

## Mental Health and Self-Care Guide for 1Ls

Over the next three years at HLS, you will meet people who will become your life-long friends and explore academic and career opportunities that will become your new passions. You will also likely face unexpected challenges – both related and not related to law school – that can take a toll on your mental health.

Between readings, cold calls, exams, and job interviews, it is easy to get overwhelmed. **Remember that all of your other classmates feel stressed and overwhelmed from time to time.** It's not just you.

Below please find some information and resources related to 1) mental health care and 2) self-care more generally.

### Mental Health Resources

First and foremost, when an unexpected challenge arises, please know that your BSA is there as a resource. Your BSA can connect you to the right resources, including seeking assistance and accommodations from the Dean of Students Office. You can speak with your BSA or with any BSA with whom you have a relationship.

Though we will go into detail about how to schedule an appointment with [Counseling and Mental Health Services](#) (CAMHS), please note there is an urgent care line that is available 24-hours. The number for that line is: (617) 495-5711.

Harvard University Health Services (HUHS) offers free mental health counseling services to all Harvard students. These services are fully covered by your mandatory student health fee. If you want to talk to a therapist in an informal, confidential setting, you can schedule an initial telephone consultation via:

- [The Patient Portal](#); OR
- By phone (617-495-2042)

Initial phone consultations are scheduled within 48 hours after your first contact with HUHS. During your initial telephone consultation, you will talk to a licensed clinician who will help you access the right services. Based on your needs, the clinician will make recommendations, which may include an appointment with a therapist or psychiatrist at HUHS.

You may wonder whether it is even necessary to talk to a therapist. Some students worry that seeing a therapist means they are “crazy” or “incompetent.” But think of it like this – you get regular health check-ups from your physician and dentist to make sure you stay physically healthy, so why not talk to a mental health counselor in times of challenge to make sure you stay emotionally healthy?

Clinicians at HUHS can help you manage with a variety of concerns, including difficulties with focus and concentration, relationship problems, and academic and career planning concerns. Seeking help from a licensed professional is a way to work through a difficult time, and

everyone goes through difficult times while they are at Harvard. Many BSAs have utilized mental health services at HUHS, and we are more than happy to help you navigate the process.

You may feel benefits after one to six counseling sessions at HUHS, but you may also need more time. Based on your needs, your therapist may refer you to a community-based clinician who is not part of the HUHS network. Seeing a non-HUHS clinician can have financial implications because mental health services received outside of HUHS are not covered by your mandatory student health fee. However, your HUHS clinician will work with you to develop a course of action that meets your needs.

If you have the Harvard Student Health Insurance Plan, seeing an in-network counselor in the area will be partially or totally covered. If you feel comfortable reaching out, your BSA might have a recommendation from their own experience or can connect you with someone who does. Harvard providers may also have recommendations based on your specific needs. You can find network providers through a list [here](#).

## **General Self-Care**

One way to take care of yourself at HLS is to continue to do the things that you enjoyed doing before you got here.

Do you enjoy chatting with your significant other, family, or friends? Make sure to carve out some time to connect with your loved ones. Do you go to the gym consistently? Figure out what time works best for you to hit the gym, drop your books and go! Do you like to get out in nature? Grab some friends, a [Zipcar](#) or [bus](#), and go hiking somewhere around Boston.

Making sure to eat and sleep well is another important part of keeping healthy. To help with this, the [Harvard Center for Wellness](#) offers classes in yoga and meditation and discounted massages. The Smith Student Center offers access to [dietitians](#), though appointments require a referral from your mental health or general care provider.

Below we have listed a few suggestions for working out, grocery shopping, and spiritual care. A more comprehensive list of resources can be found [here](#).

## **Harvard University Gyms**

- Hemenway is the gym on the law school campus.
  - If you like group classes, there are plenty of free classes throughout the week, such as yoga, spin, pilates, and more.
  - There is also a basketball/volleyball court upstairs and a squash court downstairs, along with standard gym equipment throughout the rest of Hemenway. Sign up for intramural sports at the involvement fair!
- The Malkin Athletic Center is the larger gym facility located in Harvard Square.
  - Your Harvard ID grants you access to this gym as well.
  - The MAC has an indoor pool, more class offerings, and a larger facility overall.

### **Want to go for a hike, bike, or go climbing?**

- Check out AllTrails.com. There are some great trails accessible by bus or with a Zipcar.
- The Minuteman Bikeway is a 10-mile trail that runs from Bedford to Alewife and passes through Lexington and Arlington.
- Brooklyn Boulders is an indoor climbing gym less than a mile from campus.

### **Other (Non-Exercise Related) Fun Things:**

- Take a walk through the square and grab a coffee or go read a book somewhere off campus. Go hang out by the Charles River or in the quad of the college, which is gorgeous in the fall.
- Go to a new restaurant. Our list of recommendations can be found here.
- Visit Boston! There are a ton of things to do in the city proper. Check out a list here.

### **Grocery Stores Near Campus**

- Star Market, 49 White St, Cambridge, MA 02140
- Star Market, 275 Beacon St, Somerville, MA 02145
- Whole Foods Market, 340 River St, Cambridge, MA 02139
- Trader Joe's, 748 Memorial Dr, Cambridge, MA 02139

### **Harvard Chaplains**

- Chaplains from nearly every faith tradition and agnostic and atheist chaplains are available.
  - [chaplains@harvard.edu](mailto:chaplains@harvard.edu)
  - Telephone: (617) 495-5529