeed.

8. Brush up on your writing skills. Keep a journal to help sort out your feelings and thoughts. Do not consider a first draft a final draft. Good writers give themselves adequate time to rewrite and rework a project before it is finished. The Writing Center (300 Carver Hall, 294-5411) is an excellent resource for improving your writing skills.

7. Visit the Career Planning & Placement Office for your college. Start thinking about the job that you want to get when you finish your degree. Join student groups focusing on your major, strive to be admitted to the departmental honor societies, think about an internship or an externship during spring break, and begin networking with professionals in your field.

6. Learn how to use Parks Library. Sign-up for Library 160 early. Call 294-4527 for more information. The time you spend familiarizing yourself with the library's services will be time saved when it comes to writing term papers. Do not hesitate to ask for help when you are experiencing a challenge in navigating the Library's resources. The librarians and student employees are knowledgeable, friendly and want to be of service.

5. Get to know your professors. Take advantage of a professor's office hours. Stop by to introduce yourself. Try to ask questions in class. If you feel you need further explanation, drop by your professor's office during office hours or schedule an appointment. Use the time to also explain your personal life situation (commuter, parents, and full-time employee) and ask how your professor would like you to handle disruptions in attending class lectures, labs, etc.

4. Make the most of every class. Take legible and complete class notes. Contribute to class discussions and allow others the same privilege. Come to class with assigned reading complete and review previous lecture notes.

3. Enlist support from family and friends. In your effort to earn a college degree, your family might have to assume more responsibilities or learn to live with a messy home. Let them know you love them as much as ever and your going to college is an attempt to help the family out more. Involve them in the process. Bring them to campus and show them where you spend your time. Remember that in your effort to earn a degree, you are presenting a positive role model for your family and friends. As you add the role of student to your life, it is possible that every relationship in your life will change. Sometimes these changes are positive. Sometimes these changes can be sad and evoke a sense of loss. Stay focused on your goal while doing what you are capable of to nurture relationships. Be prepared for the people who do not understand your decision and who resent your decision.

2. Become an informed student. Collect as many facts as possible when you have a problem and speak to as many people who can help you resolve the situation.

1. Be realistic in your goals. Collect as many facts as possible when you have a problem and speak to as many people who can help you resolve the situation.

How to Plan Your Time

1. **Schedule fixed blocks of time first.** Start with class time and work time first. These time periods are usually determined in advance and are not as flexible as others. Other activities must be scheduled around these periods. Then schedule essential daily activities like sleeping, eating and personal hygiene. No matter what else you do, you will sleep, eat and need to shower. Be realistic about how much time you take for these functions.
2. **Include time for errands.** The time we spend buying toothpaste, paying bills, and doing laundry is overlooked. These little errands can destroy a tight schedule and make us feel rushed and harried all week. Plan for them and remember to allow for travel time between locations.
3. **Schedule time for fun.** Fun is important. Brains that are constantly stimulated by new ideas and challenges need time off to digest them. Take time to browse aimlessly through the library, stroll with no destination, ride a bike, or do other things you enjoy. Recreation deserves a place in your priorities and in your calendars. It is important to waste time once in a while.
4. **Set realistic goals.** Don't set yourself up for failure by telling yourself you can do a four-hour job in two hours. There are only 168 hours in a week. If you schedule 169, you lose before you begin.
5. **Allow flexibility in your schedule.** Recognize that unexpected things will happen. Plan for the unexpected. Leave some "holes" in your schedule: build in blocks of unplanned time. Consider setting aside time each week marked "fun time" or "open time". These are hours to use for emergencies, spontaneous activities, catching up or seizing new opportunities.
6. **Study two hours for every hour of class time.** It is standard advice that you allow two hours of study for every hour you spend in class. Students making the transition from high school to higher education are often unaware that more is expected of them. If you are taking 15 credit hours, plan to spend 30 hours per week studying. The benefits of following this rule will be apparent at exam time. This guideline is just that, a guideline, not an absolute rule. Consider what is best for you. You may want to allow more study time for some subjects and less for others. Keep in mind that the "two hours for one" rule doesn't distinguish between focused time and unfocused time. In one four-hour block of study time it is possible to use up to two hours for phone calls, breaks, daydreaming, and doodling. Quality time counts for as much as quantity.

