



## Parent and Family Survival Skills

*Many new college students go through ten distinct stages during their first year of college. As a parent or family member of a first-year college student, this information can help you anticipate what may lie ahead during this time of transition.*

### **Phase 1: Early Summer Anticipation**

High school seniors graduate and begin looking toward the future. They may experience feelings of sadness, accomplishment and anticipation.

### **Phase 2: Midsummer Anxiety**

Students begin to realize they soon will be leaving home, family, friends and the security that each offers.

### **Phase 3: Late Summer Panic**

The student is plunged into the collegiate environment, complete with a new roommate, University bureaucracy, classrooms, homework and a foreign social world.

### **Phase 4: The Honeymoon**

Friendships are forming, and there are no tests for a couple of weeks. Time to have some fun!

### **Phase 5: The End of the Honeymoon**

Where did all of the time go? And where is all of this hard work coming from? Homesickness may appear in this phase.

### **Phase 6: The Grass is Always Greener...**

Some students begin to imagine that transferring to another school would solve their strange new problems. No doubt they would, they think, do better at another university.

### **Phase 7: You Can't Go Home Again**

The feelings associated with this phase start the first time students come home to visit and are hit with the harsh realization that family life goes on without them.

### **Phase 8: Primitive Coping Behaviors**

Well into the first quarter, students have finally learned to use the library and hold reasonably intelligent conversations. They are excited about the things they have learned.

### **Phase 9: Realization**

This phase usually precedes finals. Students realize the great amount of work ahead and know that the future depends largely on their academic success.

### **Phase 10: Putting it Together**

Sometime during the second quarter, we look for students to begin seeing college as a total experience, realizing that hard work and achievement must be priorities but need not totally preclude time for having fun. They have learned what it takes to make the most of the college year. Then again, there are some students who graduate in spite of themselves.