



# HEADING TO HIGHER ED

A PREP GUIDE TO HELP WITH THE  
TRANSITION TO HIGHER  
EDUCATION

✓ Set  
Goals

✓ Stay  
Focused

✓ Succeed in  
School

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# WELCOME

This guide will help you prepare for the next exciting chapter in your academic career!

Use this guide to help you set your academic and social goals, determine what supports you have in place, and identify skills on how to get yourself organized and ready.

I hope that you find it helpful!



ENJOY,

DR. MARILISA MOREA  
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

# CONTENT



## **1. SET SOME GOALS**

Look at some goals that you would like to achieve these next few years and identify ways on how you can meet them.

## **2. GET A ROUTINE**

Find ways to keep you focused, organized and structured, as a way to transition into your first year in Higher Education.

## **3. FIND STRATEGIES FOR WORRIES**

Identify ways to help when feeling anxious about what's ahead as you start your next academic journey.

## **4. HIGHLIGHT THE POSITIVES**

Remind yourself of ways that you have managed when you were feeling distressed in the past. Also, look at your strengths that will help when doubts begin to surface.

## **5. IMPORTANT RESOURCES**

Keep track of important resources on campus (ex. registrar offices, library programs, etc.) to ensure you know exactly where you can reach out for support if and whenever it's needed.

## **6. THINGS TO CONSIDER**

Tips of things to think about as you head into that first year of higher education.

# LET'S SET SOME ACADEMIC GOALS

List some academic goals that you would like to accomplish this upcoming year in the boxes below. Then state what you will do to achieve these goals.

ACADEMIC GOAL

WAYS TO ACHEIVE IT

ACADEMIC GOAL

WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT

ACADEMIC GOAL

WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT

ACADEMIC GOAL

WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT



# LET'S SET SOME SOCIAL & OTHER GOALS

List some goals that you would like to accomplish this upcoming year in each category listed below. Then state what you will do to achieve those goals.

SOCIAL GOAL

WAYS TO ACHEIVE IT

SOCIAL GOAL

WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT

RESUME ITEM GOALS

WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT

RESUME ITEMS GOALS

WAYS TO ACHIEVE IT





# LET'S GET A ROUTINE

Think about ways that you can adapt or tweak your current routine to create a good sense of balance when you start school.

## Sleep Routine

Do I need to head to bed or wake up earlier, be more consistent?

## Eating Routine

Can I drink more water, try to make healthy choices?

## Exercise Routine

How can I incorporate more activity into my day/week?

## Social Routine

How can I make more of an effort to socialize or be with others?

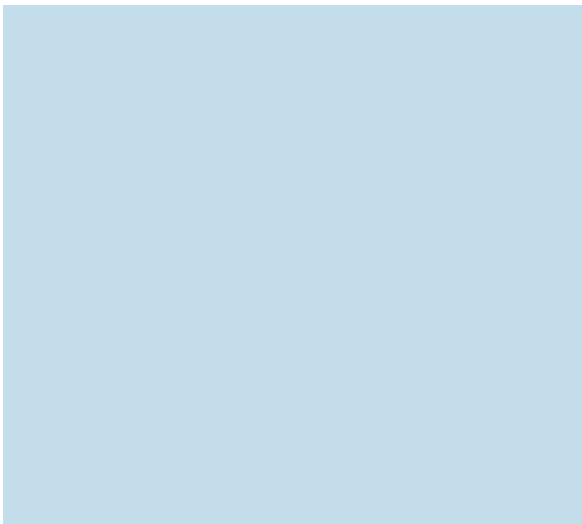
Zzz

# LET'S GET A ROUTINE

Think about ways that you can alter your current habits to put your best foot forward in your Higher Education journey.

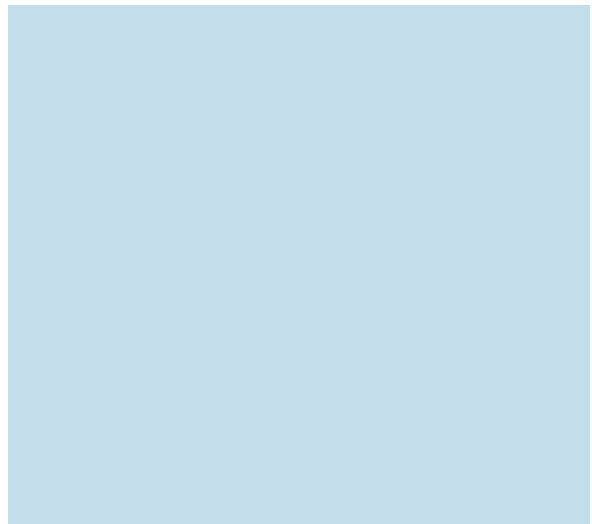
## Study Habits

How can I chunk my work so that it's more manageable?