7. **Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions.** When possible, study in shorter sessions. Three three-hour sessions are far more productive for most people than one nine-hour session. In a nine- or ten-hour study marathon, the percentage of time actually spent on task can be depressingly small. With ten hours of study ahead of you, the temptation is to tell yourself, “Well, it is going to be a long day. No sense getting in a rush. Better sharpen about a dozen of these pencils and change the light bulbs.” In the nine-hour sitting you might spend only six or seven hours studying whereas three shorter sessions will likely yield more productive time. When you chose to study in long sessions, stop and rest for a few minutes every hour. Give your brain a chance to take a break and refresh. Finally, if you must study in large blocks of time, work on several subjects and avoid studying similar subjects back to back. For example, if you plan to study sociology, psychology, and computer science, sandwich the computer courses between psychology and sociology.
8. **Set clear starting and stopping times.** Tasks often expand to fill the time we allot for them. Saying, “It always takes me an hour just to settle into a reading assignment” may become a self-fulfilling prophecy. An alternative is to plan a certain amount of time for that reading assignment, set a time, and stick to it. People often discover they can decrease study time simply by forcing themselves to read faster. This can usually be done without sacrificing comprehension. The same principle can apply to other tasks. Some people feel they can get up 15 minutes earlier and still feel alert through the day. Plan 45 minutes for a trip to the grocery store instead of one hour. Over the course of a year, those extra minutes can add up to hours. Over a lifetime, they can add up to days. Feeling rushed or sacrificing quality is not the aim here. The point is to push ourselves a little and discover what your time requirements really are.
9. **Plan for the unplanned.** The best-laid plans can be foiled by the unexpected. Cars break down in the winter. Children and day care providers get sick. Subway trains go out of service. Electricity goes off and freezes alarm clocks. That is when it pays to have a back-up plan. You can find someone to care for your children when the babysitter gets the flu. You can plan an alternative way to get to work. You can set the alarm on your watch as well as the one on your nightstand. Giving such items five minutes of careful thought can save you hours in the future.

Source: Ellis, D. (2000). Becoming a master student: ninth edition. Houghton Mifflin; Boston, MA

15 Ways to Get the Most Out of Your Daily 24

WHEN TO STUDY

1. Study difficult or boring subjects first.
2. Be aware of your best time of day to study. You may be more alert at 5 a.m. than you are at 10 p.m. Find your peak time and use it!
3. Use waiting time. Always be prepared to review notes, read, study note cards while waiting for your bus, children, or at appointments with the doctor or dentist.

WHERE TO STUDY

4. Use a regular study area. Create a place or corner in your home where your body and brain will “know” it is time to study when there. Try to find a quiet area free from televisions, radios, and other distractions.
5. Study where you will be alert. Your bedroom may not be the best place to study!
6. Use a library. If you cannot create study space in your home, use the library!

HOW TO HANDLE THE REST OF THE WORLD

7. Pay attention to your attention. When your mind wanders while studying, notice what you are thinking of and make a note of it. Make note of how often you wander into other areas of your life and make a to-do list for after your study session.
8. Agree with living mates about your study time. Discuss with spouse or significant others, children, and roommates what your plan to succeed includes. Acknowledge that you will need time to study without interruptions. Set a schedule for time with family and friends to give them the attention they deserve.
9. Get off the telephone. Screen your calls and let your answering machine manage your time for you. Schedule time to return telephone calls during your day.
10. Learn to say no. Acknowledge that you are in the business of educating yourself, that you have personal responsibilities to self, family, employers, and your community. Chose activities to say yes to that give you energy, make you happy, and improve the quality of your life.
11. Hang a “do not disturb” sign on your door. Respect your decision to earn your degree enough to prevent others from disturbing your plan. The end result is worth the sacrifice.

12. Get ready the night before. Avoid crazy, harried mornings by setting out backpacks, lunches, clothes, and coats the night before. The end result is worth the sacrifice.
13. Call ahead. Save yourself time by calling the discount store ahead of time to make sure they have the item you need.
14. Avoid noise distractions. If your neighborhood has a high volume of traffic, dogs or children that distract you while studying, consider using white noise machines or soft music to mask the noise. Avoid listening to music with lyrics or that is too loud.
15. Notice how others misuse your time. You may have friends or family members who drain a great of time and energy from you. Make note of these individuals and set a plan to manage them in a manner that reduces the time and energy they steal from you. For example, if you are meeting a friend for lunch who makes a habit of showing up 45 minutes late, order lunch and enjoy your meal. When your friend shows up, explain to them that you are on a tight schedule and only have one hour of lunch. The next time you schedule lunch with this person, remind them of your time constraints.

