

# DAILY COLLEGIAN

Independently published by students at Penn State

Vol. 120, No. 13

Oct. 7-9, 2019

[collegian.psu.edu](http://collegian.psu.edu)

## MOMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH

*In light of Mental Illness Awareness Week, which began Sunday, The Daily Collegian aims to focus on the challenges and difficulties associated with mental health — circumstances many face within the Penn State community and beyond.*





# Alumna reflects on surviving suicide

By **Jordan Corley**  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

At the age of 20 on Oct. 6, 2016, Penn State alumna Andrea Cheatle attempted to take her own life. A culmination of events slowly chipped away at her mental state until a bad break-up pushed her over the edge and sent her into a dangerously dark place which left her contemplating her own existence.

“I just felt really alone and I didn’t feel validated that I was wanted or needed,” Cheatle said. “At the time it seemed pretty simple, but obviously it wasn’t.”

During her sophomore year at Penn State, Cheatle said she found herself dealing with strong eating disorder thoughts and depression symptoms. In response, she turned to her boyfriend as a mental crutch and when he broke up with her, it validated her already loud thoughts of “I don’t matter” and “I’m not enough.”

At the time, few people knew how much Cheatle was really struggling. She said nobody understood the thoughts the break-up surfaced.

Cheatle was hurting from more than just losing a significant other.

“[My mom] knew that I was really upset about the breakup and everything but I don’t think that anybody, except maybe my best friend, really understood where I was mentally,” Cheatle said.

Cheatle was at a park near her apartment in State College at the time of the attempt. Her friends were already wary of her mental state and watching over her closely and when she stopped answering their texts, Cheatle said they called 911.

During the period between Cheatle’s attempt and the ambulance coming, Cheatle said she felt numb, like the attempt flipped a switch and she went from having a mental breakdown to not feeling anything.

“I had a very strong feeling of indifference more than anything,” Cheatle said. “The only thing I can think of remembering [in those moments] is I didn’t want [my friends] to worry.”

Before the ambulance arrived, Cheatle’s friends found her, and her best friend rode in the ambulance with her to Mt. Nittany Medical Hospital.

Cheatle stayed in the mental health unit for five days. During that time, she said she made a difficult phone call to her mom explaining what happened.

Her mom did not know how to respond and Cheatle said when she told her dad, he was confused as well. She said her dad had a hard time understanding why she made the attempt, attributing it to her breakup rather than the severity of the emotions her breakup magnified.

“I don’t think they realized how deep [the problem] was,” Cheatle said.

Her parents came to visit her in the hospital and over time she said they have learned more about mental health and her psychological state during the time of the attempt.

After her discharge, Cheatle adhered to stipulations placed on her by her treatment team. She returned to her therapist and worked with a psychiatrist to switch medications.

Her friends were supportive and helpful as she re-adjusted to classes and being at school. In total, she missed three days of classes, but she was determined to stay at school and continue taking classes after

Two years prior, she temporarily left school to attend treatment for her eating disorder.

“[My friends] put themselves into a position where I guess they felt responsible,” Cheatle said. “I felt like I added this burden to their lives.”

She slept at her best friend’s apartment the first month after her attempt and her friend’s took her key to her apartment, refusing to let her stay in the apartment alone.

“They were scared,” Cheatle said. “I mean, everyone kind of was.”

Ultimately, she tried to become more involved with school and surround herself with a positive support team, opening up to her friends about her depression.

“I’m the kind of person that once things are out in the open, like once I can’t keep them a secret anymore, I’m a lot more receptive to support,” Cheatle said.

Now, Cheatle said she cannot imagine having the feelings she had three years ago. Looking back she said it makes her sad to realize the support and love she had, but could not see.

“As horrible [of] an experience as it was, it’s kind of interesting because it’s become a benchmark to [see progress],” Cheatle said. “It’s evidence right there that people can move on and people can get better.”

Throughout the month of October, Cheatle said old thoughts will creep in and she will think about the dark place she found herself in the past.

“It’s just sadness,” Cheatle said, “it’s not like those feelings are coming back.”

Moving forward, Cheatle has tried to be open about her experiences in order to hold herself accountable, feel validated by others and to inspire others to get help and feel less alone. She said she has begun rediscovering herself, her interests and what makes her happy by checking in with herself more frequently than she used to.



**Andrea Cheatle, class of 2019**, poses for portraits outside of the Bank of America Career Services Center on Wednesday, Oct. 2.

“I find that being open about things helps me, and I think that that stems from my eating disorder and depression and that stuff,” she said. “They all got their drive from keeping secrets and lying.”

\*\*\*

On the other side of someone in crisis, there are resources to provide help and support.

Center Helps is an off-campus resource for students, providing support and solutions for those seeking help.

The organizations offers a 24-hour helpline, staffed by trained volunteers answering phone calls for Women’s Resource Center and Crossroads Counseling, Alcoholics Anonymous, crisis intervention and others.

Maggie Schoenig (senior-psychology) began volunteering with Center Helps during the fall of her junior year, completing a semester-long training process before answering phone calls for the helpline in the spring.

She said she receives calls from people who are homeless and looking for a place to stay, people in need of food, couples looking for marriage counseling, those in a crisis and more.

Schoenig said she begins each crisis call by assessing how high-risk the situation is, determining if the caller is experiencing active or passive suicide.

Passive suicide includes suicidal ideation and thoughts while active suicide indicates a plan is in place and the individual has the means to follow through with it.

“We would try and talk them through it and [go over] things that they can do to cope with those thoughts and make themselves feel better and just give them hope for the future,” Shoenig said.

For those who call the helpline

with a plan and means to enact the plan, Shoenig said the volunteer will try and get the caller to remove themselves from the situation. In those instances, the volunteer will try and figure out the caller’s location by asking them questions about what they see if the caller will not share their location.

The volunteer would also reach out to outside resources such as Can Help, an organization with trained counselors and a vehicle to go to the caller.

“I just have to trust that I’ve been trained to know what to do,” Shoenig said. “I also have to remind myself that in order to best help this person, I do have to remain calm.”

In this line of work, Shoenig said it is difficult not to feel emotionally attached to some callers and carry their pain, however, she also said she knows she cannot be fully present for another caller and help them to the best of her ability if she is distracted by a previous call.

“I know that I’m doing as much as I can to help them and at the end of the day it still is their life and their decision and that pressure can’t fall on me in order for me to do my job,” Shoenig said.

Students also have access to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), an on-campus resource which provides group and individual therapy, crisis intervention, and psychological and psychiatric evaluations.

For students seeking treatment, a screening is initially done to assess their current mental state. The screening also asks questions regarding the students’ ability to stay safe. From there, the urgency and proper level of care are determined.

Dr. Natalie Depalma, assistant director of clinical services, said

CAPS takes responses to the safety questions very seriously.

“We all consider just the thoughts of suicide to be a warning sign,” Depalma said. “It’s important that we are able to assess any time that someone is having just the idea of harming themselves.”

For students having suicidal thoughts, CAPS professionals will work with the student to create a safety plan.

“A safety plan is a plan to help someone identify what kind of things they can do if they’re having thoughts about wanting to hurt themselves or die that would increase the likelihood that they would move away from those thoughts,” Depalma said.

CAPS offers support in a variety of ways as well. They offer group psychotherapy, individual short term psychotherapy for depression, CAPSLifehacks, CAPS chat, the online platform Well-Track and a case management program.

