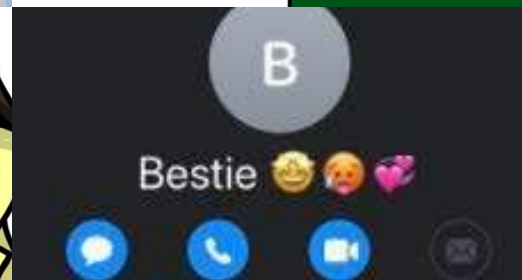
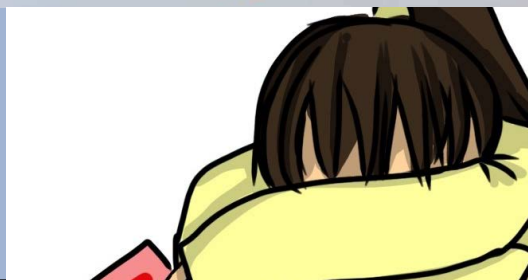
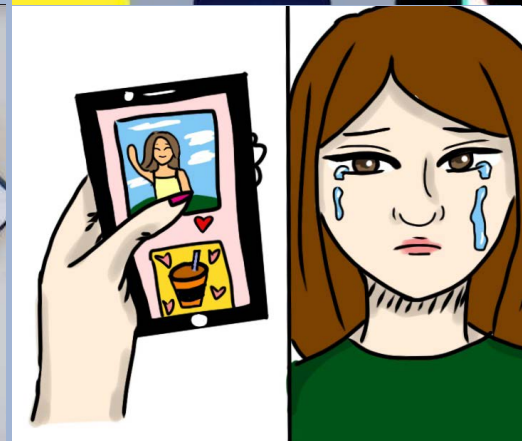


Issue 2



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Racial Disparities in Women's Healthcare

Due to the rise of COVID-19, there has been medical focus on the elderly because they are more susceptible due to their weaker immune systems.. However, recently there has been a shift of focus to minorities, especially the Hispanic community. Why are Hispanic communities reporting higher cases of COVID-19 compared to whites or other ethnic minorities? The same reason why in 2017, African Americans made up 70% of gonorrhea cases and 50% of Chlamydia and Syphilis cases. The same reason why from 2013 to 2015, Native Hawaiians died of every cancer type more than other races. The culprit for all of these statistics and many more is called "Health Disparities"

According to News-Medical.net, health disparities are the inequalities that occur in the provision of healthcare and access to healthcare across different racial, age, and socioeconomic groups. There are many factors that play into health disparities such as the following: race, ethnicity, immigration status, disabilities, gender, sexual orientation, location, and income. Some health disparities however are more based on personal factors such as lack of access to healthcare, poverty, exposure to the person's past and current medical/minorities have a higher prevalence of chronic and poorer health outcomes. For the purpose of aspect of health disparities.



When talking about reproductive many concerning statistics. For instance, education and resources in minority HIV cases which go either untreated or conditions we see in minorities later in life evidence that pregnancy related deaths in Blacks and Natives Americans older than 30 are 4-5 times higher than white women. Blacks and Native Americans experience higher pregnancy related mortality rates (40.8 and 29.7 respectively) than other ethnic minorities. Switching to the Hispanic and Latino population, the AIDS epidemic affects Hispanics greater than any other race, causing them to make up 1/4th of the cases. Back in 2014, 56% of the teen pregnancies were unattended to and those numbers have hardly shifted since. As a group, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to get smaller dosages of pain medication than whites. These are only some of the reproduction disparities in Native Americans, Blacks, and Hispanics that have been seen over the past decade.

environmental problems, lack of education, or behavioral issues. Generally speaking, conditions along with higher mortality rates this article, we will be talking about the racial

illnesses and racial health disparities, there are according to Healthypeople.gov, the lack of communities have resulted in a large number of undiagnosed. This leads to larger health (Especially for ages 15-24). There is also

The health and racial disparities do not stop there. Blacks have a 10% higher cancer rate than whites. They also have double the infants deaths per a thousand compared to whites. In 2017, the amount of Hispanic teen suicide was double that of their white peers. Asian Americans are 80% more likely to be diagnosed with end-stage renal disease than whites. Finally, Native Americans infant death rate is 1.5 times higher than the national average. No ethnic minority is truly safe from experiencing disproportionality when it comes to health care in the United States.