## Organization

What aids can I use to keep me on task (agenda, calendar, etc.)?



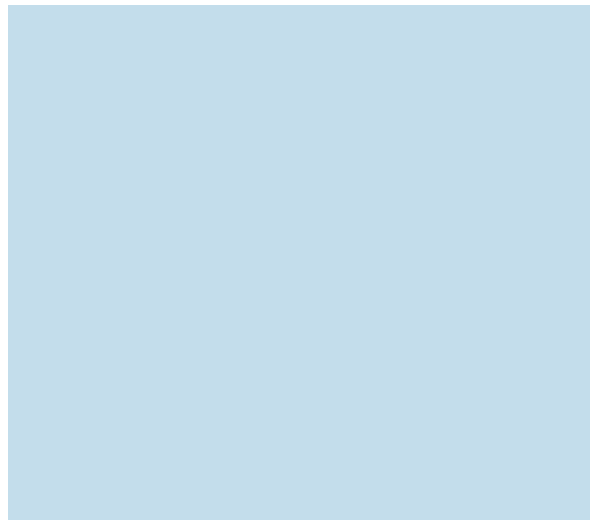
## Time Management

How can I use my time effectively so that I don't get burnt out?



## Limit Setting

What boundaries can I set for myself so I can use my time well?





# LET'S MANAGE THOSE WORRIES

Time to find some ways to work on those unwanted ANTs (Automatic Negative Thoughts) that come up. Check mark the worries that are difficult for you.

I am worried that I will not meet friends or that my current friends will be too busy or unavailable to hang out with me anymore.

I am worried that I will have a hard time adapting to level and volume of work that is expected.

I am worried that I won't do well academically despite trying really hard and studying a lot.

I am worried that I won't meet my potential or do well in my program no matter how hard I try.

I am worried that the transition to higher education will be too much to handle.

I am worried that I won't be able to balance all of the responsibilities of school, family, friendships, relationships or taking care of myself.

**OTHER WORRIES I HAVE:**





## Recognize the ANTs

Identify which worries are getting the best of you. By recognizing them, you are able to understand how they are taking over your feelings.



## Challenge Them

You can start to challenge your ANTs by:

- Looking at the facts, not the feelings
- See if there is any truth to them
- Focus on things that can change
- Use the chart on page 10



## Use Other Coping Skills

Use other ways to manage your anxiety

- See the list on page 11 for ideas
- Create your own list, too.

●

## MY NEGATIVE THOUGHT

THOUGHT:

THOUGHT:

THOUGHT:

THOUGHT:

●

## MY COUNTER ARGUMENTS

(Is it True? What does the evidence show?)