“I think it’s really important that students who are dealing with depression know that there’s help and that treatment works,” Depalma said.

She said she likes to explain the concept of equifinality to students, the concept that there are multiple roads all leading to the same path. In other words, there are multiple forms of treatment available and all can lead to a recovered space for the individual.

“There are so many different ways for us to feel better, for us to feel different,” Depalma said. “I just like people to know that there’s help, it works and you can feel better.”

To email reporter: [jec5789@psu.edu](mailto:jec5789@psu.edu).  
Follow her on Twitter at: [@JordanCorley7](https://twitter.com/JordanCorley7).

# New club aims to reduce mental health stigmas

By **Erin Hogge**  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

From hiking Mount Nittany to attending sporting events, a Penn State club aims to give its members opportunities to interact with each other in non-traditional manners — with a focus on mental health.

The Lift the Mask Club is a new student organization dedicated to reducing the stigma surrounding mental health through group conversations and activities.

“We’ll do things to just talk to each other, have fun, promoting mental health positivity and reducing our stress,” club founder Nicholas Corona said.

Additionally, each club meeting will focus on a different aspect of mental health and mental illnesses to increase conversation and broaden perspectives, according to Corona (graduate - health administration).

The foundation offers three student scholarships, ranging from \$500 to \$2,000, awarded based on differing requirements.

Students who have been affected by mental illnesses have the opportunity to apply for the scholarships, awarded by the Quell Foundation.

The foundation — specifically its documentary film, “Lift the Mask” — inspired Corona to start the club, a process he began in April. Currently, the Penn State chapter is the only chapter sponsored by the foundation, which Penn State alumnus Kevin Lynch created.



Collegian Creative

On Wednesday, Oct. 2, the club held a screening of the film and saw a healthy turnout of students, faculty and State College residents, according to the club’s Vice President Hannah Ross.

Speakers shared with the audience their experiences with mental health-related issues throughout life.

Ross (graduate - health administration) was one of the panel members, and she explained the impact social media has had on her mental health — thus “lift-

ing her mask” and encouraging others who might be struggling mentally.

“We want students to feel supported in lifting their own masks, sharing their experiences with mental illnesses,” Ross said. “[Mental health is] often misunderstood in large part because it’s tough to talk about.”

At the film screening, attendees were engaged and seemed “open and honest,” Corona said.

Because mental illnesses aren’t always visible, it can

be hard to understand what struggles an individual may be going through, according to Ross.

“It’s really important to get the word out so that people can [better] understand [mental illness] and not be afraid of it,” Ross said. “A lot of times, the assumptions [people make about mental illnesses] are unfair stereotypes.”

Corona added people today are much more receptive to those with mental illnesses.

He said he especially believes

this because more celebrities have opened up about their mental health struggles.

“Obviously, nobody’s perfect,” Corona said. “The whole point of the club is creating that open and honest communication [about our struggles].”

When Corona first came to Penn State, he had a tough time finding his “people” — something he hopes the club can help others avoid.

“[We want to give] people a place at Penn State [in which] they can be comfortable,” Corona said.

The Quell Foundation exists to encourage those with mental illnesses to share their stories, increase access to mental health resources and train first responders to recognize mental health crises.

Lynch (graduate-health administration) said he created the foundation because humans have the power to instill a sense of change in one another.

“I believe we have a social and moral obligation to act,” Lynch, 55, said. “As a society, we must help this population of people who often cannot advocate for themselves.”

Ross said she hopes to eventually partner with other student organizations to spread the club’s message.

For more information about the club and the Quell Foundation scholarships, students can visit Lift the Mask Club’s website or the Quell Foundation’s website.

To email reporter: [egh5129@psu.edu](mailto:egh5129@psu.edu).  
Follow her on Twitter at [@erinhogge](https://twitter.com/erinhogge).



# Coping with an eating disorder and living as a student at Penn State

By Kaitlyn Kudriavetz  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Haley Hamschin has to juggle a little more than the average student.

Since returning to Penn State from a semester-long leave of absence spring of her freshman year — in which she had to enter treatment for her eating disorder — her to-do list extends beyond the standard combination of homework and socializing.

“Since coming back, I have medical appointments, therapy appointments or support groups, every day of the week,” Hamschin (junior-psychology) said. “It’s a lot. It’s really hard to balance being in school and taking care of your well-being. People underestimate how much time it takes.”

Having an eating disorder is “life-altering,” which Hamschin said she believes people fail to realize.

“Full recovery from an eating disorder is very possible, but you have to put in the time to figure out how to balance taking care of yourself and being a student. It’s difficult,” she said.

“[Recovery is] something you’re working on for a really long time; even as you progress, it’s something [that you’re always working on].”

For Hamschin, an essential part of her recovery required leaving school after the first semester of her freshman year.

“It was probably the hardest decision I’ve ever made — and probably the best decision I’ve made for my well-being,” she said.

“Leaving school was [necessary], because I could not manage my classes, and my health was way more important.”

Despite being away at treatment, Hamschin had the support of her friends from Penn State. She frequently looked forward to Skyping into club meetings and visiting her friends on campus during the weekends.

Though she missed State College, she had a hard time coming

back and having to explain her absence to others.

“People were asking, ‘Oh, why were you gone?’ and I just had to say, ‘Honestly, I was taking care of myself,’” she said.

Hamschin makes a point to be open about her experiences and struggles with her eating disorder. She believes that if she is able to invite others to open up about their own struggles or feel less alone through her story, it is worth the vulnerability.

She said she thinks general misinformation and misconceptions about eating disorders cause people to shy away from engaging in important discussions that can promote awareness.

“Eating disorders are [not an issue of vanity, rather, they’re] a maladaptive coping mechanism; it’s a way to handle something in your environment that feels out of your control,” Hamschin said. “It’s a response to your environment.”

While the desire to lose weight does play a role in eating disorders, Hamschin said one gets to a point in recovery when they realize it’s not really about the weight.

“It doesn’t mean that you don’t struggle with [weight] — it just means that it’s about other things. For me, I’m a control freak; when I’m trying to control things, [my eating disorder gets worse and] that’s where I turn. It’s a way to cope,” she said.

Eating disorders don’t always look the way they look in the media, and those suffering rarely fit the trope of sickly thin.

Hamschin emphasized “eating disorders don’t discriminate” based on race, gender, body type or age.

“People were really surprised when I said I had an eating disorder,” she said. “They were like, ‘But you don’t look sick.’ Just because I didn’t look sick didn’t mean [my eating disorder] wasn’t seriously affecting me, affecting my functioning and affecting my physical health.”

Penn State alumna Andrea Cheattle described being a stu-



Lily Ngo (junior-biology) and Alana Adamo (sophomore-marketing) applaud a speaker at the PA NEDA Walk for Eating Disorder awareness at Sydney Friedman Park on Sunday, April 8, 2018.

dent with an eating disorder as “difficult.”

“Having an eating disorder is like having a full time job in the sense that you are constantly thinking about it and if you are in recovery, you are constantly battling to stay on track and challenge the ED [eating disorder] thoughts,” Cheattle, a graduate of the class of 2019 with a degree in secondary English education, said.

Cheattle found that, for her, eating in the dining halls was a tough part of on-campus recovery and management.

“Given that they put the calories for most of the foods right in front of you, it makes it very difficult to choose anything to eat that doesn’t seem ‘scary,’ especially when you are being told not to count calories by therapists and nutritionists,” she said.