- By all means, this issue is not a lost cause, there are many things you can do to help.
- Research nonprofit organizations in your city that aim to decrease this health disparity gap and volunteer with them.
- Create your own campaign that aims to teach disadvantaged communities about health issues that could be affecting them.
- Propose an action plan to local doctors and physicians to help out disadvantaged communities.
- Promote healthy eating and habits to people in your life.
- MOST IMPORTANTLY: Research about the issues and have conversations about them

Health disparities and race is not going to completely disappear anytime soon, but it can lessen over time. From implicating what you know into your day to day life, or by creating a fundraiser event to support research into these issues, you have the power to make this change.

Written by Leighton Gammage

Edited by Nathalia Ramkissoon

Graphics by Zoey Hall

Premenstrual Syndrome

Menstruation. Premenstrual syndrome. Perimenopause. Menopause. Ovulation. How often have you heard these terms? I'm going to take a wild guess and say, not very often. While these terms are all part of the health of half of the world's population, discussion around them is still highly stigmatized. This stigma can manifest itself in vastly different ways, with certain microaggressions such as "Oh is it that time of the month again?" or perhaps, even blatant miseducation and myths, such as that using tampons will make you lose your virginity³. This last myth, for many, seems just ridiculous. But in reality, miseducation about women's health is so intense and widespread, that this myth is relatively common. I've had many friends express their discomfort and embarrassment about buying tampons in public stores, which I have to admit, I have experienced as well. Why do we feel this sense of embarrassment for something that is necessary for the health and wellbeing of our body?

There are so many aspects of this issue that are of the utmost importance to work into our discussions, and just to work to understand. Some of these include period poverty, women's health in sexual education, and the shaming of girls on their periods. Education around all of these issues is critical (and there are resources at the bottom of this article to learn more!). But, in this article, we are going to address one specific term: premenstrual syndrome.

Premenstrual syndrome, more commonly referred to as “PMS”, is a combination of physical and emotional symptoms that women get before starting their period⁶. 90% of women experience PMS, although, it’s manifestations in each person can be vastly different⁶. For some, PMS can be so intense that it forces them to stay home, but for others, PMS can just be a small headache⁴. In the days after ovulation, a time period in the menstrual cycle, hormone levels fall so drastically in your body that it causes these physical and emotional symptoms. After hormones like estrogen and progesterone rise again, these symptoms often fade.

PMS, however, aren't the only symptoms that you might feel before a period. Half of women who have PMS, also report having other health problems that get worse in the days before their period¹. Some of these health issues include chronic fatigue syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome, bladder pain syndrome, and anxiety and depression disorders. PMS can exacerbate the symptoms of many of these issues before a period.¹

Symptoms can differ for each woman -- but there are also varying types of PMS. An estimated 5% of middle-aged women suffer from PMDD, which is a more severe form of PMS. PMDD, or premenstrual dysphoric disorder, often happens in women with higher stress levels, a family history of depression, or a personal history of depression. PMDD can manifest itself in increased anger, anxiety, depression, irritability, and pain in the weeks leading up to your period. PMDD, can however, be treated and eased with the help of a doctor. Common treatments include antidepressants, birth control pills, pain relievers, and stress management. Of course, you should be discussing these symptoms with a doctor before prescribing anything to yourself, however.

So, how do you know that you have PMS or PMDD? For PMS, there is no single test that determines whether you have it. For the most part, if you experience symptoms that occur in the five days before your period multiple months in a row, end within four days after your period starts, and keep you from enjoying the things you normally enjoy: you probably have PMS1. PMDD, on the other hand, is much more intense and if you have symptoms such as anxiety, depression, increased anger or pain levels, then you might want to talk to your doctor about the possibility of having PMS4.

What can I do, generally, to ease symptoms of PMS or PMDD? Researchers suggest getting regular aerobic activity helps ease many of the emotional symptoms of PMS, as well as getting enough sleep. Additionally, eating healthily and finding other ways to cope with stress has been linked to a lessening in PMS symptoms. To ease symptoms, you can take over-the-counter pain medication to ease the physical pain, and you can talk to your doctor about prescription medicine if those don't help⁴.

PMS is normal. It happens to the majority of women with their period. It should never feel like something to be ashamed about, and it should never feel like a taboo and inappropriate topic. This article addresses the overview of PMS, but there is also so much more to include and understand about these discussions. It's important to also do your own research and learn everything you need to know for your unique body type and situations.