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Penny's Pointers to Finding Time

1. Don't make promises until you thoroughly understand what you have to do, what impact the promise will have on your other commitments, and the importance of the promise to your own goals.
2. Remember that it is not the promise that creates lasting happiness, it is the completion of the action, as expected, that does. Make the words "Let me understand what you want, specifically" second nature when you take on any assignment. Always ask yourself "What can I realistically promise."
3. If you are running late or think you could be late, call and let others know. Try to reduce likelihood of others becoming surprised, disappointed or frustrated.
4. A cushion of comfort pads you in the right place. Always extend your estimate of the time that is required to accomplish your goal. Do this for yourself as your own internal yardstick, and estimate time requirements for all the links in the chain.
5. Learn to say NO to others and YES to yourself! If it is impossible to meet a deadline or fit more work into your schedule, say no or take on what you can accomplish. IT IS OK TO SAY NO – or try one of these statements:
 - I can do it another time
 - If only I had known in advance
 - I will arrange for someone else.
 - I will get back to you once I have had a chance to check my calendar.
 - I am busy that day.
 - I can do some of it.
6. The Top Three Interruptions:
 - Yourself: daydreaming, snacking, nodding off or rewarding yourself before the work is done. Take responsibility of the interrupter and focus on the task at hand.
 - Telephone: use your answering machine or caller ID to screen incoming calls. Outgoing calls are easier to control. Tips to managing the length of a call:
 - schedule outgoing calls for part of your day and make them all at once.
 - call before lunch or late in the day when people prefer short conversations.
 - leave detailed messages for others and ask them to do the same for you.
 - watch being put on hold and only agree if it is vital to talk now
 - develop conversation enders such as
 - What can I do for you?
 - You must be busy so I will let you go.
 - Is there anything else we need to go over?
 - I am sorry for sounding so hurried, but I am working against the clock.
 - Before we hang up...

I have got someone in my office...

- Other people: let them know you would like to deal with what they want, that it is important to you too, and that you will specifically make time for it, but not now.

7. Two ways to manage interruptions:

Set time limits

Set an appointment you can control. For example, if you meet with someone in his or her office, you can control when you leave easier than if the meeting occurs in your office.

8. Recognize that when an interruption occurs, it steals your time. Be kind to yourself, the person on the phone or other intruders, but be firm and keep your schedule.
9. BE REACHABLE! Being reachable saves time. Things aren't allowed to build up or get too complicated because you weren't there. Strive to call back or contact callers the same day. It lets the caller know that you are available and that they are important. Leaving a detailed schedule how, when, and where you are reachable is important.
10. Do a TO DO list daily. Don't write a new list everyday, just update the previous list. Prioritize the list. Ask yourself: Are you doing the most important things first? How urgent is this task? How can I get someone else to do the task for me? What is the worst thing that can happen if I don't do this?
11. Get accustomed to scheduling all of your time. Give your own personal enjoyment a high priority. Plan ahead and schedule it.
12. Give your mind a break and write everything down. With everything going on in your life, information processing can be done easier by writing it down in your calendar, updating it continuously, and "looking" at it at least three times a day.
13. It is usually best to make commitments only after you have checked your calendar and other commitments. Begin to respond to requests using the following statements:
- Let me get back to you today after I have looked at my calendar.
 - I can tentatively set it up. Let me make a note to myself and I will call you later today if my calendar shows a conflict.
14. Don't agonize – organize!
15. Do the worst first!
16. Anticipate waiting time and use it to your advantage. Have paper, pen, book, blank cards, tape recorder, notes, etc. with you at all times to take advantage of waiting time.

Gaining the Support You Need From Family and Friends

1. Take time to think about the support that you need as you take on the new role of student.
2. Acknowledge that you need and will seek this support. Think through what you want to talk about and what you need.
3. Schedule time to speak with the people you will need support from. Select the best time to talk. Include in the discussion your class schedule and how it will affect the family/relationship. Discuss how reduced free time will affect family/relationship. Explain why school is important to you. Ask them what worries or concerns they have as you become a student. Ask what positive feelings they have about you enrolling in college.
4. Be specific about the type of support you are asking for: undisturbed time alone, encouragement, help maintaining the household, etc.

“I would like my older children to do more chores.”

“I would like my wife to ask me about my courses and talk to me about my experiences as a student.”

“I would like three nights a week to study at home without interruption.”

5. Reward behaviors that are helpful or positive from others by acknowledging them with thanks and appreciation.
 - Actions that are rewarded tend to increase. Reward actions you want to see again.
 - Express your appreciation again and again!
 - Say THANK YOU!
 - Buy or fix the significant people in your life their favorite food.
 - Give hugs and kisses. Give hugs and kisses. Give hugs and kisses.
 - Be interested in their lives. Be present in their lives.
 - Leave nice notes and surprise them whenever possible.
 - Tell them about your classes, assignments, readings, projects, research, etc.
 - Speak highly of them to others.
 - Let them feel your success as their success.
 - Ask what they need from you.
 - Send cards to express your love and appreciation.
6. Create a plan for success together!
7. Expect surprises! Anything can happen at any time! Be flexible and reorganize when needed. Whatever happens—keep going!

