

R U W E L L

THE OFFICIAL WELLNESS PUBLICATION OF STUDENT COUNSELLING

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RHODES UNIVERSITY

Where leaders learn



Welcome to Rhodes, and to new beginnings

A very warm welcome to Rhodes and to 2010. I truly hope you will have a successful year, marking the beginning of a promising academic and professional life.

There are a myriad of issues and activities that make up life at university. You are the generation referred to as the “born frees”, born after the official dismantling of apartheid, after the release of political prisoners like Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of political organisations. However, this dismantling of apartheid and formal discrimination did not necessarily make our society well, though, did it? I think not. Just look around and you will see that our society is not at all well.

So what did the “born frees” inherit really? I think this generation is still carrying some burdens left over from the past. It would be naïve to expect to be born into a completely free society with no challenges, no issues, and no “hangover” so to speak. It is simply too early to expect that you will not be confronted by any issues associated with, or born out of, our country’s painful history. It is unrealistic to say that we are a society that has fully healed itself and carries no baggage.

The problems of a society with a history such as that of our beloved country cannot be remedied by the stroke of a pen, the scrapping of discriminatory laws, etc. It requires more – more work, more pain, and certainly more discomfort. This means that the “born frees” were not really born free, but are more of a living social experiment – pathfinders, if you will. I call you an experiment because you are living your lives post-apartheid, but you have not really escaped it, because as a society we are only now going through the motions of a cleanup operation, as it were. Our society is certainly not well. But it is in the process of getting well.

Reconciliation was not an event; social transformation is not an event, it is a process. And so, in my humble opinion, you are an experimental generation. You are the generation during whose time all the reconciliation, transformation and social change is supposed to be happening. You have not escaped – in fact, you are in the thick of things. For the reconciliation and the transformation to work, for us as a society to never return to where we came from, you need to engage, confront and deal with the issues. It is obvious that there is no way around it. To ignore it would be to endanger the progress made and the possibility of ensuring that future generations enjoy the benefits that were so hard won.

It seems to me that if you as this generation of first-years want your “born free” status to actually mean something, and last into the future, you need to defend what was gained in 1994. You need to fight the ills that still plague our society, be they in the form of crime, corruption, poverty, HIV/AIDS, etc. There is plenty to deal with, so pick a cause and get involved! Make social awareness part of your education here at Rhodes; make it part of your development; play leadership roles and engage.

By Adv. Tshidi Hashatse, Deputy Dean of Students



A LONG WALK TO FREEDOM



EDITORIAL

A special Wellness welcome to all first-year students on campus – not forgetting our senior students, of course. Attending university involves more than just developing your intellect – it involves holistic development. Highlighted below are five wellness areas on which you will need to focus in order to develop holistically at Rhodes:

Establishing your identity:

Developing your identity means being comfortable in your body and having high self-esteem and a stable personality. This can contribute to your **physical wellness**.

Developing your competence:

Intellectual competence is your key to success at university and involves using your mind to master subject matter and having the ability to comprehend, organise and synthesise facts. This can contribute to your **academic wellness**.

Developing mature interpersonal relationships:

Interpersonal competence develops through meaningful, controlled relationships that allow you to learn to function self-sufficiently and to take responsibility for your decisions. This can contribute to your **social wellness**.

Managing your emotions:

Although you might feel that you are skilled at expressing your emotions, your experiences at university will show you how to balance self-control and self-expression. This can contribute to your **emotional wellness**.

Developing integrity and clarifying values:

You will have to identify positive values shaping your life and then live accordingly. Let positive values be your inner compass. This can contribute to your **spiritual wellness**.

I trust that 2010 will shape your life according to your vision and goals.