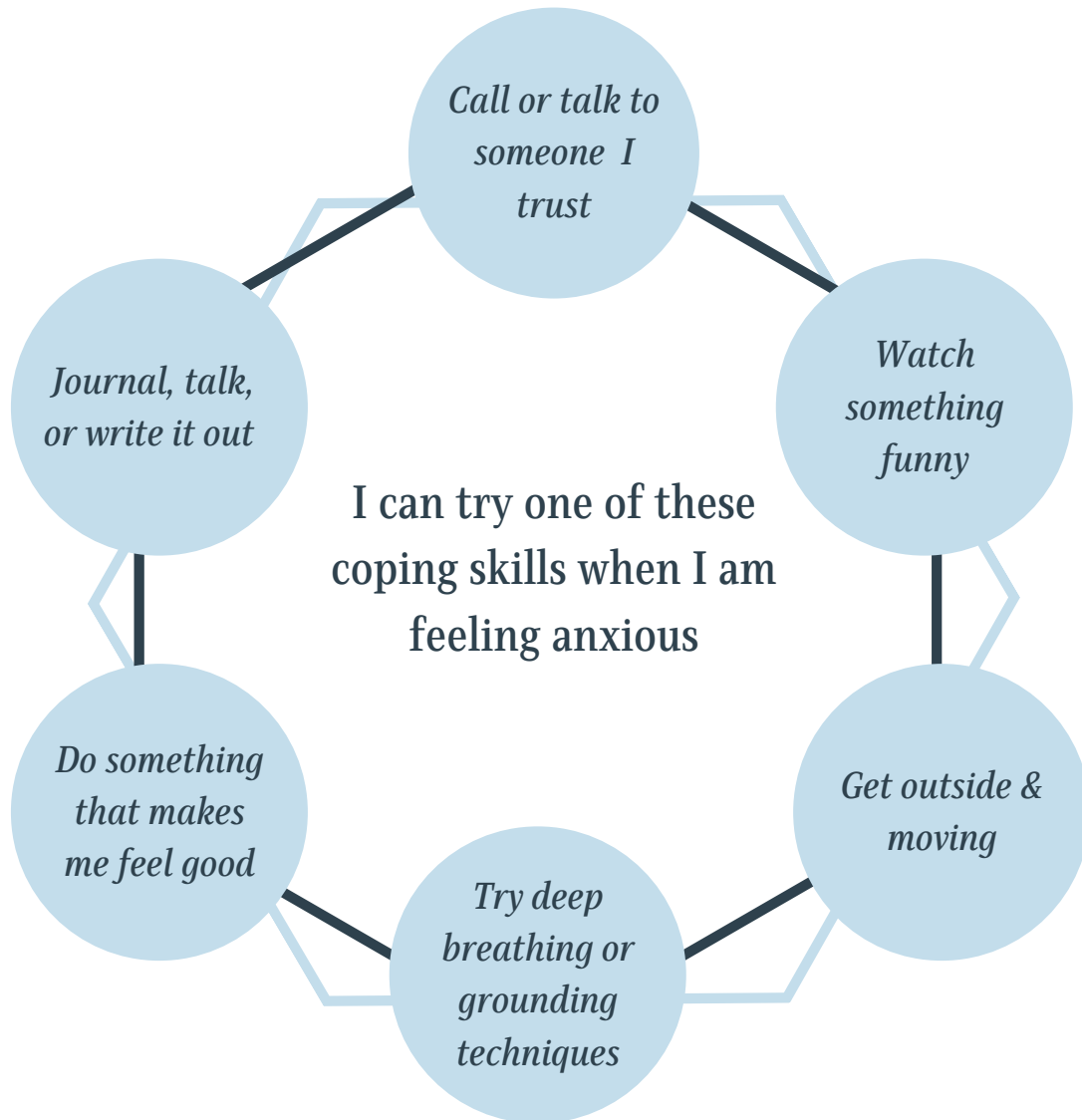
FACTS:

FACTS:

FACTS:

FACTS:

# COPING SKILLS



OTHER COPING SKILLS I CAN USE:

# LET'S LOOK AT YOUR STRENGTHS

Use this page to identify your areas of strength and sources of support.

## **Accomplishments, Strengths, & Positive Attributes**

Write out a list of things you are proud of, feel good about, and love about yourself that will help to encourage you when things get challenging.

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## **Sources of Support**

Write a list of people that you can call, write or reach out to when you need support or encouragement.

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# POSITIVE MANTRAS

Write down some inspirational quotes or sayings that have helped you stay positive and motivated to believe in yourself.

A large, empty light blue rectangular area intended for writing down inspirational quotes or sayings.



# IMPORTANT RESOURCES

Use this template to keep track of all the important resources that are available to you on campus. This will come in handy when you need some support, but can't remember exactly where to find it!



NAME OF RESOURCE



CONTACT INFORMATION

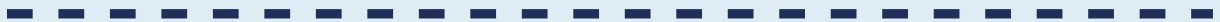
phone number:  
email:



LOCATION OF RESOURCE



WHAT DO THEY HELP WITH?



NAME OF RESOURCE



CONTACT INFORMATION

phone number:  
email:



LOCATION OF RESOURCE



WHAT DO THEY HELP WITH?