Written by Briga Kane

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Graphics by Lisa Li-Liang

Skincare

As teens, I'm sure many of us can relate to the struggle of breaking out right before that big event, or searching endlessly to find that one product that doesn't irritate our skin. Skincare is an often overlooked but critical part of self-care. As teens, our skin is adjusting to new hormones and factors, which makes caring for our skin even more important. Setting a good and responsible skincare routine can help preserve and keep your skin healthy for years to come.



What can you do to protect your skin as a teen? Well, one of the most notable changes occurring with teenage skin is the production of more oil. Adolescence causes hair follicles and sweat producing glands to mature, which paired with an increase in hormones, creates this oil ("Teenagers", 1). To counter this, experts recommend that teens wash their face once or twice a day with warm water and a soap-free cleanser. In addition to this, moisturizer is critical, and there are many over-the-counter products that can help reduce acne and oil. In choosing these products, however, experts recommend that teens choose products described as "nonacnegenic" and "noncomedogenic" because they do not cause black pores or acne ("Teenagers", 1). Moreover, avoiding products that are alcohol-based or contain oil will help strengthen teenage skin. While it might surprise you, experts also recommend good nutrition, sleep, and exercise; general well-being will help your skin as well.

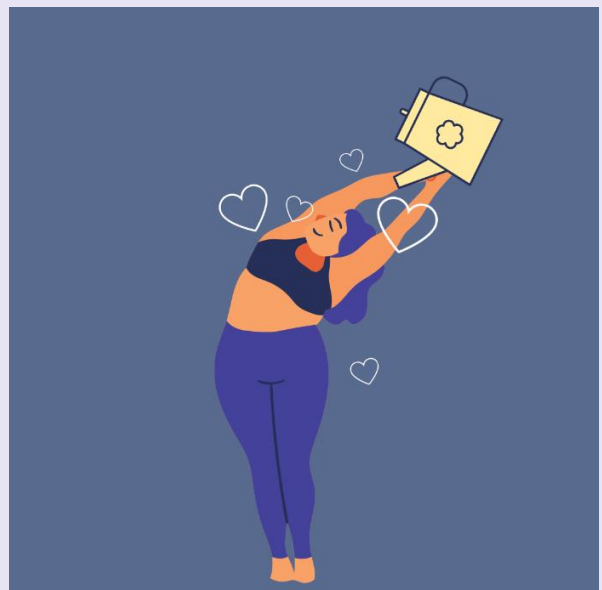
The most common skincare issue among teens is acne, which is when pores become clogged with excess oil or dirt. It's estimated that 95% of males and 85% of females have acne during their teenage years, so it is not a rare issue at all. Acne can be caused, or exacerbated, by genetic factors, excessive combing of hair, excessive sweating, pore blocking, stress, hormonal changes, and certain medications. The causes of acne have also been linked to diet. Specifically, diets that are high in dairy products (because these products have higher hormone levels) have been linked to a higher

amount of acne. To counter this, further research suggests that diets high in protein, and lower in dairy, can improve acne breakouts. In addition to diet, however, there are also other ways that acne can be eased. Avoiding excessive washing of skin and not rubbing or picking pimples will most likely help with breakouts. Washing your face regularly and avoiding pore-blocking or comedogenic products will also help ease acne. If self-treatment is ineffective, however, the next step should be talking to a dermatologist and seeking out professional treatment.

There is no magic product that will make your skin appear beautiful and resilient forever, as much as we might hope. However, there are certainly recommendations from experts that will help take care of skin. One dermatologist recommends that these five things should be a part of everyone's skin care routine: cleanser, serum, retinoid, moisturizer, and sunscreen. Everyone's skin is different and reacts differently to products, but ensuring that you look into these products will largely help take care of your teenage skin.

The way that we treat our skin throughout our teenage years will influence not only how it looks for the rest of our lives, but also our routines. Thus, ensuring that we are wearing sunscreen, for example, and not letting our skin burn, and using products to prevent acne, is one of utmost importance.

*Written by Brisa Kane
Edited by Claire Ottenstein
Graphics by Anna Babab
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Fitness Importance

The importance of fitness is pushed onto children at a young age, and rightfully so. Most people have a general understanding of the significance of fitness. Working out keeps your body healthy and having a good diet protects you from possible illness. Though like anything, “fitness” is a large category that affects the majority of people. I say this because there is a stigma that fitness doesn’t really matter in your youth. While it is true that being young usually means you’re already healthy, that doesn’t excuse not engaging in fitness.