Wellness greetings!
Dr Colleen Vassiliou

Dr Colleen Vassiliou - Head: Student Counselling

Message from the Dean of Students

I remember, what I was in first year (so many years ago) how overwhelmed I was by the sheer numbers of other students around me, and how insignificant and insecure I felt when I heard them talking in the dining halls, or in class. Every time I tried to speak in a tutorial, I blushed a deep red (this is a blonde thing, and fellow blondes will understand!) and I forgot the clever thing I had planned to say. I wanted very much to be like everyone else. Slowly life improved, I found my voice, I discovered who I was (at least I think so ...), I learned to be critical and to question common or 'normal' practices, and I got that degree. And in the process, I got to know some really different and interesting people, and discovered that I didn't have to be like 'everyone else', or to think the same way they did.

University is tough, the challenges can be huge, and peer pressure can be overpowering. Your fellow students will try to persuade you to skip lectures, to over-indulge in alcohol, or worse. And the temptation to go with the flow will be enormous. Stop – think - make your own choices, and be yourself.

Remember, your own choices are just as cool as the choices others make for themselves. You decide for yourself when you want to study and how hard, and when you want to relax and have a good time. You decide how many drinks is the right number for you, and when you want to go home. You decide who you would like to be friends with, and why. Dare to be different – dare to be yourself. In so doing, your levels of personal confidence and satisfaction will increase, and your chances of success will too.

And if things go wrong – and they sometimes do – please don't suffer in silence. The various sub-divisions of the Dean of Students Office at Rhodes offer a wide range of support, and all sorts of people with specialised skills are ready to help you as soon as you come and share your problem with us. Each of you was given a "Support @ Rhodes" booklet when you registered. Keep it handy during your time at Rhodes, and make use of it when you need to.

To all our students, good luck as you embark on your studies for 2010. Make the best of the opportunities Rhodes offers you, and help us to help you make the year a success.

Prof Vivian de Klerk - Dean of Students



Meet the 2010 Intern Psychologists

From left Leila Bentley, Philippa Skowno and Siobhan Sweeney. Absent on day of photo Penny Mathumbu and Thirushni Sam.

TO BINGE???

A little 'captain in you' is fun



A lotta "captain" in you is NOT SO FUN



Exercise your way to wellness!

Regular exercise is extremely powerful in promoting a lifestyle of health and wellness, and protecting us physically and mentally.

The benefits of exercise in terms of physical health are widely known to include:

- longevity
- improved cardiovascular health and reduced risk of strokes
- lowered cholesterol and blood pressure
- increased muscle and bone strength
- improved sleeping patterns
- healthy weight maintenance

However, the benefits of exercise for our mental health are perhaps not so well recognised, and yet it holds enormous restorative potential. Exercise has been shown to:

- stimulate the formation of new brain cells, thus improving cognition & memory
- reduce symptoms of depression such as moodiness, irritability and fatigue
- reduce feelings of sadness, tension and anger
- relieve anxiety
- increase energy

As you begin a new year here at Rhodes, consider making a new sport or form of exercise a regular part of your curriculum this year and reap the benefits physically, emotionally, socially and academically.

Physical Wellness

Why so serious? The dangerous effects of alcohol and binge drinking

In our society, drinking alcohol is considered a normal and appropriate way to relax and socialise. Liquor stores, bars and even advertisements on television make drinking alcohol seem attractive and fun. However, it must not be forgotten that alcohol is a psychoactive drug, which has significant effects on the brain, mood and behaviour. This means that it has the potential for adverse consequences such as addiction. People have different reasons for drinking, and everyone responds to differing doses of alcohol in different ways. But people don't usually think about the negative side of drinking – especially in an environment where everyone seems to be doing it. Often.