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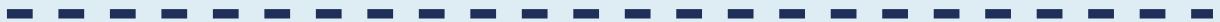
phone number:  
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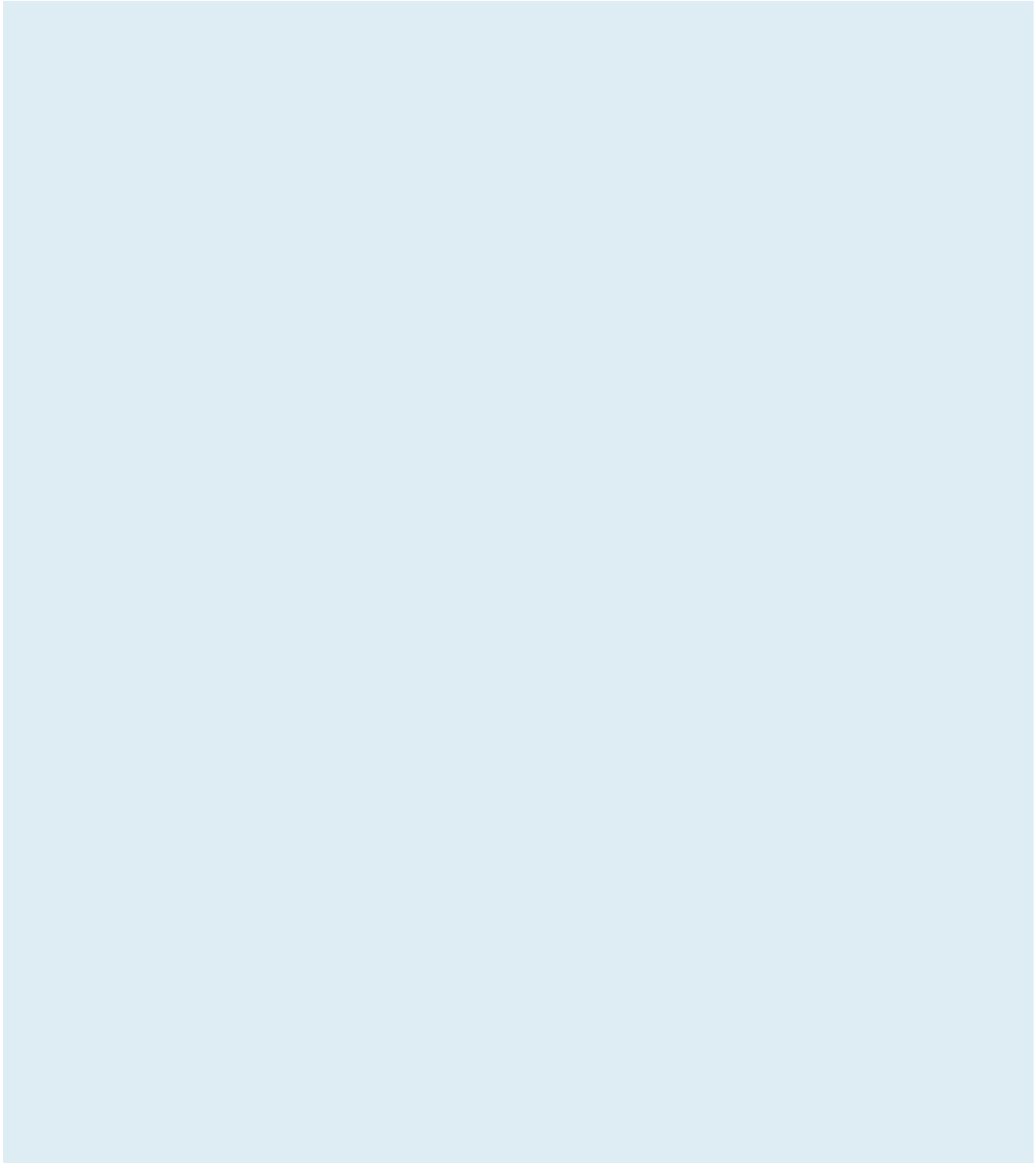
# THINGS TO CONSIDER

Here are some things to think about as you begin your next chapter of your academic career.

- Your first year will be about transitioning and learning the ropes; how to study, how to find balance, meeting and navigating new friendships and relationships, what to focus on, how to time-manage.
- You will be with students who likely have similar values as you; if you were a top student, so will most others entering your program, too. If you were more of a hand's on learner, your program also likely reflects this, and many of your peers probably have similar strengths. Don't look at this as competition, but as resources and opportunities to learn from others.
- You are NOT a failure if the program you enter with is not the one that you exit with. Many students need to use their time at school to figure out what's the best fit for them.
- You do NOT have to have it all figured out as soon as you enter (or even a bit later, too). But try put options in place to give you a good head start (volunteer or internship opportunities, network, network, network!)