Maintaining Family & Relationships

1. Try weekly family meetings to discuss schedules, chores, and activities.
2. Use this time to praise family members again for their support and encouragement.
3. Create a family calendar together to post where all can see.
4. Schedule special time with each family member. Attempt to find one hour with each member, but be flexible as your academic demands increase and decrease. Children will be less likely to interrupt during study hours if you set aside specific time for them each week. Let the child decide what you do together.
5. Use time working together to talk about each other's days. Time to share is essential when juggling work, home, and school.
6. When appropriate, take a family member to class or on campus to show them what you do and where you go.
7. On weekends, take the family on a campus tour. Enjoy the free or affordable services provided: art exhibits, concerts, athletic events, recreation facilities, etc.
8. Do homework together.
9. Family and friends need to know that they are still important to you. Give them good quality time. Good personal relationships are an essential foundation as you juggle school, family, and work.

Multiple Priorities: Balancing Self, Family, and School

Stress can be overwhelming for the student trying to balance self, family, and school. The choice is to pursue your degree may be a good one in long term, but in the short term it may take a toll if you are not prepared to deal with the process adequately. How can students with multiple responsibilities succeed when they add the role of student? They must learn to cope effectively with the challenge of balancing conflicting demands that pull them in different directions. There are five major pitfalls to confront:

I MUST DO IT ALL WELL

It is difficult but necessary for those who need to be the “super student” to set realistic expectations for themselves. It might not be realistic to get A’s in every class or develop all your skills to the maximum levels given the amount of time and energy available. This could well be the first time in your life that you feel like you are not working up to your full potential. Learning to adjust expectations based on what is possible and still give your attention to the other aspects of your lives is a challenging task, but not impossible!

I MUST EXPERIENCE IT ALL NOW

There are so many opportunities to take advantage of in college that it often is hard to choose among them. The chance to study new, intriguing areas, to excel in school, and to achieve your goals is wonderful, but some limitations are often needed based on the constraints of maintaining relationships, working, going to school, and taking care of yourself.

I CANNOT SAY NO

The ability to say no to requests or opportunities is difficult for many people. College has so many demands that it is sometimes necessary to set limits. Saying no to fellow students or professors can be difficult because of what you believe they will think about you, or because of the guilt feelings that follow from denying someone’s request. Being able to say no to requests from friends and family also becomes important in order to avoid becoming overwhelmed so that it is impossible to cope with yourself. Saying no has consequences; opportunities may be missed or someone may be unhappy with your choices. But not being able to say no leads to mental and physical exhaustion that can develop into serious stress-induced illnesses.

I FEEL SO GUILTY

There are so many times in the effort to balance self, family, and school that you may start to feel guilty as a student. Unfortunately, guilt uses up vital energy, does not change the situation, and usually involves some self-deprecation and blame. The irony is that this is one of the most important times in your life to be forgiving with yourself, which guilt will not allow. Learn how to nurture yourself so that you can feel re-energized instead of drained. Do not give all of your healthier habits a lower priority.

LIVING IN THE FUTURE

When life becomes very stressful, people sometimes cope by thinking of a time in the future when stress will be less. Unfortunately, many people take this reasonable idea and develop an unhealthy habit of living in the future. They are waiting for happiness in their life at some point and this reduces the enjoyment of the present. Be present in your life! Find moments of joy and pleasure to help you through moments of stress and challenge.

You have chosen to attend college. Be accepting of the disruptions this decision will create in your life. How you cope with these issues will determine how much you will be able to enjoy the process and the accomplishment of your goal. Keeping perspective on what is real and important is helpful in evaluating necessary choices that need to be made regarding where to put your time and energy. One key to developing and keeping a healthy perspective is being able to slow down and enjoy the process. Keep in mind that college is a temporary process to a permanent life. The long-term benefits outweigh the short-term sacrifices. Proceed through your days in college with a positive attitude that you can do it all...just not at the same time.

Surviving Bureaucracy & Red Tape

Adult students often experience some degree of frustration as they prepare to enter college. First there are the meetings with the advisors, then the department heads, then with the Treasurer's Office, then with Financial Aid, and on and on. Here are a few survival tips to help ease the college process:

- Expect delays and challenges. You will be better able to accept if they present and you will be pleasantly surprised if they do not show up.
 - Get the names and titles of all people with whom you talk. If you get bounced from one office back to the same person you began the process with, politely let them know.
 - When you know someone's name, use it! This reduces the likelihood that you will remain a number.
 - Understand that the people you deal with are there to work for you, not against you.
 - Use campus resources.
 - Communicate effectively. Have questions prepared ahead of time and be specific.
 - Keep accurate files and documentation of answers, records, and other information you receive from various offices on campus.
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Tips on Assertive Communication:

