Recognizing Distress

Counseling Issues and reasons for referral
1. Don’t assume that all LGBTQ identified individuals are in distress, have mental health issues, or are struggling!

2. As allies, you:
   a. Are not expected to be a counselor, just a support person!
   b. May be needed to provide information and resources on campus and in the community.
   c. May encounter serious issues which require a professional counselor
      * The WSU Counseling and Testing Center is available resource on campus and has triage-walkin appointments daily. Call at 978-3440 or walk a student over!
*We provide individual and group services for students, faculty, and staff on the WSU campus.

3. Possible warning signs of a distressed student: (i.e. changes from previous observable behaviors or if you have never interacted with the student be aware of some that leaves you feeling alarmed or concerned)
   a. Has the student stopped going to class?
   b. How are their grades or ability to concentrate? Are they keeping up with assignments?
   c. Are they working? How is that going?
   d. Are there changes in daily functions such as:
      1) Sleeping more or less than usual
      2) Crying
      3) Weight gain or loss
      4) Stopped participating in activities they used to enjoy
      5) Do they talk of excessive partying or substance use?
   e. Watch for severe anxiety:
      1) Are they nervous talking to you?
      2) are they out of breath or sweating?
      3) Are they curled into the chair or hunched over?
      4) Do they complain of headaches or physical ailments?
      5) Do they avoid interacting with others?
   f. Refer counseling to any student who voices suicidal thoughts or feelings or thoughts of harming others.
      * Suggest walking them over to the Counseling and Testing Center to talk to a counselor, calling to set up an appointment with them in your office, you can also make a report the WSU University Behavioral Intervention Team website at http://webs.wichita.edu/?u=ubit&p=/index/about your concerns and someone from the team will follow up.

4. Find out about each person’s support system.
   a. friends, family
b. who do they have to talk to?

c. what do they do when they are feeling down? Coping skills

5. A good guideline to use is if you are feeling overwhelmed or worried about a student, referring them is the best choice!