Both Cheattle and Hamschin were able to utilize Penn State’s Healthy Eating and Living Support (or HEALS) program in their journeys to recovery.

Cheattle was part of the HEALS program “for a bit” before she left school for treatment her freshman year.

She continued the program

when she returned to Penn State after treatment.

It was through this program that she had access to therapy, group therapy, a doctor and a nutritionist. “They were essential to the decision to ultimately leave school to get more intensive help,” she said.

“When I returned to school, they were still ready and available to help.”

Hamschin also has had an extremely positive experience with the HEALS program.

“They’re great,” she said. “They have medical doctors, psychiatrists, dietitians, case managers, therapists, who all coordinate care on-campus and coordinate with outside providers for anyone who goes to them... it’s really impressive that we have [access to] this.”

For those struggling, Hamschin believes the most essential aspect of recovery is connection — which she was able to find at Penn State.

“You can choose to surround yourself with positive people. I wouldn’t be able to do it without friends and the people around me who really care. Full recovery is completely possible; there’s

always hope for it,” she said.

Hamschin hopes to dismantle misconceptions and raise awareness about eating disorders and eating disorder recovery through her involvement with the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) in State College.

Currently, she is the coordinator for the NEDA walk, which happens annually every April.

“I wish people could see that [there is always hope for full recovery],” she said, “and I wish more people were comfortable asking for help.”

Hamschin said she doesn’t mind talking about her struggles for this reason. She hopes that by opening up about her experiences, it can be a source of comfort for others.

“The more I talk about it, the more people might know about the resources,” she said.

If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, it is encouraged that you reach out to the HEALS team at Penn State.

Visit [nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://nationaleatingdisorders.org) for more information.

To email reporter: [kxk460@psu.edu](mailto:kxk460@psu.edu)  
Follow her on Twitter at: [@umkaitlynx](https://twitter.com/umkaitlynx).



National Association  
for Behavioral Healthcare

Access. Care. Recovery.



NABH's members are committed to ensuring patient access to behavioral healthcare treatment, including inpatient, residential, outpatient, and recovery and support services.

If you or someone you know is struggling with a mental health issue, please contact us and we can refer you to one of our members who can help.



# Penn State should consider contributing more to CAPS

Last week, it was unveiled that the 2020 class gift will be an endowment to CAPS, also known as Counseling and Psychological Services. This gift marks the second graduating class in less than five years that has voted to do so.

Simply put, the university should see it as a wake up call that its students, again, decided the most impactful gift it could bestow on future classes is more funding toward its mental health programs, which are constantly in high demand.

A 2018 study by the American Psychological Association showed that one in three college freshmen have some diagnosis of a mental health disorder. At University Park, that would have been close to 3,000 first year students last year.

Is our CAPS program capable of serving 3,000 students from each class, or a total of about 12,000 students?

As students continue to

## OUR VIEW

### The university needs to take note of what students think needs attention and act on it

help fund their own mental health programs through fees, Penn State needs to take it upon itself to more efficiently expand itself to the demand from students to improve upon CAPS.

However, it would be ignorant to pretend that isn't a tall order to fulfill, and many students know that. Circumstances will never be perfect, but CAPS will surely need more than just student donations to fulfill the needs from students that it still lacks — even if all possible efforts thus far have truly been put forward toward improving the entity.

While the university has increased its support of CAPS in recent years, there will always be more work that can be done as student demand for mental health resources continues to increase.

After the class of 2016

made its class gift an endowment to CAPS, the university released a statement detailing what would be allotted to CAPS — not just from the gift, but from the university, student fees and more donors.

Four years later, the current senior class decided CAPS could still use more funding to meet the student body's needs, and offered another endowment.

It is impossible to know for sure how exactly the money from the 2020 class gift will be allocated, but some form of change is necessary. Compared to the alternatives, the CAPS endowment is a choice for the class gift that will hopefully have the most significant impact on the greatest amount of people.

It is certainly an improvement the traditional senior class gifts have

clearly evolved from physical garnishes on campus, like lamp posts and benches, to programs and facilities that will leave a lasting impact on future Penn State students.

CAPS could be a major resource for students with mental health concerns, but it is also a very limited program. Some of its resources include group counseling programs and weekly CAPS Chat sessions, but CAPS only offer short term individual counseling opportunities for students — otherwise referring them to professionals in the area that some students may not be able to afford.

In a perfect world, CAPS might have a more central, noticeable hub on campus dedicated to mental health resources — a place where students could get the help they

need from trained professionals and where alumni could see their money having a real, positive impact.

UPUA has also been working on a resolution to consolidate CAPS into one location — but again, the work is a student-based organization that could likely benefit from with assistance from the university.

There is not one specific person who deserves the blame for CAPS' struggle to match student demand. However, this has continued to present itself as an issue that needs attention from the university, which continues to be ignored.

The university should continue to notice what its graduating students feel needs attention — and they should work to better provide it themselves.

Despite the complexities behind improving CAPS' infrastructure, the senior class made a decision that will truly help mold the health and wellness of future classes. From there, one can only hope it leads to tangible progress.

MY VIEW | Cassandra Kidwell

## Finding answers: Looking back on my childhood anxiety

As a child, I cried a lot. You could be thinking, yes, all kids cry a lot. They cry over falling at the playground, being left out of a game or when an adult gets angry with them — situations we certainly handle differently with age.

But my childhood tears were shed over the lightest subjects.

In third grade, I accidentally said "yes" to a lunch lady for a side salad instead of smiley fries and began crying because I was overwhelmed by my wrong decision. Although it makes me laugh today, I was sent to the counselors for the whole day and given a stress ball to help control my emotions.

I would cry over not knowing answers on tests, scared to disappoint. I had intense separation anxiety and cried when I was away from my mother.

I missed the bus going home frequently and cried every time it happened, thinking that I would be stuck at school for the night. This went on until I was in fifth or sixth grade.

After realizing I had anxiety as an adult, looking back at childhood memories a gave me the biggest feelings of eureka.

Yes! Wait, no anxiety is awful, but yes! I now understand the source of years of worry and insecurities. Finally, these pieces of my

childhood came together, and I knew exactly why I was sent to the counselors after a simple lunch-time mistake.

My teachers were always told about my behavior, as a part of it was from my father passing when I was in elementary school.

I was too young to understand what cancer even was — as my mother told me it was a "bug in his brain" — let alone try to understand my resulting anxieties in the following rough years of my life

I actually visited my second-grade teacher for a job shadow requirement in my senior year of high school. On that day we laughed about how much I used to cry, trying to remember all the small things that made me upset.

While this may be dark humor in laughing at the tears of my younger self, it's comforting to know all the tiny things that got me upset over the years really didn't matter. Instead they served as an indicator of the start of my worrying that continued throughout my life.

My intense emotional state in second-grade was justified, given my father's death had just occurred that summer.

In junior high, the realization of where my constant worrying and

anxiety came from allowed me to finally piece together my childhood.

My appointments to talk with "the nice lady who played games with me," was actually my counselor. The summer camp I went to was for children who were affected by the loss of loved ones.

Piece by piece, I was getting ahold of my past and emotions.

Children with anxieties and other special cases were able to be excused and tended to based upon their needs. Other kids were not there to judge and frankly, were jealous when I came back to class with a stress ball with a cute

face.

This child-to-child understanding is something that some adults could surely use. I am not suggesting that all those with anxieties and mental illness deserve to be excused in every situation of their lives, but more understanding and respect could surely be granted.