Binge drinking is when alcohol is consumed with the intention of becoming intoxicated within a short period of time. Amongst young adults, binge drinking is becoming more common and is very dangerous. Binge drinking can lead to:

- extremely slowed reflexes and reaction times (especially when walking or driving)
- impaired judgment
- confusion and impairments in attention and short-term memory
- "blackouts" (not being able to remember details surrounding the drinking episode)
- alcohol poisoning (nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite)
- extreme mood swings and emotional outbursts
- impaired sexual performance (impotence) and unintended pregnancy
- physical injury (car accidents, falls and violence)
- social problems (interpersonal aggression)
- withdrawal symptoms (increased heart rate, tremors, insomnia, anxiety, seizures and transient hallucinations)

Because alcohol depresses the functioning of the central nervous system, in some cases of binge drinking, increased alcohol levels in the bloodstream can lead to low body temperature, anaesthesia, respiratory failure, coma and death. On the other hand, chronic drinking can lead to physical and psychological dependence, which can have detrimental effects on social, occupational and recreational functioning.

So take responsibility for your health and wellbeing by drinking in moderation. You can still have fun, without "a little Captain in you!"

Rea Buys - Intern Psychologist

THE HEALTH SUITE

The health suite offers opportunity for physical exercising at all levels of proficiency from beginner to advanced. The facility is well equipped for both aerobic and strength training, and is extensively used by "social/lifestyle" exercisers as well as competitive sports people. The aerobics and indoor cycling classes are particularly popular with social users who are allowed to progress at their own pace. Capable instructors and personal trainers are on hand to give advice and assistance.

Contact: Felix (046) 603 8367
F.Munyai@ru.ac.za

Megan Campbell - Intern Psychologist

TO BINGE???

6 drinks on a night out, every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday will cost you:

- R9 360 in a year
- And 156 HANGOVERS

OR NOT TO BINGE???

2 drinks on a night out, every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday will cost you:

- R3 120 in a year
- That means you have R6 240 to spend on:





Lisl Foss - Counselling Psychologist

Academic Wellness

Reduce Repeat Revise

People say that studying at university is very different to school. This is true.

In the first place, there is a lot more information coming at you, which makes it impossible to rote learn....it's just too much to learn everything by heart. So the first thing you have to do when studying for tests and exams is to REDUCE the information. This is best achieved by making summaries.

Read through a section of your work and then sit back and ask yourself what the most important points are. Make a short summary (only one or two words for each point). Then REPEAT the information by reading over your summaries a number of times until you're able recall all the points. During the test or exam use the points as prompts and elaborate on the topic required.

During the term it is useful to REVISE your lecture notes on a daily basis. Research shows that if we do our first revision of new information within 24 hours of initially acquiring it, more than 80% of that information will be stored in our long-term memory. However, if you wait longer than 24 hours to revisit new work, less than 20% will be remembered. So the best use of your time is to go over lecture notes on the same day, before you file them. That way, when it comes to studying for tests and exams, much of the information will already be in your head!

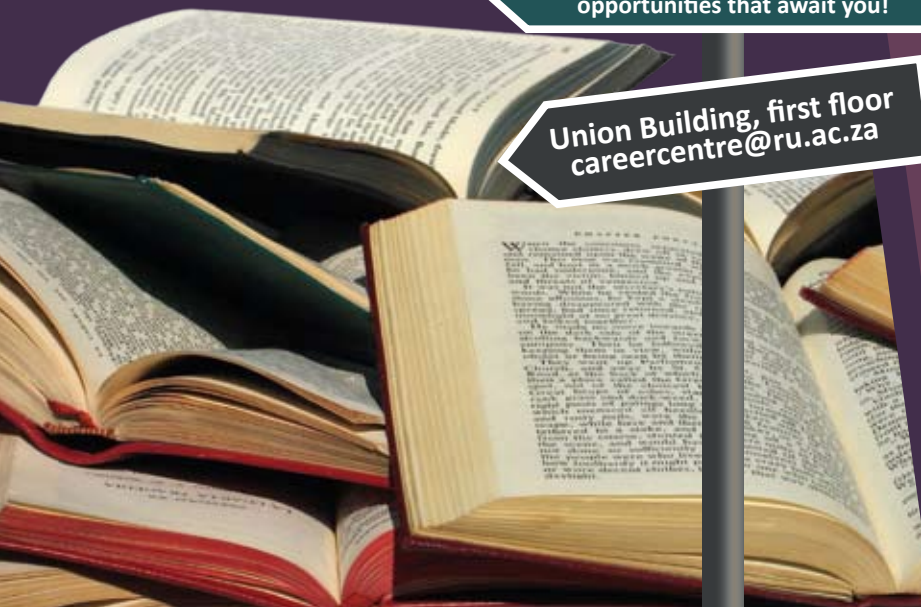
**The Career Centre:
A PLACE OF DIRECTION**

