

# For Students

Reactions to being hazed can vary greatly; two people who go through the same experience might react quite differently based on a combination of the extent of the hazing, individual characteristics, and past experiences.

## Potential Reactions to Hazing

- Anger, confusion, betrayal, fear, resentment, embarrassment, humiliation, hopelessness, helplessness, anxiety, and depression are all normal reactions to being hazed; some individuals have become suicidal
- Physical consequences can include exhaustion, headaches, hangovers, illnesses, injuries, and scars
- It's common to believe that things won't get worse, though they often do
- You may want the hazing to stop, but don't want to get the group in trouble
- You may want to leave, but fear the consequences or feel like you've invested too much already to walk away
- Self-blame can occur and is fueled by hazers who tell new members that they will let others down if they leave or tell anyone what is going on

## Testimony From Others

The impact that prolonged hazing can have on one's mental health is described first-hand by Adam Zwecker (Cornell University '04) in an excerpt from his award-winning paper, "Hazed and Confused."

"It is not hard to imagine that drastically recreating oneself to take on a whole new persona must take a significant emotional toll on a pledge. The pressure of having to constantly manage one's impression upon those around him and the perpetual difficulty of acting a part around one's new group of friends to maintain a desired status among an in-group leads to a number of psychological struggles. Not surprisingly there were several kids who suffered meltdowns or became depressed to the point of contemplating suicide... After weeks of attempting to recreate one's personality many pledges must find themselves wondering who they are or who they have become."

"Some pledges successfully circumvent the process either because they already fit the mold of an Alpha Gam (not the real name) before they begin to pledge or because they are too headstrong to allow themselves to be broken down and recreated. Others aren't so fortunate. In my pledge class we had several kids suffer from depression that

was either brought on or exacerbated by pledging, and at least one of them contemplated and later attempted suicide."

"General melancholy and constant anxiety were everyday realities for most pledges, who lived in fear of the next line up or verbal assault by their older brothers. There was a look in the eyes of all of the pledges, who had to eat at a separate table from all of the brothers, of paranoia. Meals typically became silent meals more out of the fear of drawing the attention of frat brothers who might decide to turn a routine dinner into another opportunity to degrade their brothers to be. On weekends it was not unusual to see anxiety overcome many pledges as their fears and suspicions stemming from the approaching Sunday line up began to eat at them. Since quizzes and chores assigned to pledges were intended to be nearly impossible to accomplish, it was inevitable that some pledges would have unfulfilled duties and incorrect answers to quiz questions that would soon come to haunt them in the form of an additional 100 push ups and being ceremonially chastised by frat brothers."

## What You Can Do

- Stay connected with friends outside of the group. Groups that haze often try to isolate their new members from others who might challenge them to question what they are going through.
- Talk with others about what you are going through. You do not have to keep it a secret. Demanding secrecy is a common practice designed to protect people who are abusing others. You have a right to tell anyone anything you want about what you are going through, even if you were made to promise that you would not do so.
- Seek guidance from your parents/guardian or other family member.
- Refuse to participate. Others before you have done so.
- Join together with other new members to refuse to be hazed. There is power in numbers because groups depend on getting new members to join. Some fraternity members admit that they became very worried when it appeared that a group of new members might rebel, because the financial consequences to the group would be serious if the new members left. Hazers don't want new members to realize how much power they have, so they work hard to keep them subjugated.
- Leave the group. This is hard to do, but is always an option. Walking away from hazing takes strength. Don't believe it if anyone tries to tell you that leaving is a sign of weakness or that you weren't tough enough to hack it. Quitting when you are being hazed takes character.
- Talk to a healthcare provider to help you sort out what to do.
- Seek other support services as needed, such as advising offices within each college or school.
- Report the hazing, confidentially if you prefer, to Christine Ziev, Director of Student Activities. You can also contact her via [email](#) or by phone is 508-831-5291.

# Hazing Education for Student Clubs

Anti Hazing Education awareness is provided annually to student clubs. The Student Activities Office hosts an annual series of speakers open and advertised to all clubs and members.

## Opportunities for Education and Involvement

Annual Speakers

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Continuing Online Education

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