- Identify what you want. What are your goals? Identify what you want.
- Keep it short, simple, and specific (The KISS Rule). Get and keep people's attention. Avoid abusive, aggressive language that puts others in a defensive mood.
- Look assertive. Make your face match your words, use confident body posture, make eye contact, avoid threatening gestures or nervous fidgeting.
- Sound assertive. Use a calm, conversational tone of voice. Speak loudly enough to get people's attention but not to the point of frightening others.
- Deal with one problem at a time. Allow the person with whom you are dealing a few minutes to reach a solution.
- Acknowledge and praise others for their cooperation, time energy, and ability. Be appreciative of a job well done.

Tips on Being a Successful Student

Plan to be successful!

- Find out assignment dates, test dates, and reading assignments and write them into your calendar
- Attend all classes
- Sit in the front of the room
- Prepare for each class period
 - Read assigned reading
 - Review lecture notes
 - Prepare questions to clarify information
- Take organized, clear class notes
- Study two hours for each hour of class a week
- Set study goals for each study session and stop studying when goals are achieved
 - Length of material to be read
 - Understand concepts
 - Outline chapters
- Prepare for tests by writing practice tests
- Feel motivated by personal goals
- Take responsibility for our academic and personal life
- Being a successful student is your job! Act accordingly.

Manage Your Time!

- Fill your calendar/s
 - Semesterly/Monthly/Weekly/Daily
 - Start with time that is not flexible (class schedule, work schedule, assignment due dates, examination dates, study time, etc.
 - Include family/friendship time (family meetings, special time for each relationship
 - Make "To Do Lists" every night for the next day. Limit your list to 6 items. To Do Lists let you know what you can say "yes" to and what you can say "no" to. They also let you know when you are done!

Do's and Don'ts of Classroom Behavior For Adult Students

Don't

- If you are absent from class, ask your professor if you missed anything important (every class is important!).
- Have side conversations during class. If you have a question, ask the professor not another student or you will both be lost.
- Overparticipate in class discussions. Give others a chance to contribute and yourself to learn from their input.
- Walk in or out of class while the lecture is going on. If necessary, explain your situation to the professor.
- Ask if the lecture today will be on something important.
- Call your professor at home unless you have been given permission to do so.
- Go over the professor's head unless you have to. If you have a complaint it is best to see the professor first if possible.
- Sit in the back row of the classrooms.
- Leave class early or unannounced. This is disruptive and inconsiderate.
- Act disinterested, pompous, or bored.
- Discuss your work with your professor at the end of the class period. Schedule an appointment during office hours.
- Assume your professor only teaches one class and has no other responsibilities on committees or research projects.
- Give the professor gifts.
- Correct the professor in front of the class.
- Bring children to class without your professor's permission.

Do

- Ask questions that are pertinent to the topic being discussed.
- Come to class prepared, having completed the reading assignments.
- Discuss your personal situation (parent, full-time employee, commuter student) with your professor to create a plan if you must miss class in the event of an emergency. Discuss how to communicate with the professor and the consequences of missing class time.
- Let the professor know when you must miss class or an exam in advance whenever possible.
- Expect professors to hold adult learners to a high standard.
- Be honest with your professors.
- Try to solve your own problems or at least come up with a reasonable solution when approaching the professor.
- Know your rights. Keep all copies of printed materials.
- Show up on time.
- Assume that all tasks/assignments are important and do your best to be sure that your work is done to your best ability and within deadlines.
- Realize that all tasks are not fun, personally rewarding, or exciting.
- Take the initiative once in a while to go the extra mile in class or assignments.
- Develop a positive mental attitude about school and your goals.
- Come to class with proper materials: paper pen, books, etc.

How to Maintain a Positive Attitude in a Stressful Situation

Stress is not bad for you. In fact, it is necessary for health and well-being. Too much stress is bad for you! How you react or respond to stress is the secret to maintaining a healthy balance. The situation does not cause the stress. Our reaction to the situation is what causes the stress. What is stressful to one person may not be for another.

Coping with Stressful Situations:

1. Make a list of everything you experience as negative, upsetting or stressful.
2. Examine your list item by item and ask yourself the following:
 - Can I do anything about this? How directly involved am I in the situation?
 - What would happen if I ignored this or avoided it?
 - Could I change the situation? Could someone else change it?
 - What if I changed my reaction to the situation?
 - Create a plan to change your reaction and do it!
3. Make a list of things that are positive in your life. What activities make you feel happy? What makes you feel good?
4. Review the positive list and ask yourself:
 - Am I ignoring or taking for granted positive experiences?
 - What do I enjoy doing? What do I feel enthusiastic about?
 - What would I like to do that I keep postponing?
 - Who do I like to share these positive experiences with?