My mother took every step to ensure that I could try to move on and "be okay" when I got older, but my anxieties and sadness stayed with me throughout my life despite the preventatives.

So, when I hear those undermine mental illness, I get frustrated. Those who are battling certain

mental illnesses cannot "change their mindsets" to make their thoughts go away.

An individual with anxiety, depression or another mental illness does not deserve another's negative opinion to add to their struggles.

Losing a parent changes your perspective on life and certainly changes my thoughts every day. Many need to walk a mile in someone else's shoes before they make judgments about mental illness.

I like to think that today I have learned coping mechanisms other than crying, but quite honestly it might still apply today that I would shed a tear or two if I accidentally said yes to salad instead of the delicacy of smiley face fries.

Some of these mechanisms include repeating positive thoughts in my head when I become negative about myself, reminding myself of the great people that I have in my life and giving myself some slack when my workload is taking over my self-care.

I share my story not to compare to another's trauma or illness, but to share my experience and further spread awareness. Positive encouragement and suggestions are more helpful to help fight evil thoughts, not judgement and slander.

Cassandra Kidwell is a sophomore majoring in print and digital journalism and is a columnist for The Daily Collegian. Email her at [cpk5275@psu.edu](mailto:cpk5275@psu.edu) or follow her on Twitter at [@cassiewellkid](https://twitter.com/cassiewellkid).



DAILY COLLEGIAN

Collegian Inc., James Building, 123 S. Burrowes St. State College, PA 16801-3882 ©2019 Collegian Inc.

### BOARD OF EDITORS

- Editor in Chief**  
Elena Rose
- Managing Editor**  
Tyler King
- Digital Managing Editor**  
David Eckert
- Opinions Editor**  
Lindsey Toomer
- and News Social Media Editor**  
News Editor  
Maddie Aiken
- Assistant News Editor**  
Lauren Fox
- Features & Investigation Editor**  
Lilly Forsyth
- Arts & Lifestyle Editor**  
Chelsea Kun
- Sports Editor**  
Matt Lingerman
- Assistant Sports Editor**  
Jake Aferiat
- Assistant Sports Editor**  
Shane Connelly
- Football Editor**  
Dylan Jacobs
- Multimedia Editor**  
Jack Hirsh
- Photo Editor**  
Caitlin Lee
- Assistant Photo Editor**  
Aabha Vora

To contact News Division:  
News, Opinions, Arts, Sports, Photo, Graphics, The Daily Collegian Online and The Weekly Collegian  
Phone: 814-865-2531 | Fax: 814-865-3848  
Phone: 814-865-1828 | Fax: 814-863-1126

### BOARD OF MANAGERS

- Business Manager**  
Colsen Ackroyd
- Vice President**  
Rachel Weber
- Advertising Manager**  
Scott Witham
- Creative Director**  
Hannah Degler
- Marketing Director**  
Elizabeth Blanchfield
- Business Insights Director**  
Cindy Chen
- Sales Director**  
Ethan Thilavanh

To contact Business Division:  
Advertising, circulation, accounting and classifieds  
Phone: 814-865-2531 | Fax: 814-865-3848  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays

### We want to hear from you

Send us your comments on our coverage, editorial decisions and the Penn State community.

Email: [editorinchief@psucollegian.com](mailto:editorinchief@psucollegian.com)

Online: [collegian.psu.edu](mailto:collegian.psu.edu)

Postal Mail/In Person: 123 S. Burrowes St., State College, PA 16801

Letters should be about 200 words. Student letters should include class year, major and campus. Letters from alumni should include graduation year. All writers should provide their address and phone number for

verification. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Members of organizations must include their titles if the topic they write about is connected with the aim of their groups. The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters. The Collegian cannot guarantee publication of all letters. Letters chosen also run on The Daily Collegian Online and may be selected for publication in The Weekly Collegian. All letters become property of Collegian Inc.

### Who we are

The Daily Collegian's editorial

opinion is determined by its Board of Opinion, which is made up of members of its Board of Editors, with the editor in chief holding final responsibility for content. The opinions expressed on the editorial page are not necessarily those of Collegian Inc., a separate institution from Penn State.

### About the Collegian

The Daily Collegian and The Weekly Collegian are published by Collegian Inc., an independent, nonprofit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty and profession-

### Complaints

News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager.



## NEW SHADE OF BLUE

*After transferring from Duke to Penn State prior to his sophomore season, Seth Kuhn is settling in as a Nittany Lion*

By David Pollak  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Seth Kuhn gambled on himself. The midfielder from Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, played college soccer at national powerhouse Duke a season ago.

Kuhn played in all 18 games for the Blue Devils last year and started seven times for a team that made a berth to the Sweet 16.

But he still wasn't happy, so he took a chance and reunited with former coach Philadelphia Union Academy coach and current Penn State coach Jeff Cook.

Even though Kuhn didn't envision himself donning a different blue and white jersey, it's been beneficial to both Kuhn and an up and coming Penn State team that he changed scenery.

"It was hard, because going to Duke, I didn't think that I would be coming to Penn State," Kuhn said. "Obviously that's not how it is when you commit, but things weren't working out there."

Soccer is a mental game just as much as a physical one, and

adjustments are a key part of that.

However, all soccer isn't played the same.

Kuhn has had to adjust to a multitude of aspects both on and off the field when he made the move from Durham to University Park.

Transferring in itself is a tough task for any student, but being a Division I athlete presents its struggles as well. A team's style, academic program and the coaching staff are just a few factors that have a role in a transfer decision.

"When I was looking at options, I was looking at Penn State and I just tried to find a place where

I felt I was going to be comfortable and where I had a coach that I could trust," Kuhn said. "That's what I found in [coach] Jeff [Cook] and in Penn State."

While the adjustment from Duke to Penn State was a major life change, Kuhn found the transition to be easier than expected.

"I had already known some of these guys through Reading United in the summer, and even playing with them in the academies," Kuhn said. "It was honestly, kind of



Ken Minamoto/Collegian

**Midfielder Seth Kuhn (17)** pressures a Stanford defender during the men's soccer game against Stanford at Jeffery Field on Aug. 30.

seamless."

The transition from high school to college is daunting in itself. On the other hand, transferring after having a year of experience at Duke paid dividends for Kuhn.

In fact, Kuhn mentioned how his time at Duke made his transition a lot smoother.

"Having that year of college

experience at Duke, coming in here and knowing what the lifestyle is going to be like of a college athlete made that very easy," Kuhn said.

Cook and his staff make note of incorporating new players into a new environment and that they are in the right mental state.

In Kuhn's regard, his

relationship dates back to the days when Cook was a coach at the Philadelphia Union academy.

"I think patience is key with that and to understand how we want to approach the game," Cook said.

"I've coached Seth before, so there's some familiarity there, but I think Seth can play a couple different roles and his passing quality is really key."

With that familiarity on the field, Kuhn has been able to focus on developing a routine that works for him.

"When you don't have practice, you have class and when you don't have class you're studying, eating or resting," Kuhn said.

"Just kind of making sure that you're always doing something and being on top of your lifestyle, which is super important."

Establishing a level of comfort early on, Kuhn was able to make the transition to Happy Valley a successful one.

"Something that I struggled with at Duke was trying to focus on schoolwork even though I wasn't enjoying my soccer," Kuhn said.

"I found a way to do that in that circumstance, then coming here I'm enjoying my soccer and it makes the schoolwork follow up with that."

