Often students are made to feel inadequate if they do not have a clearly defined career path. However, perhaps indecision is really open-mindedness. If students can tolerate the ambiguity of not knowing exactly what to do, they may be able to develop an openness to new experiences that will help them learn more about themselves and the world.

The idea of open-mindedness is steeped in the career counseling theories of “Planned Happenstance”. Mitchell and Krumboltz (1999) make the five following recommendations to help students move toward a more open-minded approach.

- Help students realize that careers are as much influenced by unplanned events as they are by planned events.
- Discourage students from thinking that something is wrong with them because they are indecisive; rather encourage them to be curious and explore possible career interests.
- Teach students to capitalize on unplanned opportunities that capture their interest. The best way to consider a particular career is to have some level of experience in that field. (Or something that closely resembles that type of job/skill set)
- Encourage students to reach out to people who have careers of interest. Support students in their efforts to explore their interests. Encourage them to gather as much information as possible from people in various job settings.
- Follow-up with students and provide continuing support.

March 24th – Trends Related to Alcohol and Other Drug Use Among College Students. Learn about patterns of use in our student population as well as Penn resources. Offered in collaboration with the Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Initiatives.

April 14th – Sexual Violence and Students: Discuss the prevalence of sexual violence on college campuses and look at how it affects our campus community. Learn what you can do to provide support to a student in need. Offered in collaboration with the Anti Violence Advocacy Group, Penn Women’s Center.

April 28th – Managing Staff Burnout. Learn ways to recognize burnout in yourself or your staff. Discuss strategies to prevent burnout as well as to re-energize and nourish the spirit.
MANAGING STAFF BURNOUT
Strategies for Self-Care

- **Identify signs of burnout.** Are you getting enjoyment or satisfaction from your work or do you feel bored, tired or fantasize about doing something different? Burnout can manifest itself in many ways. Sometimes it manifests itself in persistent physiological symptoms like headaches, muscle tension, upset stomach or sleep difficulties. Psychological symptoms include feeling unmotivated, anxious, hostile or withdrawn on a regular basis. Figure out what’s going on with you.

- **Challenge yourself to learn new skills and add variety to the work that you do.** Explore taking on new roles in your department.

- **Engage in activities that nourish your creativity and energize you.** Remember that cooking class you took a few years ago? What about trying *Ultimate Frisbee* like you’ve always wanted? Spend some time thinking about an activity that you may have tried previously (and maybe not) that gets you away from work and really enjoying time doing something that you like to do.

- **Social support goes a long way!** Reach out to your family and friends. Make time to stay connected with loved ones. Sharing your feelings and letting others support you can provide a lot of emotional relief.

**CAPS GROUPS FOR STUDENTS - HOW THEY CAN HELP**

Each semester, CAPS offers a wide range of support and therapy groups for Penn students. Some groups are organized around a specific theme, such as eating concerns or dissertation support, while others involve a specific population, such as undergraduate women.

Groups offer a safe, supportive space for students to explore their concerns while gaining valuable support and feedback from their peers. In a typical CAPS group, 5-9 students meet weekly or bi-weekly with one or two CAPS counselors. It is normal for students to feel apprehensive initially about sharing personal information with fellow students. However, they quickly find that they are able to gain valuable validation from group members. Many students have shared how helpful the CAPS groups are in providing them with a place to vent their worries, explore patterns and try out different ways of relating to others.

For details on all of CAPS Winter/Spring 2010 groups, visit the group section of our website at [http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/html/groups.htm](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/html/groups.htm) or contact Group Coordinator Dr. Michele Downie at downie@exchange.upenn.edu.

**Mindfulness Meditation**

Anxiety and pessimistic thoughts about the future often interfere with one’s ability to study efficiently. By practicing mindfulness meditation, one can develop more control over these counterproductive thoughts and feelings. The Mindfulness Meditation Group meets every Wednesday from 5:15 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Newcomers, please come at 5:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Ella Ray at (215) 898-7021 or elray@upenn.edu

**Meet Our New Staff!**

Dr. Leilani Crane, Staff Psychologist

Leilani, a Dartmouth alum, holds graduate degrees in religion and international finance. Her research interests include multiracial/multicultural identity and the treatment of eating disorders. Dr. Crane serves on the Multicultural Concerns Committee of the Division of Psychoanalysis of APA.