

# Returning to 'Normal' Life...Whatever That is? – College Counselling Blog #6

Cast your mind back to when your life was 'normal'... what did it look like? How did it feel? What happened there? Did you like it?

## What is 'normal' to you?

March 2020 saw COVID – 19 change a lot of people's lives. The last year and a half has been a very uncertain time. Some people may have been more resilient to the things happening around them, some took it in their stride and others enjoyed the comforts of being able to stay at home.

However, we cannot get away from the dark cloud that COVID brought with it. Lots of people have lost loved ones, many became anxious and scared and others have been affected socially and financially.

For those of you that maybe started college last year, many of you would have been logging in to TEAMS each morning from your home. For a lot of you, this may have meant that you were unable to make new friends or maintain old friendships. Some may have found online learning impossible, for a number of reasons. This may have left you feeling alone.

Returning to college or coming to college for the first time may feel very daunting and many of you may find socialising and being around people again, difficult.

Even if you are not affected by social anxiety, you can use the tips below to look out for others and lend a hand...

- Firstly, NORMALISE how you feel. There are more people than you realise that suffer from social anxiety... Even the most confident people. Also, our social habits have had to adapt, so changing back can be hard.

- JOURNALING can be extremely useful to help you recognise what is going on for you, in those moments where your mouth goes dry and your mind goes blank. Sit with them... is this something you can work on?
- TALKING to someone you trust about how you feel, can really help. Don't be alone with it! This may be a friend, a teacher, a family member, or a student mentor.
- WORK ON IT... if social anxiety begins to affect your everyday life, it may be time to talk to a counsellor, to help you work through your thoughts and feelings.

If you notice that someone is shy or doesn't get involved much, quietly chat to them, make sure their ok and see if there is anything they need. Respect what they ask for, it may not be a good time for them. Most of all...  
BE KIND!

Sometimes, all you can do is SMILE and that might be all it takes to make another person's day a little brighter. It's a superpower, try it!

[You can find out more about social anxiety here](#)

If you would like to talk to a college counsellor, you can email us at:  
[counsellorreferral@nptcgroup.ac.uk](mailto:counsellorreferral@nptcgroup.ac.uk)