**Unsure if you are doing
the right course?**

**Not sure what you going to
do with the course you are
studying?**

**Please come and visit the Career Centre
to explore, discover and talk about the
opportunities that await you!**

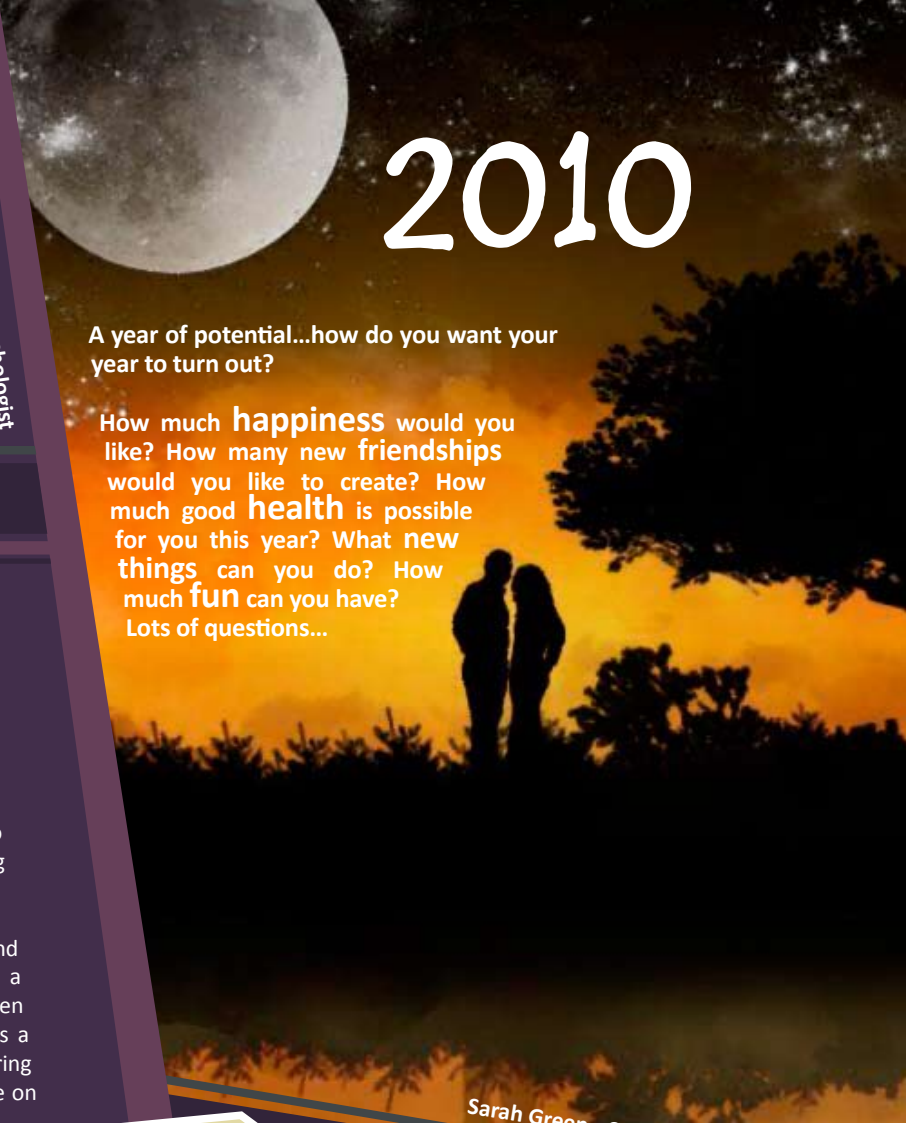
**Union Building, first floor
careercentre@ru.ac.za**



2010

A year of potential...how do you want your year to turn out?

