

Getting Along With Your Roommate

Most freshmen don't have a choice when it comes to choosing a roommate but must instead live with whoever was chosen for them. Even if you are given a choice, living with someone else other than your family can be complicated. Here are some tips to help you with getting to know your roommate.

Share personal information with each other

Ask your roommate questions that might help you find out more about his/her background, such as:

- What can you tell me about your family? Is it big or small? Do you know your extended family very well?
- What are your friends are like?
- Where are you from? What is your hometown like?
- What are your favorite activities, interests and hobbies?

Make sure you discuss your emotional styles

The way you convey your feelings can effect how easy it is for others to get along with you. How do you react when someone upsets you? Do you put on a happy face but are angry inside? When you are feeling down do you need to be alone? Talking to your roommate about some of these things will make the months ahead go by smoothly. Here are some more things that you can talk about with your roommate.

- What are the things that really annoy you?
- What makes you smile when you are mad?
- How do you react to bad news?
- How do you deal with stressful situations?
- What is your mood most of the time?
- What kinds of things make you really tense or uptight?
- How do you let people know you're angry?
- How do you deal with stress?

Discuss Likes and Dislikes

In any relationship there will be similarities as well as differences. You and your roommate need to discuss important information about your likes and dislikes. For example, are you an early bird? Will you wake your roommate up if he/she is a night owl? What if you are a clean freak and your roommate is messy? If you talk about your differences from the get go then it will be easier to compromise about the things that are different. Some conversation starters:

- How do you feel about people borrowing your things?
- How important is it to keep the room clean and neat?
- How much sleep do you need to function throughout the day?
- How do you feel about drugs and drinking?

- What are your feelings about dating?
- What are your thoughts on having people of the opposite sex stay in our room?
- What kind of music do you like?
- How hard/easy is it for you to make friends?
- How important are grades and school to you?

Living with someone is not easy, especially when your backgrounds, emotional styles and likes and dislikes are completely different or even if they are too similar. By following the above guidelines and keeping an open line of communication between the two parties involved, living with your roommate should not be a dreadful or stressful situation, but can instead add to your enjoyment of college.