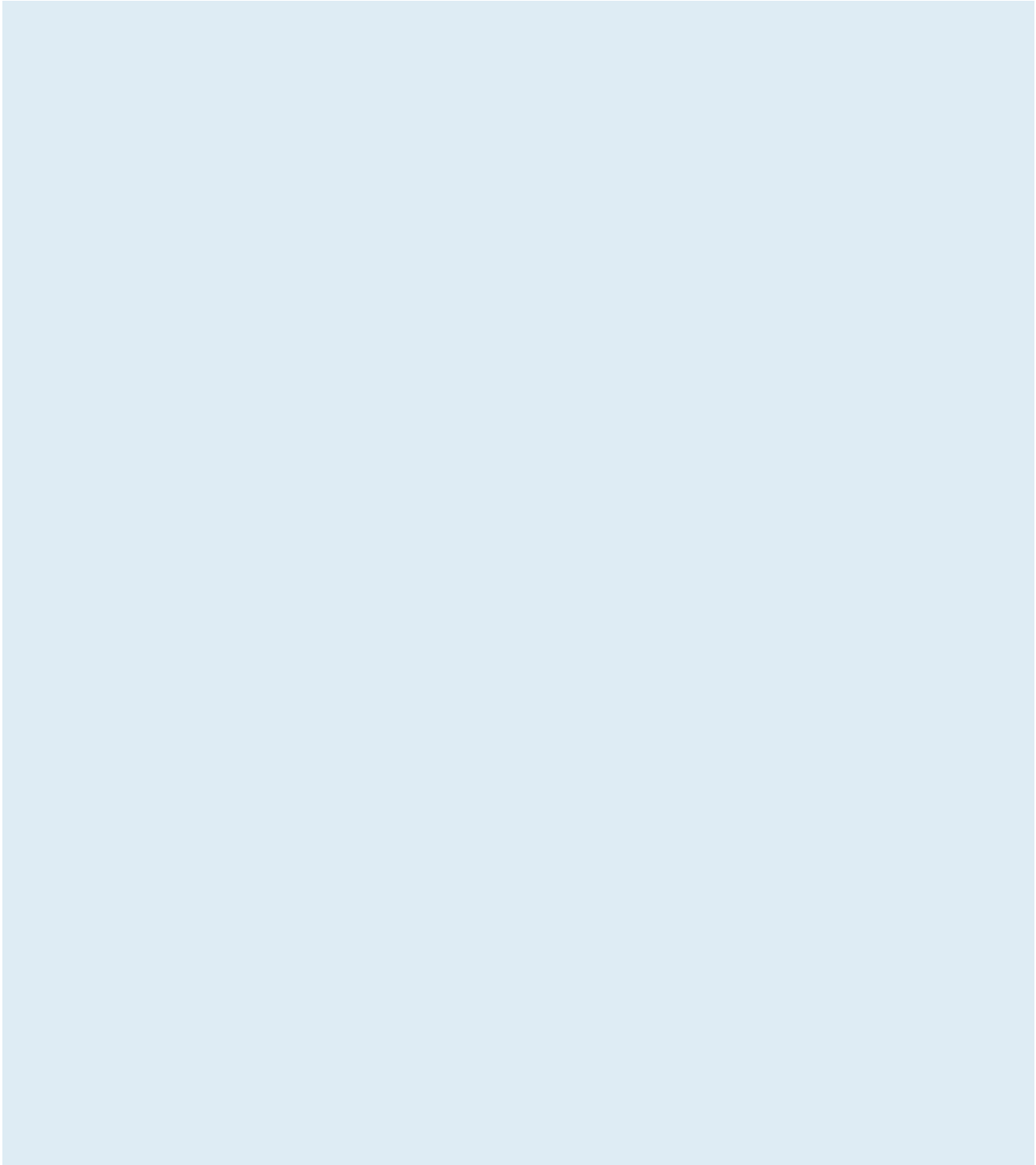
# IMPORTANT NOTES

Use this page to write down some notes that will help support you with your goals.



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# FINAL THOUGHTS

## HOPE YOU FOUND SOME INSPIRATION

I hope that this guide was helpful for you to find some ways to understand your anxiety with your transition to Higher Education, challenge some of the negative thoughts you might be experiencing, and offer some positive ways to start your next venture on a confident and positive note.

**Dr. Marilisa Morea** is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist.

She has other workbooks and journals available for purchase that might be helpful. To learn more about her, and for more resources and information on all things mental health, check out her TikTok or Instagram pages

@dr.morea or head to her website:

[www.monarchtherapy.ca](http://www.monarchtherapy.ca)



### Check out the *Get It Together* Series!

A series of self-guided workbooks and journals aimed to heal low self-esteem and boost self-confidence through information, tips, tricks & more! Check out Dr. Morea's website for purchase details.