To email reporter: [dbp5295@psu.edu](mailto:dbp5295@psu.edu).  
Follow him on Twitter at [@David\\_Pollak097](https://twitter.com/David_Pollak097).

## When injury bug bites, players rely on teammates

By Ryan Lam  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

It's the word every player, coach and fan dreads hearing. "Injury."

At a moment's notice, an athlete's life can be changed and a team's season thrown off the rails.

It's often random and always devastating.

For Penn State, it's an affliction about which the Nittany Lions know all too well.

Perhaps the team's biggest problem has been the lack of stability and cohesiveness, which stemmed from the rolling list of injuries on the roster.

Coach Erica Dambach, looking at the bigger picture, thinks a lot of positives could come from the bad experience in being sidelined.

"It is part of the journey as an athlete, too often, unfortunately," Dambach said.

"I've just seen too many positive things come out of those moments in terms of strength of people, strength of athletes, coming out of the other side stronger than they've ever been, knowing that they can take on everything."

Kerry Abello has had a history with injuries, most recently with a huge scare that saw her leave the game in a walking boot against Virginia on Sept. 15.

She denoted the quick contrast of the mindset of injured players in this setting.

"It's always like your first reaction is you're upset and frustrated and that's a really natural reaction," Abello said.

"But I think the thing that helps me through it is always just looking to my teammates and knowing that they're going to do what they need to do to take care of



Noah Riffe/Collegian

**Midfielder Ally Schlegel (34)** gets tripped up during the match against No. 3 Stanford on Friday, Aug. 23 at Jeffrey Field. The No. 6 Nittany Lions fall to No. 3 Stanford 2-1.

what needs to be taken care of on the field."

Abello suffered an ill-timed injury late last season, spraining her MCL in the quarterfinals of the Big Ten tournament and missing the semis and final. She also realized in that high-stakes moment, while she needs her teammates' support, she also needs to be there for them off the field.

"It was obviously really tough for me because I wanted to be on the field with my team," Abello said.

"Getting through that I think was just constantly looking to my teammates, using them as resources. They were all here for me and I wanted to be there for them too."

"I think going through that process, I just learned that it's not the end of the world to get injured, and you just need to look to the people around you to support you and lift you up and get you back on the field as soon as possible."

Ally Schlegel was part of that support group last year. She had to redshirt because of a torn ACL — the second of her career — and was still voted Penn State Rookie of the Year by her teammates for her off-field presence.

"Although I couldn't necessarily put my efforts onto the field, the things that I was doing off

the field and the rehab — all the things I was doing as a teammate mattered," Schlegel said.

Schlegel is perhaps the poster child for the "getting back stronger than ever" narrative in the program.

In her first season of college soccer, Schlegel has already found the back of the net eight times in 13 appearances and is currently the top scorer and point-getter on the Nittany Lions.

As positive as Schlegel is as a person, the injuries still initially got to her and made her question herself.

"As an injured person, like, I think you sometimes think that you don't matter. But you do," Schlegel said.

"Your mind just tends to go to other places because you can't play right then and right there. All the clichés people tell you are true. They wouldn't be clichés if they weren't true."

However, Schlegel would not want to have it any other way.

"I wouldn't go back and try to change it," she said.

"Both injuries told me different things about the world and myself so with mental health, it just taught me how I have to deal with my emotions. You can't always be okay, but at the same time, you can't feel sorry for yourself 24/7."

Schlegel also pointed out a very important aspect in letting the

feeling run its course, especially with the negativity.

"I think the times when I just needed a day to feel bad for myself, I would let myself do that but I couldn't last longer than a day," Schlegel said.

"I think it was important for me to acknowledge my emotions and acknowledge that things were hard and what I was going

through was tough. But in the next day, I realized that there's so much to be optimistic about and so much more coming."

The players agree that they would not have gotten through injuries without their teammates as a support system.

"I think sometimes it's easy to think when you get injured and you're not playing that you're not as important but every piece of our team is so essential, even if you're not on the field," Abello said.

"They're always here to support me. Everyone has gone through some sort of injury so we're always there to help each other."

They've also realized the importance of having a go-to support group when they need it most. For Schlegel, she has found that group in her freshman class.

"Maddie Myers, Rachel [Waserman], Cait [Haislip], Kat [Asman], Kelli [Beiler], we were all in the dorms together. They were just my bouncing board whenever I needed something," Schlegel said.

"They were just good to have because not only could they support me, but they could also give me that tough love at times when needed."

To email reporter: [txl273@psu.edu](mailto:txl273@psu.edu).  
Follow him on Twitter at [@ryrylam210](https://twitter.com/ryrylam210).



Ken Minamoto/Collegian

**Midfielder Ally Schlegel (34) and defender Kaleigh Riehl (3)** celebrate Schlegel's goal against Michigan State at Jeffery Field.



Ken Minamoto/Collegian

**Midfielder Kerry Abello (2)** dribbles the ball while being defended by Michigan State player Paige Webber (28) at Jeffery Field on Sept. 22.



# Creating jobs for people with disabilities

By Grace Miller  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Taproot kitchen combines two passions: locally grown food and creating jobs for people with intellectual disabilities.

Founder Sharon Schafer said she had always cared about both of these things, as she is interested in food sustainability and has a son with an intellectual disability who also loved food.

“We wanted to provide a space where people could really explore their passion and cook anything and not be excluded because of their lack of not being fast enough, or not having the training or not having the ability for further training,” Schafer said.

Schafer said when individuals with intellectual disabilities are in high school, there are a lot of opportunities for them to “dream alongside” other students. But once they graduate, those opportunities are much harder to find.

It’s because of this that Shafer started Taproot in 2015.

“We knew we could help by finding more ways for our children with disabilities to interact with the community very meaningfully and to create jobs for them and to create community engagement and other very real interactions with life and with people,” she said, “so that they have the fullness that they deserve,”

Working at Taproot can even be a stepping stone for some people who might go on to get other jobs in the food industry, Schafer said. She added that while employers might have to make adjustments for people with disabilities, their work will meet quality standards.

“It’s a very personal and human thing that enables an employer to hire somebody with intellectual disability,” she said.

In addition to the workers, the Taproot family is comprised of volunteers — most of whom are former teachers who have experience working with people with intellectual disabilities. Other workers are mentors who will come to work with a specific individual.

“They just have a love and a passion for helping this generation as they progress into adulthood,” Schafer said.

“They just have a love and a passion for helping this generation as they progress into adulthood”

Sharon Schafer  
Taproot Founder



James Leavy/Collegian

**Sarah Pelchar, of State College,** works for Taproots Kitchen in the Good Shepherd Catholic Church on Friday, Oct. 4. Taproots is a food business that employs individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Bethany Kephart works for the Arc of Centre County and accompanies employee Sam Moyer at Taproot every Friday.

“ [ T h e s e opportunities are] extremely important,” Kephart said.

“It gives them something to come out and do, and be around other people in the community.” Taproot currently offers catering services and provides food for the Good

Day Cafe. Schafer said they get as much food as they can from nonprofits and local farms like Plowshare Produce, Penn State-

run farms, the Food Reclamation Network, Jade Family Farm and Community Cafe.

Schafer said the kitchen will work with whatever it’s given—and that’s part of the fun. Taproot also has catering menus, which Schafer said are filled with things they love making.

“It’s been really well-received,” Schafer said, “because, you know, I think we make it with a lot of love and care and with really good ingredients.”

