



# Tips for Wildcat Grads!

## 9 strategies to navigate the transition

*CONGRATULATIONS GRADS! As you navigate through this next phase of your journey, we hope that you celebrate your accomplishment and that you take care of yourself. We have some tips to help ensure that journey is healthy and fruitful! You will always be a wildcat, and as we know...*

*EVERYDAY IS A GREAT DAY TO BE A WILDCAT!*



**1. Acknowledge your emotions (all of them!)** Graduating is a major milestone, and something to celebrate! However, positive things can be stressful too. It's normal to have a range of emotions at this time: you may be happy AND anxious. You may be proud AND have some regrets. You may be looking forward to moving on, while also experiencing feelings of loss (your college experience and all of the people and places connected with that). This is normal, and it's important to allow yourself to feel the whole range of emotions you are experiencing.

**2. Foster your connections.** Reach out to supportive friends, family members, and mentors. Social support is one of the most significant keys to successfully manage change. Being able to talk things through, and give voice to our feelings decreases stress and allows us to gain better perspective. Make plans to maintain the campus connections that are meaningful and important to you. At the same time, be open to developing new connections.

**3. Remind yourself of all the transitions you have already navigated.** When facing a new challenge, it's important to think about all the challenges we have already faced, to remind ourselves of our ability to navigate change. Remember your first day at UNH? If you could go back and give yourself some advice what would you tell yourself? Looking back, you now know that you managed that transition, but at the time it may have felt overwhelming.

**4. Focus on the basics.** Make sure to take care of yourself. Sleep, nutrition and exercise are often the first things neglected when we are stressed and in times of transition. Taking some steps to prioritize your physical wellbeing is going to have a positive impact on your emotional wellbeing.

**5. Intentionally Use Positive Coping Strategies.** Use the strategies that you know work for you, and maybe try some new ones as well. Mindfulness, journaling, creative outlets like drawing or painting, music, and spending time in nature are a few examples of things that help to decrease stress.



**6. Be patient with yourself.** Whatever your next step is going to be after graduation, it's going to be a change. This is an exciting time, but also requires some adjustment. Allow yourself some time to adjust, don't expect yourself to have everything figured out at once. Tackle things one thing at a time!

**7. Look to role models for inspiration.** Who inspires you? What challenges and obstacles did they navigate? Knowing how other people navigated challenges can give us great ideas, and can also remind us that we are not alone.



**8. Recognize that change is constant.** Throughout our lives we encounter many transitions. We want to face these transitions, without letting them throw us completely off balance. Looking at the bigger picture of our lives, and how these experiences have helped us grow can be a helpful reminder.

**9. Realize that nobody has this all figured out.** You have undoubtedly learned a lot and have grown a lot in your time at UNH. While you worked hard to earn your degree, this is not an end-point. A degree does not mean you have everything figured out. Continue to learn, continue to challenge yourself, and don't be afraid to ask questions!

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us.”



~ Ralph Waldo Emerson



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