To preface, each individual will be at a different stage in “fitness” and overall health. Your body is your body and therefore what works for you may not work for another person. Fitness is an individualized subject. For example, while we all should have a basic understanding of math, that doesn’t mean you have to become a mathematician, or pursue a math-heavy field. Relatively, for fitness, we all should engage in healthy choices but that doesn’t mean you have to engage as heavily in it as another person does. Here’s an example: an average person should work out for at least 30 minutes a day, versus an athlete who should work out for a longer time period. (Or in the case that someone is disabled, “fitness” is going to mean something else.) I want to stress that fitness is individualized because there is a stigma around the way our bodies should and should not look. “Fitness” means having a healthy body, and a healthy body is specific to you. Regardless of this, we all should still engage in activities that promote healthiness.



However, for a majority of people fitness goes back to the first point made. The idea

that since we are young, we are automatically healthy and therefore do not need to engage in fitness is wrong. To put it simply, think of a hurricane warning. Once the warning of a hurricane is put out, people begin to prepare for the incoming hit. You don’t prepare for the hurricane after it hits, you prepare beforehand. So, when it comes to health, we have always been warned about the dangers of not staying healthy. Unhealthiness can result in an increased chance of heart disease, strokes, high blood pressure, etc. If you would prepare for a hurricane before it hits, you should equally prepare your body before a potential disease hits. Even though you may be young, that doesn’t change the fact that you can still get sick at some point in your life. According to the CDC, heart disease is the number one leading cause of death for American citizens. About one in four people die of heart disease. What is the best way to prevent it? One easy answer: make healthy habits.

While it seems repetitive and unimportant, choosing to not take part in fitness is choosing to not prepare for a hurricane. The hurricane might not hit for a week or two, and heart disease (or any other illness) might not hit for a year or ten, but it can still hit you eventually. That is why it is important to keep up with fitness. Maybe you’ll be okay for right now, but you don’t know if you’re going to be okay in a few years—physically speaking. The reason why fitness is pushed onto us in school is to not only protect our bodies right now, but to help our bodies in the future. Working out, keeping a healthy diet, and avoiding harmful substances are the top three ways to avoid the chances of disease and illness.

Being healthy takes a lot of time and energy; however, again, fitness is individualized. Working out for even 20-30 minutes is great. You don’t need to hold yourself to other people’s standards of what’s “right.” As long as you’re working toward being fit for your body, then you’re in the right place. Though people often think a gym is needed to work out, or that you need to spend a ton of money on a healthy diet, this is not the

case. You can do 100 situps in your bedroom, or 20 push-ups before bed. You can do your best to avoid fast food, which is keeping a healthy diet. A healthy diet doesn’t have to mean three full meals solely containing nutrients. Sometimes it can simply mean not eating a lot of unhealthy foods. You don’t need weights to build strength. There are many other ways you can gain muscle. You could save up and build your own workout materials if that is of interest, or simply go on a jog everyday. If you can’t get running shoes, you can find a cardio workout you can do from home. There are endless ways you can find a way to work out.



Being fit and healthy does not mean going to the gym for an hour or two everyday and eating three nutrient-based meals while drinking a protein shake. It might mean that for some people, but not for everyone. Sometimes it’s avoiding junk food or doing 30 push ups. Regardless of what fitness means to you, it’s still important to ensure you’re actively engaging in healthy choices. The choices you make right now might not seem to affect you in this moment, but they can definitely affect you later in life. Just like the hurricane example, make sure you prepare for it before it hits. Not after. Make sure you keep your body healthy to avoid disease. Don’t wait until after you have something negative to begin making healthy choices. Healthy choices are an everyday act. So choose wisely.

Written by Seika Brown

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Seven Steps to Help Trust Issues

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Have you ever had “trust issues” with your friends? If so, you were probably hurt in the past and have trouble trusting new people. Or perhaps someone you know has experienced this dilemma. Either way, this article can help you better trust others, a skill anyone can benefit from.

#1: Address why you have “trust issues.”

There can be a whole slew of reasons why someone may have trouble trusting a friend. Did you have a bad experience with someone in the past? It can be hard to forgive someone after they have hurt you, but try your best to move on in the most healthy way you can. You can address the person or situation that you think your trust issues are rooted in before jumping into a new friendship with feelings of insecurity. Either way, it is up to you and your unique position. If your trust issues root in something that happened in the past with someone you're no longer friends with, try not to let that bad experience ruin your ability to trust new people. This is a new person, with hopefully no intentions of hurting you.