It is important to take the time to do activities that are fun, enjoyable and that give you energy. Healthy people are both unselfish and selfish! They act in ways that are good for their well-being and still are helpful to others.

Beneficial Activities:

- Laugh and play with friends
- Listen to good music
- Student Counseling Services or other professional when feeling stuck or overwhelmed
- Physical activities/exercise
- Take a nap!

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH STRESS AND TENSION

TALK IT OUT

Find a confidant (clergy, relative, friend, advisor) and release those worries instead of keeping them bottled up. The solution is often discovered while talking out the situation.

ESCAPE

Lose yourself in a good book, movie, game, or take in a change in scenery with a brief trip. You will not solve your problems by standing there and suffering. But be prepared to return and lead with the problem when you are in a better frame of mind.

WORK OFF ANGER

Do not lash out at a provoker or a prospective provoker; let the impulse pass. Instead, use your energy doing something constructive, like cleaning the house, or taking a walk, or playing tennis.

GIVE IN OCCASIONALLY

Even if you believe you are right, it is sometimes easier and less stressful if you yield a little; others may yield in response.

TAKE ONE THING AT A TIME

An ordinary workload can sometimes seem unbearable if you are under tension. Remember this will pass; it is temporary. Take the more urgent tasks, do them, and then go to the next thing.

SHUN THE SUPERPERSON URGE

Do not expect too much from yourself. A constant state of worry will be the result. No one is perfect. Put your energy into those things you do well and that will give you the most satisfaction.

GO EASY WITH YOUR CRITICISM

Some persons expect too much of others, and feel let down when the other person does not measure up. Instead of criticizing, search out the other person's good points and help her/him to develop them.

GIVE THE OTHER PERSON A BREAK

When people are under emotional tension, they often feel that they have to "get there first" to edge out the other person, no matter if the goal is as trivial as getting ahead on the highway.

MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE

Many persons feel they are left out, slighted, neglected and rejected. The fact is others may be eager for us to make the first move. It is possible we are deprecating ourselves. It would be healthier to make some of the overtures instead of always waiting to be asked.

SCHEDULE YOUR RECREATION

Many persons drive themselves so hard they leave too little time for fun. They find it difficult to take the time. A set routine and schedule would help them. It generally is desirable for almost everybody to have a hobby that takes in their off-hours time; one in which they can throw themselves totally, forgetting work.

Budgeting With Less!

Clothing

- Buy only the clothes you need and will fit into your present wardrobe.
- Buy usable clothing from thrift store, garage sales, warehouse outlets, and discount stores
- Make purchases during sales time: clearance, end-of-the-month, or end-of-the-season
- Exchange clothes with friends and family
- Buy multi-season clothes (knits that can be worn more than one season, all weather coat with zip-out lining)
- Buy minimum care clothing (washable, dark colors)
- Consider saving by sewing your own clothes. Be careful when purchasing materials

Personal Care

- Buy personal care items from discount stores
- Buy necessary items such as shampoo and toothpaste at reduced prices when stores offer “specials”
- Compare cleaning ability per ounce as well as price per ounce
- Compare generic/store/national brand names
- Give haircuts at home and adapt styles that don't need to be trimmed as often
- Try inexpensive cosmetics
- Avoid fancy containers and packaging
- Reduce the use of paper products

Medical

- Explore the use of community health care services (clinics with reduced or sliding fee scales)
- Check medical insurance policies to avoid overlapping coverage
- Ask the doctor if he/she has free samples of prescribed drugs
- Discuss costs with doctor and what your policy will/will not cover
- Ask doctor for generic names of prescribed drugs rather than brand names
- Compare local outlets to find who fills prescriptions at lowest prices
- Save all receipts from medical bills and prescription drugs. Medical insurance payments, medical bills, and prescription drugs can be tax deducted

Gifts and Contributions

- Make gifts at home (sew, craft, and hobby skills, cooking skills)
- Give time and services instead of money
- Set a limit on spending for holiday and birthday spending
- Recycle children's gifts (books, games, puzzles, etc.)
- Coordinate gift exchanges with family, friends, and relatives instead of buying for all

Recreation

- Subscribe to cable TV if it reduces other entertainment expenses
- Cut back on dining out, find less expensive restaurants and those where “kids eat free”
- Exchange home entertaining with friends: card games, dinner parties, pot lucks, game nights, etc.
- Attend matinee shows at the movie theater
- Make use of public facilities: beaches, concerts, parks, ballparks, art centers, and museums
- Attend community celebrations
- Use local library services (book borrowing, magazines, videos, newspapers, music, etc.)
- Plan vacations to areas where friends and relatives have invited you to visit
- If you have the equipment, camping can save you money
- Childcare: use family or friends wherever possible. Consider coordinating a co-op system with other parents

