Climbing the Mountain

Summer is over and it’s back to the grindstone. A month into the semester and the uncertainty inherent in beginnings has diminished considerably and a sense of normalcy has been established. Part of this normalcy for me, and for many others, is the ever-present and varied degrees of anxiety.

Anxiety, like many things, exists on a continuum. Some anxiety is good and serves as a motivator. While too much anxiety can be paralyzing and detrimental to overall wellbeing.

I started off the semester closer to the paralysis end of the continuum. In reviewing my syllabi and painstakingly entering each of my assignments into my planner, I was hit by an avalanche of anxiety. “How am I going to do this?” was all I could think. I felt like I was standing at the bottom of an enormous mountain that I had to climb. This was the imposing image on which I focused.

In taking a step back, I realized that I was causing the anxiety by focusing on all that I have to complete in the coming months, I was unnecessarily weighing myself down. I know this mountain, and I’ve climbed it before. I’ve made it through two semesters of graduate school, and I’ll make it through this one. The trick is to climb one step at a time.

When I realize that I am anxious and that I have control over the anxiety, here are some things I do to relieve an anxious state:

- Focus on the breath/meditate
- Exercise
- Write it down
- Talk to a friend
- Go for a walk

The early stages of the semester are a great time to assess ways in which we help and hinder our progress. How do you contribute to your anxiety? What do you do to relieve anxiety?

Hopefully my experience with anxiety has helped normalize someone else’s experience.

V. Mattei

Welcome New Counselors!

Welcome! As you probably already know, graduate school can be incredibly intimidating. However, once you move past the general intimidation and uncertainty, there is an enriching side that makes up for the discomfort. This program provides its students the opportunity for tremendous personal growth, and that growth will be an invaluable and inseparable aspect of your personal and professional lives.

When I started graduate school last Fall I was intimidated and overwhelmed by the experience (I still feel this way from time to time). I had no idea what to expect, and I questioned my abilities as a graduate counseling student. If you feel this way too, know that it’s normal!

To ease your transition, see Tips for New Counselors on page 2.
“music can happen anywhere, anytime, with anyone, and anything.”
Billy Jonas

Tips for New Counselors

1. Cohort: Get to know your peers; they will be a source of strength and support throughout your graduate school experience. Carpooling is a great way to form connections and conserve resources, with the added bonus of a built-in study group.

2. Self-care: You will no doubt hear these words again! Self-care is particularly important for people in helping professions, and there’s no better time than the present to start nourishing your mind, body, and spirit. Remember that you’re still a person, even while you’re in graduate school, so make time to enjoy yourself!!

3. Vulnerability: Be willing to be open and honestly share yourself with others. Get comfortable giving and receiving feedback. This is where a lot of the growth happens.

4. Organization: Plan out your time and your assignments wisely. Saving assignments for the last minute breeds more anxiety than it’s worth! (I’m still working on this one)

5. Trust yourself and the process: You can do this! Many have come before you and have made it through, as will you.

Break by the Lake

What: WCU Counseling Program’s annual conference for student service personnel and mental health personnel interested in working with children and adolescents

When: Friday, September 28, 2012, 8:15 AM to 3 PM

Where: Lake Logan Episcopal Center, Canton, NC

Cost: $25 for students/retirees, $35 early registration (ends 9/20), $45 onsite

Who: Singer, songwriter, and teacher Billy Jonas will talk about the impact of music in the classroom.

Information available at: http://www.wcu.edu/6888.asp and breakbythelake.wcu.edu

Important Dates and Information

FIELD PLACEMENT
Spring 2013 practicum and internship applications are due October 1, 2012. Field placement forms can be found in the Resources section of the Counseling website: http://www.wcu.edu/6892.asp

GRADUATION
For students who plan to graduate in December, the application for graduation deadline is October 1, 2012.

LIABILITY INSURANCE
For students who will be in practicum or internship in the Spring you will need to have liability insurance. Insurance is included in the membership costs of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). The student rates for these organizations are $93 an $60 respectively. Learn more at: www.counseling.org and www.schoolcounselor.org

NCE
Saturday, October 13, 2012
Charlotte and Greensboro

COMPS
Saturday, October 27, 2012 in Cullowhee

PRAXIS EXAM
School Counseling students must take the counseling portion of the PRAXIS II exam before or during practicum/internship semesters. For fee waiver information go to: http://www.ets.org/praxis/about/fees/fee_waivers/
Poster Presentation Opportunities

2012 Licensed Professional Counselor Association of North Carolina Annual Conference: A Deeper Understanding of the People We Serve

**When:** Conference: October 19-20, Student Poster Session: October 19, 2:30-3 PM  
**Where:** Koury Convention Center, Greensboro, NC  
**Poster Submission Deadline:** October 1, 2012  

**Lisen emailed the poster submission form to all students on 9/4 in an email titled Counseling Program info**

NCSCA 2012 Annual Fall Conference Professional School Counselors: Helping Students Find Their Way

**When:** November 7-9, 2012  
**Where:** Koury Convention Center, Greensboro, NC  
**Poster Submission Deadline:** September 24, 2012  
**Conference Brochure:** [http://ncyi.org/images/user/NCSCA12multipage8.pdf](http://NCYI.ORG/IMAGES/USER/NCSCA12MULTIPAGE8.PDF)  
**Poster Submission Form:** [http://www.ncschoolcounselor.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=1](http://www.ncschoolcounselor.org/)

Rural Scholarships

Five scholarships in the amount of $5,000 each are available to students who reside in rural areas and are committed to serving rural populations.

Military Scholarships

Five military scholarships in the amount of $5,000 each are available for students of CACREP-accredited counseling programs who have recent military experience. A commitment of 2 years of service to military veterans and families is required.

Application Deadline: November 1, 2012. Scholarships will be awarded in February 2013.

For more information visit the National Board for Certified Counselors Foundation Programs website at: [http://www.nbccf.org/programs](http://www.nbccf.org/programs)

Interested in Play Therapy?

Attend the North Carolina Association for Play Therapy Fall conference: **Play Therapy: More than Words.**

**When:** October 26, 2012, 8:30 AM– 4:30 PM  
**Where:** UNC Charlotte, Cone Center

Conference and registration information available at: [http://coedpages.uncc.edu/oeo/ncapt/flyer.pdf](http://COEDPAGES.UNCC.EDU/OEO/NCAPT/FLYER.PDF)

Topics to be covered:

- Play Therapy and Nature: Theory, Research and Practice  
- Integrating Faith and Psychology in Play Therapy  
- Using Play Therapy and Creative Arts to Nurture Emotional Development in Foster and Adoptive Children  
- Ethical Issues in the Play Therapy Relationship: Keeping Ethical Standards in the Forefront

NBCCF Scholarship Opportunity

“The goal of the scholarship program is to increase the number of counselors in priority underserved communities, currently considered to be military and rural populations.” (nbccf.org)
### WCU Counseling Contacts

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**Note from the editor:**

This newsletter is a resource of the WCU Counseling Program. If there is a specific topic you would like to see covered, or additional information you would like included in this newsletter, email me at vamattei1@catamount.wcu.edu. This is your newsletter and I am always open to your suggestions and submissions.

Sincerely,

Vicki Mattei

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*Onwards & Upwards from here... (Don’t look down!)*