#2 Find someone to talk to about your trust issues

A Trust Partner. Delving into why you have trust issues can be scary and emotionally challenging, especially if you're experiencing trust issues with multiple of your relationships. Talk to a school counselor, coach, relative, or anyone else that has your best interest at heart. Having someone to help you identify the core of your trust issues problems is extremely helpful and can aid you in overcoming them. Know that you don't have to do it all on your own. The people around you are here to help!

#3: Rethink whether friendship X is worth keeping

Make sure you are getting what you need out of a friendship. If you just have trust-issues with one or two people, rethink whether these friends are worth keeping. Every relationship is a two-way street with embedded trust. Think back to a time that made you distrust your friend. Did they do something intentional to breach your trust or was it an honest mistake? Was it their problem or did you just view their mistake as a problem? Ask yourself these questions, jot down your thoughts, and reflect.



#4 Know that even if you do trust people again, you are inevitably going to be let down sometimes.

People aren't perfect. Acknowledge that there is always some degree of risk in every relationship. You mess up too. Everyone messes up. Instead of shying away from trusting others again because of the possible hurt it can cause, learn how to hurt well. Let yourself feel all of your emotions fully. Know that they are valid. Don't ignore how you feel. Journal. Create a comfortable environment. Know that hurting is a part of life; everyone experiences it sometimes even though no one tends to talk about it. Being mindful is key to giving yourself what you need to heal and is a tool you can use when learning to trust again.

#5 Start small to test the waters.

When learning how to trust again, pick someone you see often and start small. Picking someone you have repeated encounters with speeds up the process of trusting, as these repeated encounters already start to build assurance. So pick someone you see regularly, whether that be at school, on your commute, at an extracurricular activity, etc. Once you feel comfortable with someone, start small. Share a little bit about yourself. Let yourself be slightly vulnerable; ask for a favor, share how you're feeling, show interest in them. These small actions will be acknowledged and oftentimes reciprocated; everyone is eager to have a new good friend.

#6 Trust an animal.

A study done by the Journal of Research in Personality reported that pet owners who had their pets with them (or thought of them) when generating a list of life goals had much more confidence in achieving these goals. The study asked 165 pet owners to make these lists; one-third of them had their pets with them while they made their list of life goals, another third were told to write a bit about their pet to bring their pet to mind before making their list, and the last third made their list while their pet was in another room. Bottomline, an animal can offer a dependable, safe haven for you to engage with, which is one of the keys to fostering trust.

#7 Be trustworthy yourself.

You can't expect to trust others if you can't be trusted yourself. Being trustworthy can help you seek it out in others. Offer to help someone, do a favor, follow through on your obligations, keep your word. When someone else trusts you, it is a reminder that maybe you can trust too.

Know that learning to trust others again is a process. Try your best to put your past problems with trusting aside and not bring them into new relationships. Learning to trust again is a journey, not a race, so take your time.

<https://blogs.psychcentral.com/nlp/2016/11/trust-issues/>

<https://www.quickanddirtytips.com/health-fitness/mental-health/how-to-trust-people-again?page=1>

How to deal with Growing Up

It seems that there are so many times I pause and find that weeks, months, and even years have just passed by. Forgetting that there's nowhere to go but forward, until moments you lived through become simply memories. For many of us, the relationship we have with this dynamic force that seems to push us in unknown directions is quite a turbulent one. We romanticize our youth, long to stay in these moments forever, and hope that we live in stagnant bliss where the looming fear of adulthood can never touch us. There is real fear found when we stand before bridges that connect two chapters of our lives and are expected to let go without looking back. Childhood and adolescence hold an iron grip on our lives, and many people never want to leave. Through life as young people there begins to be a fundamental disconnect with the idea of impermanence, with even adults grappling with the truth of an ever-changing reality.

The honest truth behind this tricky stage to navigate is that many grow old, yet never grow up. We follow a physical trajectory of aging until we find our days numbered and, eventually, gone. There is nothing we can do to change the physicality of maturing, yet to ease this fear of growth we can learn to become more aware of ourselves, others, and our reality. There is an understandable fear that surrounds adulthood with its tasks of doing taxes, paying rent and mortgages, accumulating debt, and holding a job, while still being simultaneously expected to seek meaning in our lives. A video by the School of Life called "How to Keep Growing Up" discusses the complexity behind adulthood. In the 20th century, beginning with the work of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, a child's growth was meticulously observed, and "every principle stage an average infant might go through on the developmental journey of its earliest years" was identified. This shows that many of our achievements when we were young surrounded liberating activities like riding a bike, or learning to socialize with others. We were praised for small actions and our shortcomings never defined our character since we were still learning to relate to the world. Yet as we grow older, we begin to be judged by the grades we receive, the internships and extracurriculars we participate in, and then, later on, the university we are accepted into and the job we may have. As time goes on, growing up becomes "synonymous with getting ahead." This creates understandable anxiety surrounding adulthood, as childhood was a time when we were told to be adventurous and make mistakes, look at the world with wonder and ask as many questions as we liked. This wonder and excitement for life are taken from so many of us, as we are told to conform to a rigid society.