Transportation

- Use public transportation if available or organize a carpool
- Commute with friends
- Use a bicycle for short-distance transportation
- Have a reputable mechanic assess a used car before purchasing
- Make sure tires are inflated adequately
- Buy oil and windshield washer fluid from discount stores and learn to change them yourself
- Compare car insurance costs and different deductible levels
- Learn to do minor repairs yourself by reading repair manuals
- Buy transportation, not prestige

Housing

- Consider purchasing a fixer-up home
- Explore becoming an apartment manager to reduce or eliminate rent
- Share costs with a roommate or family member
- Seek federal or state subsidized housing if you qualify
- Examine housing costs and analyze if costs could be reduced

Utilities

- Pay electric and other bills on-site if you pass by the office
- Turn water heater down to lower setting (140 degrees). Check hot water usage and monitor use each month
- Reduce wattage of bulbs in lamps and switch three-way lamps to lowest setting
- Switch to fluorescent bulbs whenever possible
- Turn off lights when not in use
- Drip dry clothes
- When using the oven, plan to cook as much as possible while the oven is hot
- Use the microwave to defrost and reheat when possible

Telephone

- Write letters or use email as much as possible
- Keep a list of topics to discuss with long distance family, friends, and business acquaintances
- Downgrade or reduce services on telephone service
- Keep a record of long distance calls to compare to bills

Heating and Cooling

- Make sure that registers for supply and return air are not blocked by drapes or furniture
- Lower the thermostat a few degrees while entertaining a large number of people
- Keep room and closet doors closed so that space is not heated or cooled unnecessarily
- Close heating vents in rooms that are not frequently used
- Use weather stripping or tape to seal drafts around windows and doors
- Install plastic on windows to reduce drafts during winter months
- Dress warmly and reduce the thermostat. During the day when no one is home, lower the thermostat
- Set cooling thermostat as high as comfortable
- Plant trees and arrange landscaping to shade and protect your home
- Use window shades and insulated drapes/liners
- Place rugs against doors to reduce drafts
- Insulate attic, walls, and basement ceiling
- Tune up furnace, replace filters, and tape leaks in ducts
- Keep dampers closed when the fireplace is not in use
- Install glass door enclosures on fireplaces

Home Furnishings

- Get furniture inexpensively at auctions, warehouses, thrift stores, from family or friends, and garage sales
- Buy unfinished furniture
- Use newspaper classified ads
- Buy versatile pieces that have more than one use
- Buy bed sheets on sale to use as curtains

Cleaning Supplies

- Ammonia in water is a good cleaning solution
- windshield washer fluid, vinegar and water, or ammonia solution all clean windows well
- Chlorine bleach is the best disinfectant and toilet bowl cleaner
- Baking soda removes baked-on grease spots on the stove

Water

- Reduce hot water usage as much as possible
- Don't let faucets drip
- Adjust water pressure in shower head if possible
- Wash clothes only when you have full loads
- Use cold water for rinsing and washing whenever possible
- Encourage family members not to run water continuously when brushing their teeth or washing dishes

Food

- Reduce snack food and eating between meals
- Pack lunches for work and school
- Use powdered milk
- Use coupons and special sales
- Buy day old bakery items at reduced bakery thrift shops
- Grow vegetables yourself
- Cut meats yourself (stew meat, whole chickens)
- Grate your own cheese
- Learn how to cook inexpensive meals
- Prepare menus and shopping lists and stick to them
- Use the newspaper to find sale items
- Don't charge your groceries
- Avoid buying convenience foods
- Don't shop more than once a week
- Drink juice or water instead of soda
- Shop without children and impulsive buying spouses
- Take advantage of seasonal specials

Food Eaten Out

- Inquire what the specials are before ordering
- Find out what restaurants have specials for children and senior citizens
- Use coupons
- Drink water
- Dine out at lunch, as it is usually more affordable

Emergency Services

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
Story County American Red Cross	515-232-5104 426 Fifth St http://www.lincolnwayarc.org/	Disaster and emergency assistance
Emergency Residence Project	515-232-8075 225 South Kellogg http://www.public.iastate.edu/~tastaub/erp-1.html	Provides shelter, meals, and other basic assistance to homeless persons
Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.	515-956-3333 126 South Kellogg http://www.micaonline.org/	Family development and education, children health assistance, and employment assistance
Youth and Shelter Services	515-233-3141 420 Kellogg, PO Box 1628 http://www.yss.ames.ia.us/	Services include individual, group, and family counseling, diagnosis and evaluation, crisis intervention, prevention, & education, youth employment and training, runaway and homeless youth services, emergency shelter care, and family foster care
Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support (ACCESS)	Business Line: 515-292-0500 Crisis Line: 515-292-5378 1-800-203-3488 PO Box 1429 http://www.assaultcarecenter.org/	Assistance for victims of sexual assault, domestic violence and incest, including a confidentially located shelter, 24-hour crisis line, and counseling for survivors