How much **happiness** would you like? How many new **friendships** would you like to create? How much good **health** is possible for you this year? What new **things** can you do? How much **fun** can you have?
Lots of questions...



Sarah Green - Counselling Psychologist

How about starting now, today, and asking yourself some fundamental questions that will create the life you want for yourself? Start with: How can I look after myself this year so that I can be in the best possible health? What can make this year special, different or more challenging? What do I need to contribute to my academic career so as to make this year a solid learning experience for me? What do I need to organise or become involved in so that I can have a good social life? What are my best ways of having fun?

University isn't always about hard work and handing in assignments. It's also about using this time to broaden your horizons, to stretch your limits and expand your possibilities. So get out of your comfort zone this year and ask yourself at least one of the above questions.

Then get to work... and make it happen!



5 Love Languages

The content of this article is based on the 2004 book *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman. Those interested are encouraged to consult his book for more in-depth information.

The “Love Tank”


Chapman (2004) explains that within each of us is a “love tank”, with our interactions with others determining the level to which this tank is filled or not filled. While it is possible for us to live life with an empty love tank, this is not the ideal, and we all strive/long for a full love tank. A full tank means that we feel loved and appreciated, and have a sense of belonging and worthiness. The purpose of this article is to explore the different ways (different languages) by means of which each of us can fill our love tank.

Being “in love” versus having “real love”

Chapman (2004) distinguishes between what he calls being “in love” and having “real love”. Being in love is the initial stage of a relationship when you fall in love. There is little choice involved (you cannot choose with whom and when you will fall in love) and the relationship itself is effortless. You feel euphoric and see your partner as perfect. It is believed that the basis of this phase is biological and that we have evolved in this way to ensure the survival of the species. Unfortunately, the duration of this phase is limited and lasts on average for a maximum of two years.

According to Chapman (2004) “real love” is a choice. Real love does not come naturally. It requires effort, but has no time limit and is the most rewarding type of love. Real love can last a lifetime and keeps your love tank full. The key component to keeping this love, however, is accepting that it is a choice and then choosing to love. Chapman (2004) explains that love is something you do for someone else and not something you do for yourself.

Once you have chosen to love, this does not automatically mean that your love tank or that of your partner will remain full (as it was in the “in-love” phase). If you do not learn your partner’s “love language”, or if your partner does not communicate love to you in your own love language, your love tank will begin to empty. The next step requires you to effectively communicate to the other person that you love him or her. This step can become complicated, since we do not all speak the same love language. Just as you may not understand what is being said by someone speaking Chinese, you may not understand that another person loves you if that person is not speaking your primary love language, and vice versa – you cannot expect someone else to automatically understand your own primary love language. Speaking another person’s primary love language conveys the message that you love him or her, and this will enable that person to fill up his or her “love-tank” more rapidly and effectively.



Samantha Fox - Intern Psychologist

Social Wellness

According to Chapman (2004) there are five love languages. Each of these constitutes a broad category and there are thousands of ways to express each language. A person feels most loved when “spoken to” in his or her primary love language. This is also the language that we use naturally to express love to others.

1. Words of Affirmation

If this is your primary love language, you feel most loved when you receive compliments, encouragement and kind words. There are many ways to express words of affirmation, but these are the underlying characteristics.

2. Quality Time

If this is your primary love language, you feel most loved when you spend quality time with your partner, which involves focused attention, a sense of togetherness (not just proximity), quality conversation (sharing your experiences, thoughts, feelings and desires in a friendly, uninterrupted context where you feel heard and experience sympathy), and perhaps a shared activity.