What many young people find is that in the mess of trying to understand external factors, they begin to lose touch with their internal locus of control. This stage strips away a needed search for identity and purpose, which leaves many adults well into life still grappling with the face they see in the mirror. As transitions loom in the future, it's important to understand the inevitability of hardship, loss, and failure, as well as knowing that growth never ends, as we are constantly shifting and learning to understand the world around us. The fear of adulthood cannot be eased in any fundamental way, yet to develop emotionally there are several pieces that one must begin to understand.

Learn to Accept Failure

No human being is perfect and as adolescents, we begin to develop an aversion to failure. It strikes our self-confidence, and schools around the world hold responsibility in instilling this need to constantly have success. Yet infants could never learn to walk without falling, and failure is so fundamental to human life. Some of the most successful people have failed more than anyone else, and growth is characterized by finding a way to analyze your mistakes and learn from them.



Learn to Adapt Through a Range of Strategies

Through life, we become so comfortable with habits and patterned ways of doing things that we generally try applying old methods to new realities. This can cause frustration and hopelessness when confronted with difficult situations. While growing into adulthood we must understand that the way we conducted ourselves in the past or tackled issues before may not function now. We must learn to approach work, our social lives, and our romantic lives with an open mind.

Learn to Empathize with Yourself

Life is a difficult path to walk through, and many times we push ourselves down or judge ourselves too harshly for not being who we want to be, or for not achieving all we wanted to do. Know that you will never have anything figured out completely and that mistakes are normal. Empathize with yourself and be kind to yourself when you are in difficult situations or even when you're not.

Understand the Importance of Introspection

Introspection is not widely valued in our culture, and many times we neglect to try and understand or analyze our own thoughts and feelings in order to better ourselves. This is an essential part of growing up, as it allows us to mature and grow as individuals. Growing up is not just about having responsibility, but also about trying to form a solid identity. Spend time on your own, and learn to distance yourself from social settings if needed. You should never be truly dependent on others for your happiness, and asking yourself difficult questions about what you want to do and where you want to go may be difficult, but essential, as many drown their thoughts with noise until years later they realize they never figured themselves out.

Recognize the Importance of Adaptability

An important part of adulthood is knowing that the world is constantly changing, and many things, if not most, will not go your way. It's important to be flexible and adapt to the many situations that will arise in your life. Charles Darwin once said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, it is the one that is most adaptable to change" (Goodwin College). Let go of old thought processes, and learn to alter the way you think to fit new environments.

Examine Your Own Mistakes and Let Go of Pride

Pride can be one of the most harmful things a person can hold on to, as it stunts personal growth and hinders a person's ability to be introspective, adaptable and kind. As adolescents our go-to phrase is always "I know," and many times we never stop to listen and examine why we might not know in that moment. Some adults let go of this prideful answer, but many never learn to, and this creates a perfect environment for ignorance and insecurity. When you feel you want to answer with "I know" while someone is correcting you, pause and analyze the situation. More often than not, we know nothing.

Know when you need consolation and assistance

Many times we feel that to become an adult means that we have to learn to manage on our own, and be independent in as many ways as we can. Though independence is essential and important to grow and live on your own, no person can ever be expected to never need assistance. You may feel it is weak to ask for help, but really it is one of the most important things to master. In the United States and many western countries, an individualistic society is valued, while community comes second. Yet it is essential to let go of pride and know when you need a person to comfort you, or point you in the right direction.

Hold yourself and those around you accountable

Never be too lenient on yourself, and know when you have done something wrong or when someone else has done the same. Forgiving our friends and family very easily in an effort to fit in and be accepted by others may feel easiest, but we should be aware enough to pinpoint behaviors in ourselves and others that can be destructive and unproductive. Once you begin to hold yourself accountable for your own actions, we can start to see more clearly the actions of others. This is why introspection is so valuable and essential for learning to manage the world around you.