Schafer said the average day at Taproot is filled with fun, but also high stress.

“We always have a clock ticking just like in cooking shows,” Schafer said.

“You have to get the thing done and we have to all work together to make it happen, especially when you’re doing a catering order.”

Sarah Pelchar is one of the workers at Taproot. She started cooking when she was five years old.

At Taproot, she likes to make fruit tarts, which she said are “really easy” to make.

Pelchar added that though she likes to cook and bake, that’s not her favorite part of Taproot.

“I do like spending time with my friends here,” she said.

She said she’s learned a lot, and she specifically enjoyed learning knife skills.

Pelchar added they were able to learn the knife skills from real chefs.

As Taproot continues to serve the community, Schafer said they want to continue opening doors for individuals with intellectual disabilities, rather than allowing them to face a “wall.”

“I think that the goal is to

provide more jobs, but I wouldn’t ever limit it at that,” Schafer said.

“Because again, not everyone that comes through our kitchen is going to be one who ends up with a job. For some of them it’s just an exploration, or for some of them, it’s just a chance to do something meaningful.”

Taproot is currently run out Good Shepherd Catholic Church, but will move into a kitchen at 318 S. Atherton St. at the end of the year—a move that has been years in the making.

Schafer said Taproot will host a “super fun” community event from 5 to 8 p.m. on Dec. 5 at the new location. The event will feature pop-up shops, artisan art sales and foods from a variety of cultures.

To email reporter: [lgm5130@psu.edu](mailto:lgm5130@psu.edu). Follow her on Twitter at [@graceemilleer](https://twitter.com/graceemilleer).

# How UPUA’s 14th Assembly advocates for mental health

By Ashley Hayford  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

When running for UPUA’s 14th Assembly presidential ticket, Laura McKinney and Jake Griggs focused much of their attention on mental health awareness and action.

With the pair now holding chief executive positions, their advocacy has not slowed down.

“Mental health has long been a priority of our entire organization because of its importance to the student body as a whole,” Griggs (senior-management and political science), UPUA’s vice president, said via email.

On campus, Griggs said Penn State and student organizations like UPUA “have worked hard” to reduce mental health stigmas, which he said has in turn increased the load of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

“It has been and will continue to be a top priority to work with CAPS and other university offices to ensure the needs of the student body are met to the fullest extent they can be,” he said.

In the past few years, UPUA has supported and passed a number of initiatives regarding mental health, including the expansion of CAPS, WellTrack, the implementation of a director of Assembly Wellness seat and an annual Mental Health and Wellness Week.

In tandem with the Student Life committee chaired by Jacob Klipstein, the 14th Assembly has advocated for mental health and other health resources more than most assemblies before it.

The Student Life committee specifically organizes Mental Health and Wellness Week, and also works on other mental health initiatives — including the push for the consolidation of CAPS into one building.

“CAPS Consolidation is easily one of the most important issues facing students today, and getting it to the forefront of the administration’s mind is very important,” Klipstein said.

Additionally, Klipstein said McKinney, UPUA’s president, has been pushing for mental health initiatives that go beyond CAPS and include important figures and organizations on campus.

“[McKinney] has taken the lead on bringing this conversation to the forefront of the highest levels of administration,” Klipstein said.

Specifically, UPUA is working on a Student Support Network that would encourage students to help others access resources and understand programs. Additionally, UPUA is working to bring bilingual and multilingual counselors to CAPS.

Klipstein said the initiatives UPUA takes now will be monumental for future Penn State students.

“Now that more students are seeking help, we need to make

sure the resources are as easy to find as possible — and where they’d ideally all be housed under the same roof,” Klipstein said. “CAPS is one of the best services this university has to offer, and every step we make in collectively making it better for even one student goes far in making it better for all students.”

Klipstein added supporting student mental health goes beyond just thinking about students’ brains. It also includes their physical health, experiences on campus and the resources students can have to alleviate that mental stress or burden.

“I think the other important thing is realizing how many other initiatives fall into the category of ‘Mental Health and Wellness.’ Things like improving financial resources on campus helps because worrying about money can be incredibly taxing on the minds of students,” Klipstein said. “Initiatives like Free STI Testing can also help because worries about general health also tie into Mental Health and Wellness.

“Mental health is one of the issues that keeps me fighting the hardest for students. The stories I have heard are the reasons I wake up every day and keep fighting to tackle issues like those I mentioned to help make life a little easier for every student.”

During the Sept. 11 session of the UPUA, David Weiss was confirmed as the director of Assembly Wellness — a new position under the 14th assembly. Weiss (junior-statistics) will oversee UPUA members’ mental health.

“My role was created to ensure the executive board was doing what they could to enhance the experience for everyone in UPUA,” Weiss (junior-statistics) said. “Furthermore, I am here to make sure people enjoy who they are working with and have the resources to succeed in and out of the organization.”

Weiss, who was previously a Schreyer representative and freshman council member within UPUA, said he feels a special need for the position that goes beyond his job description.

“No representative, executive board, judicial board or freshman



Collegian File Photo

**State of State emcee Laura McKinney (junior-broadcast journalism)** introduces the next speaker at State of State at the State Theatre.

council member should sacrifice their overall well-being to be in UPUA,” Weiss said. “Many don’t realize how hard the members work and how many hours they put into initiatives they feel will help student lives. Sometimes that may take a toll on them, and if I can be here to provide a resource or just have a destressing conversation with them, then I did my job.”

During weekly sessions, it’s common for Weiss to stand up during comments for the good of the order to present lighthearted statistics or pieces of advice to let representatives know that he is thinking about them and their well-being.

“Assemblies can get tense at times. If I can bring a tip or light-hearted piece of advice to the floor and make anyone smile or anyone’s day just a little better, then maybe they will enjoy UPUA just a bit more, and this in turn would improve students’ lives,” Weiss said. “In my opinion, there are so many different ways to improve your mental health whether that be through healthy eating, exercising or more efficient studying. Hopefully people take some of my tips to heart, use them and improve their mental health.”

Aside from easing assembly tensions, Weiss intends to get involved with Mental Health and Wellness Week and create a

stronger relationship between CAPS and UPUA.

Health and Human Development representative Paty Birungi said she is hopeful for Weiss and his commitment to the position.

“I hope to see David bring unity and positivity to the assembly as there are often very serious and stressful discussions. I hope he is able to provide an element of positivity and separation between the work we do and the interactions between the assembly through having various bonding and destressing events,” Birungi (sophomore-biobehavioral health) said.

Additionally, Griggs said he hopes that future assemblies will continue to prioritize mental health awareness within the student body.

“The problem of mental health on campus isn’t new and it’s not going to go away. The UPUA will always work to ensure that the needs of each and every student are met on campus, and mental health will always be an integral part of the overall wellness of any college student,” Griggs said. “Down the road, we hope to see the inclusion of mental health services in an all-encompassing Wellness Center, which we believe will allow for further consolidation of resources valuable to the student body.”

To email reporter: [alh526@psu.edu](mailto:alh526@psu.edu). Follow her on Twitter at [@theyoungknope](https://twitter.com/theyoungknope).



Jonah Rosen/Collegian

**UPUA Vice President Jake Griggs** opens the meeting at the HUB-Robeson Center on Wednesday, April 24.



**By Becky Marcinko**  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

The coursework is also quite different from the standard Penn



Moreover, students balance many other responsibilities aside from classes.