Services for Children

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
Moingona Girl Scouts Council	515-278-2881 10715 Hickman Rd, Des Moines http://www.girlscoutsiowa.org/index.cfm	Coordinates Girl Scout program for all girls, age 5-17 in central and southern Iowa
Camp Fire USA	515-274-1501 5615 Hickman Road Des Moines http://www.campfireusaia.com/MamboV4/index.php	Provides a group experience for youths and an environment that builds self-esteem and enhances life skills
Boys and Girls Club of Ames, Inc.	515-233-1872 210 South Fifth St http://www.bgestorycounty.com/index.php?PID=1&cid=1	Provides services for boys and girls, aged 7-18 in Story County
Mid-Iowa Council, Boy Scouts of America	515-266-2135 1659 E. Euclid Ave, PO Box 3009, Des Moines http://www.scouting.org/	Coordinates Boy Scout Program for the Story County area
Youth and Shelter Services	515-233-3141 420 Kellogg, PO Box 1628 http://www.yss.ames.ia.us/	Services include individual, group and family counseling, diagnosis and evaluation, crisis intervention & education, youth employment and training, runaway and homeless youth services, emergency shelter care and family foster care
Lutheran Social Services	515-232-7262 1323 Northwestern Ave http://www.lsiowa.org/	Mental health and social services to children, families, and individuals

Childcare Agencies

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
Center for Childcare Resources	515-294-7167 1-800-437-8599 100 University Village http://www.centraliowachildcare.org/about/storycounty.html	Provides information to parents on child care providers and ongoing education for child care providers
Children's Services of Central Iowa	515-292-2828 4507 Hutchison St.	Provides quality, affordable childcare related services to children and families of all income levels
Ames Community Preschool Center	515-233-2901 611 Clark Ave http://www.acpc-childcare.org/	Offers programs for pre-school children as well as providing childcare
University Community Childcare	515-294-9838 100 University Village http://www.public.iastate.edu/~ucc/homepage.html	Offers full and part day child care for children between the ages of six weeks and twelve years old and child care for mildly ill children for the ISU community
Story Time Child Care Center	515-387-1259 84 Main St. PO Box 214	Provides child care for families in Collins, Maxwell, and surrounding areas

Mental Health Services

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
Richmond Center	515-232-5811 1-800-830-7009 125 S. 3rd Street, Suite 200 http://www.richmondcenter.net/	Mental health services
Center for Addictions Recovery	515-232-3206 1619 South High Avenue http://www.cfrhelps.org/	Group, individual, and family therapy for alcoholism and other chemical dependencies
Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Central Iowa	515-292-9400 130 Sheldon Ave. #306 PO Box 851 http://www.namiiowa.com/	Provides support for families and friends of mentally ill persons

Services for the Mentally Disabled

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
Mainstream Living	515-232-8405 2012 E. 13 th Street http://www.mainstreamliving.org/	Work activity and supported employment services for adults with disabilities
ARC of Story County	515-232-9330 430 Fifth St. PO Box 581 http://www.thearcstory.org/	Advocacy organization for all persons who are affected by mental retardation

Services for the Elderly

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
HOMeward of Mary Greeley Medical Center	515-956-6000 1606 South Duff, Suite 400 http://www.mgmc.org/body.cfm?id=70	Health assistance to help those who are ill or frail to stay in the community as long as is reasonably possible
Heartland Senior Services	515-232-2906 205 South Walnut http://www.heartland seniorservices.com/	Services for adults 60 years old and older including adult day care, county-wide transportation, an activity center and home-delivered and congregate meals
Story County Retired Senior Volunteer Program	515-292-8890 113 Colorado Avenue http://www.rsvpvolunteer.org/	Volunteer management for those who are 55 and older

Legal Aid

Agency Name	Contact Information	Services
Student Legal Services	515-294-0978 B11 Memorial Union http://www.dso.iastate.edu/sls/	FREE legal assistance for students
Center for Creative Justice	515-292-3820 210 Lynn Ave http://www.creativejustice.org/	Meditation services
Legal Aid Society of Story County	515-382-2471 937 Sixth Street Nevada http://www.midiowa.net/~legalaidstory/	Provides legal consultation and representation in civil matters