3. Receiving Gifts

If this is your primary love language, gifts represent physical proof of love and are treasured. Chapman (2004) highlights that all the world’s cultures have a tradition of giving gifts at wedding ceremonies. He believes that this is because at the heart of love is the spirit of giving. Gifts do not equal money; indeed, it is often the gifts that have no price tag that are the most valued. The gift of giving oneself during a time of crisis communicates great love to someone whose love language is receiving gifts.

4. Acts of Service

A person whose love language is acts of service will communicate his or her love through helpful deeds (washing the dishes, cooking, cleaning, etc.) and will experience acts of service as an expression of love.

5. Physical Touch

A person whose love language is physical touch expresses love by physical touch and feels most loved when experiencing physical touch (e.g. a hug, a touch on the shoulder, a massage, or sexual intercourse).

We use all five love languages in our relationships, but each of us has one primary love language that fills our love tank most effectively and in the least amount of time. Most importantly, we must all be willing to learn our partner’s love language if we are to be effective communicators of love in our choice to have “real love”.




When new is not ok

Being in a new environment for the first time can be a wonderful, exciting and stimulating experience. For some, being new to university and adjusting to new demands, circumstances and challenges seem to be a piece of cake. However, many students, especially first-years, find the new environment challenging, and adjustment does not happen that easily. Students may struggle to find their feet and feel confused, lonely and unsure about whether this place is for them. Some may even start to feel excessively sad, anxious and disoriented.

Factors that could make adjustment more difficult include being the first one in the family to attend university, studying far away from home, having little supportive contact with family and established friends, or feeling different to other students, for example in respect of age, culture, background or language.

If you are having difficulty adjusting, it may be helpful to remember that you are not the only one and that it is quite normal to struggle in the beginning. Be gentle with yourself with regard to your expectations, take one day at a time, and remind yourself that it usually gets easier with time. Try to gather as much support as possible, from lecturers, friends, family or others. Get involved in activities that you enjoy. If the negative feelings persist, it may be beneficial to approach the Counselling Centre for help.



Tanja Smuts - Clinical Psychologist

Emotional Wellness

“Arriving at Rhodes”

Is it hard being new in town? Struggling to find your feet? You are not alone.


Change can be stressful. People can experience feelings of loneliness, sadness and anxiety when they move away from all that is familiar. If you add that to being at university for the first time, with new kinds of work and challenges, it is not uncommon for people to feel that they are not coping and maybe even “going a bit crazy”. If this sounds like you, and you feel like you need a place to chat to a group of people going through similar experiences, the “Arriving at Rhodes” group might be for you.

We meet weekly for informal discussions on how newcomers are experiencing Rhodes and we come up with ways to help one another grow accustomed to all the challenges that it brings.

We meet at 12 noon on Wednesdays.

For more information come to the Counselling Centre in the Bantu Stephen Biko Building or call our receptionist Delvene at 046 603 7070, or email her at g.gelderboem@ru.ac.za.

Matthew Leaver - Clinical Psychologist



Change can be stressful.

People can experience feelings of loneliness, sadness and anxiety when they move away from all that is familiar.



sadness
loneliness
anxiety

Thinking about yourself as a Student (or any other role for that matter)

You may want to try this exercise. In the space below, write down your definition of student (or another role you play in life):

Now you can ask a number of questions to help you understand yourself in this role. You could start with these:

- Where did I get the definition from?
- Who told me what it means to be student?
- Did I have a part to play in defining the student or was this determined by others that want me to fit this definition?

All sorts of questions starting with who, why, what, how and when in relation to the meaning of being a student can help you discover what being a student means to you.

Now, on the view that the definitions we assign to our roles influence our achievements in these roles, how you define yourself as a student influences how you are as a student. Hence it has an impact on your sense of achievement in this role, which contributes to your overall wellbeing in life. Thinking about your roles in life in this way may prompt you to re-evaluate your role definitions in order to live a more fulfilling life.