“I am nonstop, and the day can go by so quickly, or drag on for

McCoy also said she likes to exercise and listen to music to de-stress. "Making sure I eat healthy is the most important thing for me right now," Stalcar said. "I find myself eating unhealthy foods to get myself through the day when I get too busy, so it's important that I prep

McCoy said learning self-care and time management is essential to success as a music student.

"Perseverance and time management is very important, because burnout is the hardest thing to go through for any student really, and there is no time to stop and recover, and it happens often as a music student," McCoy said. "It is like pacing yourself when you're trying to not just complete, but win a marathon."

To email reporter: [rnm5187@psu.edu](mailto:rnm5187@psu.edu).  
Follow her on Twitter at [@beckymarcinko](https://twitter.com/beckymarcinko).

**spotlightlabs.net**

[illegible]

© Pappocom

	6		1			3	5
		5				7	1
			3				8
	7	2		9	3	1	
		1	5	8		9	7
3					7		
	1	4				8	
8	2				1		5

©2019 PuzzleJunction.com

## By JACQUELINE BIGAR

www.jacquelinebigar.com  
©2019 King Features Syndicate Inc.

**PISCES (2/19-3/20) ★★★** You might need some downtime. You could find that a friend is deceptive and not sharing the truth. On the other hand, you could be disappointed by a long-term prospect. Stay as level as possible. Changes will occur. Tonight: Where the action is.



# ‘You are not any less important’

*Therapists and mental health employees use a language that specifically helps clients to best stabilize and support individuals*

By Grace Miller  
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

One in three college freshmen have a diagnosed mental health disorder, according to a 2018 study by the American Psychological Association. Although Penn State offers a variety of resources for students to seek help and support regarding mental health, taking the first step can be intimidating. But getting familiar with aspects of the resources, specifically therapy practices, is a starting point. Therapists and mental health professionals use calculated words and phrases when speaking to clients to best convey conditions.

## Finding empowerment

When she is talking to clients, Centre Helps Crisis Hotline Counselor Stacia Mincer said there aren't many specific words or phrases they use, because everybody is unique. Often, she said, people will call to vent. Her goal is to summarize and acknowledge what was said in a feeling word.

“One thing I specifically like to do is look around for supports in their life that already exist,” Mincer, who became a counselor in 2017, said. “That’s because, when a lot of people call in, they’ll tell us they have nobody at all. And that’s rarely true.”

Callers are usually in crisis mode, she said, which means that they are really upset and not always thinking clearly. Reflecting helps to sort the thoughts.

Mincer gave the example of a caller having relationship problems.

“So something that we might say is, ‘So I can tell that you’re feeling upset about this situation. I can tell that you feel kind of alone in this relationship, like you’re not being listened to, that your feelings aren’t being validated.’”

This kind of support provides a “jumping off point” for callers, Mincer said.

“It’s a turning point,” she said. “Letting them know that we hear them and that we’re listening, and we’re paying attention, and that we care about them, it can make them feel a little bit less alone.”

The counselors aim to empower clients and use techniques to help the callers through crises.

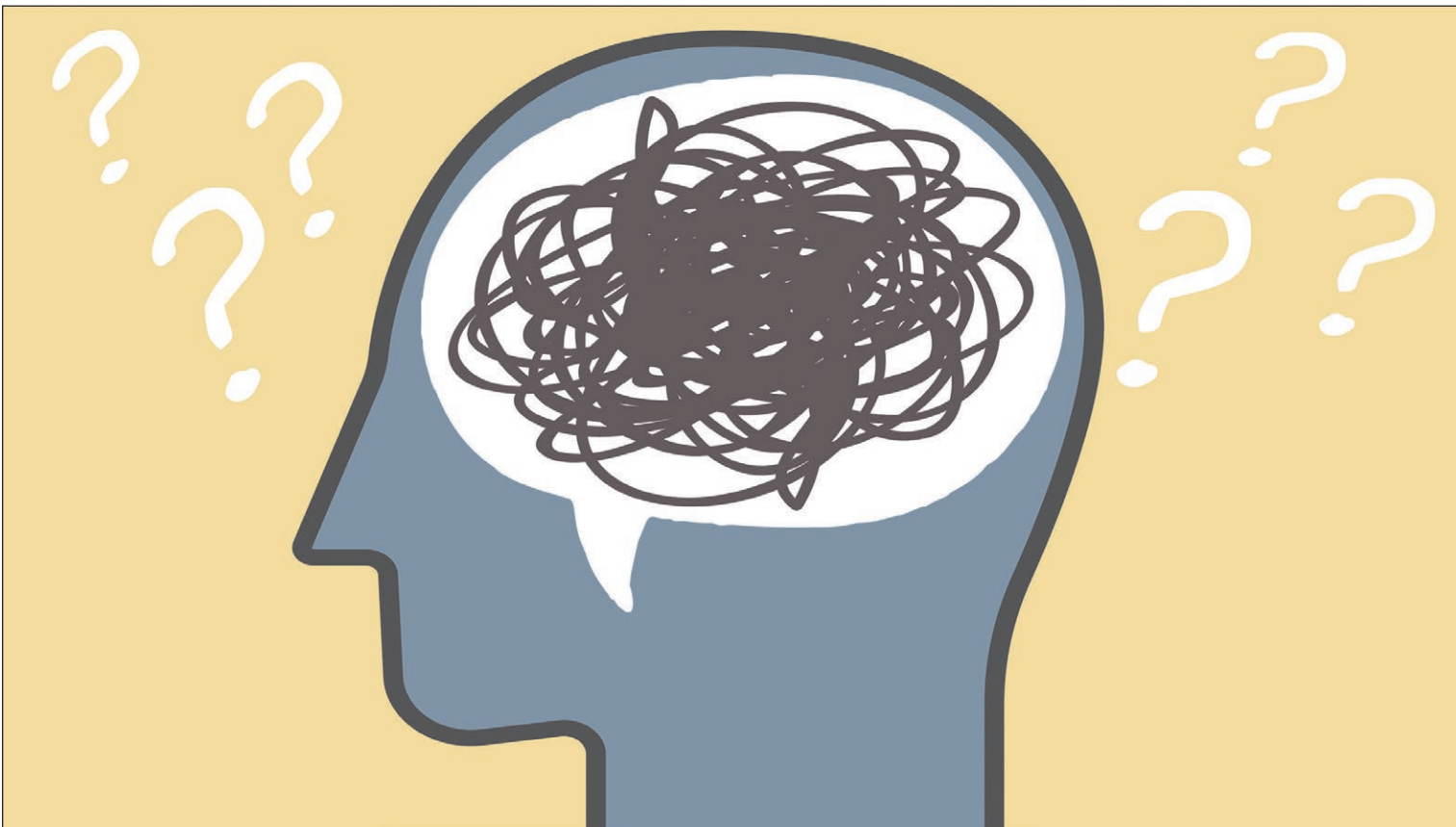
One of these techniques is something she calls “collaborative brainstorming.” After listening to the caller, Mincer assessed the situation and brainstorms different coping mechanisms.

“[I] try and ask a lot of questions about the caller’s situation,” she said. “Just learn a lot more about their life and see what they like to do, see what they’re passionate about, explore coping skills they may want to use, deal with kind of whatever they’re dealing with whenever they get off the phone.”

## Into the box

One commonly used image is the “toolbox.”

