



Dear CCNY Community,

This week we present:

Letters to Home - Processing the End of the School Year

Endings can be both refreshing and difficult for a multitude of reasons. Endings bring about change, which can be associated with loss and can also be seen as the opportunity for new adventures. As the end of the semester approaches, this can have various meanings: the end of your first year in College, Graduation, an upcoming free and unstructured summer, or perhaps a decrease in how often we see our classmates/friends. Below are some helpful ways to find time to reflect, de-brief, and process this unique ending to the school year:

- **Slow Things Down:** Find or make time in your day, every day, to intentionally do nothing. You might try to use this time to take deep breaths, go for a walk, or sit outside and stare at the clouds. Explore mindfulness applications for your phone to provide you with additional guidance. If you want to do it ad-hoc, put on a timer for 10-20 minutes and practice stillness. In a society in which productivity and achievement are emphasized constantly, rest is revolutionary. In addition, recognize that getting by is enough during this pandemic.
- **Reflect on the Year/School Year:** Set aside a time during this month to think back on all the changes that have occurred during this last year. Reflect and honor your ability to adapt and make it this far! Journaling can also be an effective way to process the thoughts and feelings that have come up in the academic year. Perhaps there were achievements you are proud of and other areas that you want to improve. Or maybe you simply want to write down something meaningful or funny that happened to you and your friends/classmates. No matter what, the mere act of reflecting can be very helpful for your well-being.
- **Be Accepting of Your Emotions:** Transitional periods can lead to an unpredictable range of emotions. Keep track of your mood and the influences either in a journal or through daily check-ins. If you feel overwhelmed, take a break from whatever you are doing and try doing the opposite. For example, if you find yourself getting anxious thinking about the future and next year's classes take a break and practice focusing on one thing in the present moment.

- **Make a Schedule:** This will help us prepare for the summer and unstructured time. Most people do well with some form of structure in our day, as the boundaries of a schedule helps us feel a sense of order. Schedule in when you want to wake up, eat your meals, get exercise, talk to a friend, nap, do something creative and even schedule in your free time. That's right, put the TV watching or social media scrolling into your schedule so that you don't have to feel guilty about doing it and then when the time is up, you can move forward to the next activity.
- **Share Experiences:** Whether it's during a walk outside or a video chat, make time to reflect and process with another person – to listen to their thoughts, growth, and bumps in the road, and share yours. We humans are social by nature and one of the hardships with shelter-in-place has been the loss of community and human connection.
- **Communicate with a Professor / Network:** The summer can be a great time to reach out to a professor that you enjoyed learning from to hear more about their research, get advice on your academic path or even to ask for reading recommendations. Expanding your network during these times can be useful to increase your professional support and development. Ask questions and learn how others in your field or companies are adapting to employees being remote.
- **Recall Other Successful Transitions:** We can easily get caught up in the trance of the moment we are in and forget that we have past victories and successes. If the current moment feels turbulent, think back on other transitions in your life that you navigated successfully, from finishing high school to making new friends at college.
- **Find Meaning:** This does not mean to ignore the realities of this pandemic or take away the hardships many have faced. Finding or creating some meaning in the unknown and chaos can help us balance our mindsets and regulate emotions. This can also help us when looking forward and exploring possible next steps. It is important to note that even children find or make meaning through their play. You may note that they are playing out themes related to shelter-in-place or the disruptions of their routine.

Thank You! As we have reached the end of the school year, this Letter is the last in its series. The Counseling Center is appreciative of each and every one of you for taking the time to read our Letters and explore the resources. We hope these Letters to Home in some way honor your unique experiences and have provided guidance and comfort during this difficult time.

Additional resources:

[Podcasts Designed for College Students](#)

[Finding Purpose - Brief Podcast](#)

[Civic Saturday - Finding Community](#)

[My Life, My Stories Event - Virtual Intergenerational Conversations](#)

[How to Self-Reflect](#)

If you are worried about your safety or the safety of a loved one, **call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-TALK (8255).**

If you or a loved one is confined to an unsafe home, call the **National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233)**; if you're unable to speak safely, visit thehotline.org or text LOVEIS to 22522.

For immediate mental health support please call NYC Well 1-888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355). NYC Well provides free, confidential services to support mental health concerns. NYC WELL is available 24/7 and can provide assistance in over 200 languages.

You can also text WELL to 65173 or access the NYC WELL website at <https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/> to chat with a counselor.

Stay safe and take care of each other,
The Counseling Center