Graham Kingma - Intern Psychologist

Lantern Swinging

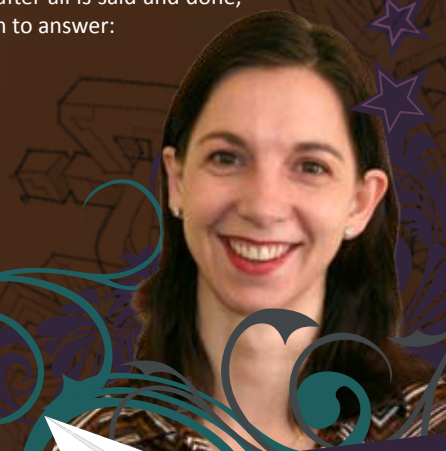
In 1904 a train was coming down from Westchester wanting to cross a bridge. The train crashed into the water, it was a serious accident and the lantern swinger was blamed for the tragedy.

In those days there would be a lantern swinger standing at the bridge to let the train know if it could pass. If the bridge was up, the lantern swinger would swing his lantern and if the conductor didn't see the lantern swinging he would assume that the bridge was down and safe for passage.

When the lantern swinger was brought to court he protested his innocence and when his attorney asked him if he did swing his lantern on the day in question he would state, 'I did swing my lantern'.

Eventually the lantern swinger began to sound as if he was doubting his story but after he was acquitted his attorney questioned him again, wanting to know if he was telling the truth. The lantern swinger turned to his attorney and said, 'I never lied to you.... You just asked the wrong question, you asked if I swung my lantern, you forgot to ask if my lantern had light.' We all need a lantern to illuminate our way through life. We go through the motions of living but after all is said and done, there is only one essential question to answer: Is your lantern lit?

Colleen Vassiliou
Counselling Psychologist



Spiritual Wellness



Meet the Health Care Centre Nursing Sisters F.I.t.r.: Sister Mauritz, Sister Mildred and Sister Shiella

The Health Care Centre

We open Monday to Friday
08h00 - 17h00

Weekends and public holidays
09h30 - 12h30 and 14h00 - 16h00

Vacation times: Monday to Friday 08h00 to 12h30 and 14h00 - 16h00
for emergencies only

Our purpose is to provide comprehensive holistic health care.

Our services include:

- Treatment of minor ailments
- Family planning
- VCT / Comprehensive care, treatment and management of HIV
- Follow up and monitoring of non-communicable diseases
- Pregnancy advice
- Inpatient care for acute illnesses **YOUR HEALTH MATTERS TO US**

Come make an appointment at Student Counselling

Should you require more information about the various group sessions, workshops, or if you encounter any emotional or psychological difficulties, please make an appointment to see one of our psychologists. Contact Student Counselling at (046) 603 7070 or e-mail counsellingcentre@ru.ac.za or visit us on the 2nd floor of the Steve Biko Building (Union Building).

Lastly, if you have a comment, question, idea, article or quotation you would like to share with us, please e-mail or place your letter in our suggestion box at Student Counselling.

Group Therapy Calendar 2010

Monday	14h00	Study Skills
Tuesday	09h30	Reaching beyond your potential
	11h00	Healthy Relationships
	15h30	Strengths and Resources
Wednesday	12h00	Arriving at Rhodes
	15h30	Art Therapy
Friday	09h30	Wellness Group
	14h00	Study Skills



Is someone sending you rude smses, nasty facebook notes, horrible emails? Does your ex-partner keep calling after you've told them to stop? Is someone making jokes in the dining hall about your HIV status, sexuality, religion or race? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, than you are being harassed and you should consider reporting the matter to the **Student Harassment Officer**.

LARISSA KLAZINGA
l.klazinga@ru.ac.za | 046 603 8181

Meet our friendly secretary: Delvene Gelderbloem

"You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of." – Jim Rohn