

# You're going to be fine, trust me

Dear Columbia new freshman (welcome!), sophomore, junior, or senior: you're going to be fine.

This university challenges everyone who enrolls. The ways in which your limits, perspectives, and personality change might shock you as time progresses. Some people mesh with Columbia well from the beginning of NSOP; some people struggle to enjoy it at all, over the course of any of their 4 years. But this process grows and builds you: regardless of whatever perception of yourself you might have right now, it will inevitably mutate in subtle ways every day for the rest of college.

I'm excited for the changes that will take place for you. If you had trouble making friends during NSOP, you will attain more interesting and caring friends over the next few years. If your first-semester required coursework is already giving you doubts about your fitness here, you will learn to study and manage your time (by necessity). If you believe you're in a precarious state mentally or emotionally - don't worry. I promise you that someone else has been in that position, that they have made it out, and so can you.

I'm confident making all these assertions because I've observed it all happen in my classmates, close friends, and myself. I've had the fortune of watching people grow and change in ways they didn't expect, and all these people have become strong, confident, and aware regardless of where they started. That's why I'm excited for you, even if I don't know you (and it's frustratingly easy to not know someone at Columbia). I'm excited for you to be surprised by your own ability to empathize, persevere, and grow.

I know so many people who have questioned (or continue to question) whether they deserve to be at Columbia, or whether they even belong here. I've spent a lot of time mulling over those exact doubts. I promise you that someone else has been in your position, however bad, and that they left that position happier and more well-rounded.

Pause, breathe, and maybe laugh at it all. Chances are you're actually doing great. But if you're not, trust me - you're going to be fine.

*I've put up the plaintext here:* <https://pastebin.com/Q8F7ARwq>