Know That the Way You View Reality and Complexity Will Continue to Change

This is one of the most essential things to understand. People are not rigid in any way, shape, or form. We move and adapt to our circumstances and are changed by experiences. Never think that you have to stay in one mindset for a long period of time, or that you should hold on to notions of what may have identified you before. Your goals and aspirations may change as well, so don't be afraid to take unconventional roads. For example, one day you may think your career path is medicine, but then find you have more affinity for another field. Don't think you need to know yourself right away, or plan your life completely. Moving through life rigidly can never lead to true happiness and comfort.



Growing into adulthood does not just consist of accepting varied responsibilities that differ from what we experienced before, it's also the art of understanding the self and what maturity truly means in your own subjective reality. It's becoming aware of the complexity that surrounds you and understanding that perfection can never be achieved. It's knowing you will never know enough, and that the world you live in is filled with people who are just as afraid and confused as you are and who are all trying to find their way.

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Writer : Sarah Abdellatif-Chaves

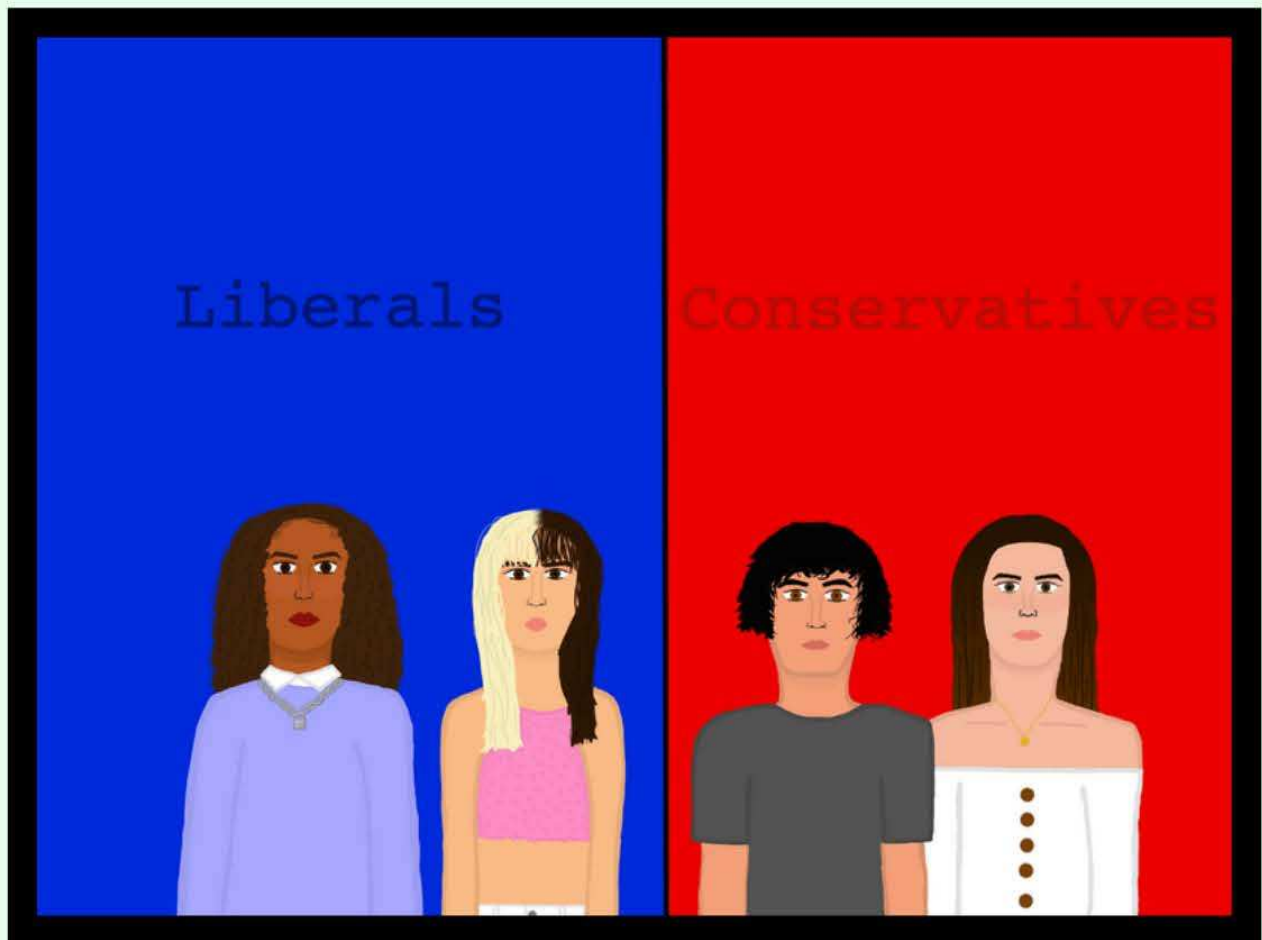
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Friendship and Politics