Assistant Director of Community Education and Outreach at Penn State’s Counseling and Psychological Services Kate Staley said that the toolbox isn’t a coping strategy inherently,



Collegian Creative

but rather an assortment of strategies that can help alleviate “distress.”

Penn State student Jordan Rohn described a toolbox as different ways and techniques someone could use to “diffuse a crisis.” Specifically, Rohn (junior-psychology) said he utilizes breathing exercises and putting his head in water.

“T h e y ’ v e helped me a lot,” he said. “It helps me get through days that are kind of hard.”

Each person’s toolbox, Staley said, is different as individuals have different coping mechanisms.

“If I taught you a tension and release progressive muscle relaxation, you might love it, and feel like it totally helps you relax,” Staley said. “Your best friend, who you think is so like you, might not like it, right? Because it might just not work for them.”

## Stay in the moment

Another concept is mindfulness.

Staley described mindfulness as “really big kind of field of study, as well as field of practice” that covers topics such as acceptance, self-compassion and living in the moment.

“Typically, worry is about things in the future,” she said. “We’re worried that ‘x’ will happen or ‘x’ won’t happen.”

Mindfulness can help combat these worries by grounding you in the present, she said, even if the immediate emotions aren’t particularly positive.

“If you can be in the moment, even briefly, you are able to let go of future concerns and past concerns and just kind of experience the moment in the rich way that the moment has to offer you,” Staley said. “But you are really present and able to hear and listen and be curious.”

One such mindfulness practice is five-sense grounding.

Sequentially, a person identifies five things they can see, four things they can feel, three things they can hear, two things they can smell and one thing they can taste.

The purpose of this, and similar mindfulness exercises, is to provide stability to individuals who may be overwhelmed or have trouble being present.

CAPS offers a four-session mindfulness clinic that runs two or three times a semester, which Staley has taught before.

“[Mindfulness] really can be helpful and therapeutic,” she said. “It can absolutely help people reduce the stress and increase the sense of well being.”

Because he is prone to overthinking, Rohn said mindfulness was not an easy concept for him to grasp.

Though he said he doesn’t practice mindfulness all the time, it’s a good tool for when things get “crazy.”

“It’s basically a way just to not let the future get to you,” Rohn said, “just sort of be able to live right here right now so that you can appreciate the things that are around you instead of just pushing away.”

## Down the rabbit hole

Staley said a part of being human is getting worried about both big and little things — and this can sometimes lead to a “worry cycle” or “spiral.”

For instance, she said a student could be worried about an upcoming test. By thinking that they will fail the test, they enter the spiral and believe they will fail the next test, then fail the course and never graduate.

“These worry cycles are — the way the human brain is wired — very compelling,” Staley said. “And they tend to kind of sweep us, any one of us, no matter what age we are, into them.”

Getting lost in a worry cycle can cause generate physiological impacts. If a student continues to tell themselves they are bad test takers, Staley explained, they might start to develop feelings of dread and anxiety.

Eventually, the student could have trouble sleeping or experience increased heart rate.

She said that these cycles

can be cut short by using strategies from your “toolbox,” like mindfulness, talking to a friend or therapy.

Rohn said he experiences spirals occasionally, but less frequently and intensely than before.

“One thing happens, and then another thing happens, and they kind of just bleed into each other and just keep going down and down,” he said.

He said he can recognize that a spiral is coming on by listening to his emotions, especially if he’s really upset or anxious.

To curb a spiral, Rohn said he starts by assessing and sorting the causes of the spiral into two categories: things he can control and things he can’t.

“For what you can control, you can be like, ‘Okay, I’ll do this about it. I’ll do that about it,’” he said. “The stuff that you can’t control, it’s just like, ‘I will just flip this perspective.’ Because you can’t control it, but you can control how you feel about it.”

## Gaining perspective

Ben Bishop has been in therapy since the eighth grade, and along the way, has learned about self-compassion. He said that it can be hard for people not

to compare themselves to others — especially in the age of social media.

“W h e n you compare yourself to other people and other lives, that really isn’t realistic, it creates this train of thought of being unworthy, or there’s something wrong with you, or you did something to deserve it,” Bishop (senior-energy business & finance and energy engineering) said.

When he was in middle school, Bishop said these comparisons caused him a lot of anxiety. As he got older and experienced more stressful situations, he said he was hard on himself.

“I kind of developed the mindset of like that I was the victim and that I did something wrong,” Bishop said. “I didn’t give myself any credit for the accomplishments I had.”

He compared unraveling his emotions to reading computer code with no prior knowledge.

Rohn said that he’s grown in his own self compassion, becoming more patient and kinder with himself

“We all beat ourselves up because we’re like, oh, ‘I could have been more this or more that,’ instead of just like, accepting your boundaries.”

Practicing self-compassion helped him gain perspective and he said is worth the difficulty because it can help overcome expectations that might be weighing on someone.

“You can be like... ‘It’s okay because I tried my best,’” Rohn said. “It’s important to love your efforts. You’re not any less important or worthy if you don’t do certain things or feel certain ways.”

Staley said that people, including herself, are typically really hard on themselves because society sends us

Kate Staley

specific messages, she said, about how we should look, behave and express emotion.

Self-compassion is a way to change that mentality by “increasing your desire to know yourself in no other than a curious way,” she said.

“[Self-compassion is] offering yourself the kind of basic sense that you are okay,” she said. “Not that every single thing you do is lovely behavior, right? But that you are at a core level, a person who is trying, and who is earnest, and who is in the world trying to learn.”

## Opening the door

Being vulnerable is like opening a door, Rohn said. One can’t get to a new place without taking the first step.

“[Vulnerability is] the first stepping stone into therapy,” Rohn said. “You have to be vulnerable enough to share what you’ve been through. But some people aren’t ready to share because they’re either still processing it or they don’t want to accept it.”

“It’s incredibly hard to be vulnerable because there are so many facets to it — you don’t know who to trust, you don’t know if you can trust yourself. It’s hard. It’s emotionally taxing to be vulnerable.”

Bishop said that vulnerability can be a tough concept to learn, especially when experiencing anxiety. He said it forces you out of your comfort zone.

“You feel very out of place — just, like, not really comfortable with where you’re at or the situation,” he said. “And it can cause issues, like it can prevent you from going to certain things.”

He recalls having to be vulnerable when he agreed to attend therapy at his parents’ request. After going through a few therapists to find the right match — which he says is very important — Bishop was able to see the value in therapy.

Throughout his whole experience, Bishop recognizes that it’s the struggles that make him who he is today.

“It’s shitty as hell and I’d never wish it on anyone, but it also allows you to really grow and develop some skills and kind of find your niche and what works for you.”

## Pushing through

Bishop attributes finishing his college education to resilience.

There were many times he considered dropping out or joining the military but decided to stick through it.

And he’s thankful he did.

“If I hadn’t continued to push through college and just like all the bullshit I went through, that my life would be way different,” Bishop said.

“There’s a lot that I’m now grateful for that would never have happened if I had ended up dropping out.”

Like Bishop, Rohn said resilience has played a major part in his life.

“It’s really about bouncing back and not letting things that hold you back keep you down,” he said.

To him, it’s about knowing that nothing is permanent.

“Bad things happen and I know that I can be happy again,” Rohn said.

“I’ve been in a good place before, I can get there again. I’ve been in a bad place before, so it’s not the first time.



Collegian File Photo

CAPS Assistant Director of Community Education and Outreach Kate Staley poses in the UHS building on Monday, Aug. 21, 2017.