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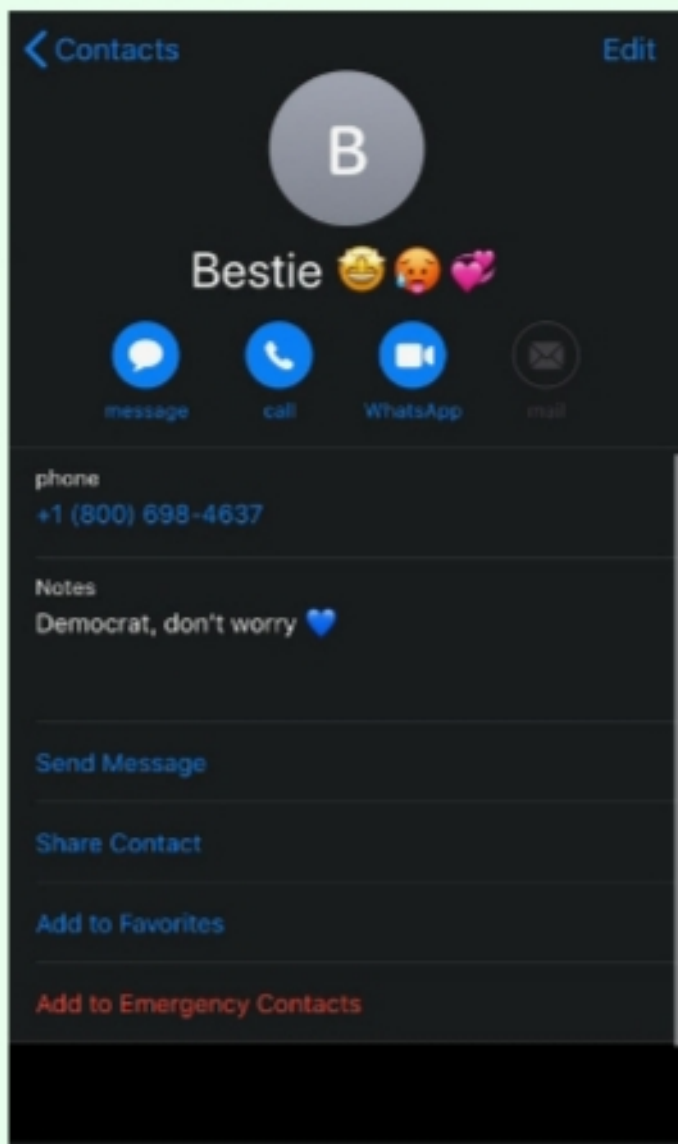
Think of someone you know personally that has different political views than you. Who comes to mind? Are you on good terms with them? Are you, dare I say...friends? Everyone has their own view of politics based on their experiences and values. No two people are the same and being friends with someone with differing political views or parties can be frustrating yet beneficial. There are many factors to consider when being friends with someone who has opposing views from you. It's important to remember that you don't have to get along with everyone, but knowing what to do when you're stuck in a heated argument can help you preserve your friendships. Whether or not you choose to discuss politics with your friends is up to you. Politics will always be a sensitive topic, especially with people who you're close to. It can make or break friendships and even familial relationships.

People become very passionate about things that hugely impact their lives and can lash out when someone close to them doesn't see eye to eye. The first step to coming together despite your differences is to listen. This is something that people don't do enough. We jump to conclusions too quickly and speak our mind before we know the entirety of the situation. We can ask our friends more in-depth questions about their political stances. Have them explain their reasons for supporting a certain candidate or condoning a certain law or action. This will allow them to form a comprehensive response for their stance. Having these open-minded conversations will help us better understand each other and our ideologies. Another approach people don't take as often is empathizing with others. Look at the situation in the other person's shoes. Ask yourself, why does he or she believe in this? What is his/her background in terms of culture, ethnicity, and possibly religion? There are various reasons behind people's political beliefs, but the arguments won't end until we understand why we're arguing in the first place. The first step to improving the world we live in is to acknowledge and understand the many different perspectives we all have.

Even after discussing your views, you and your loved one still might not be able to see eye to eye. The next step is to agree to disagree! Sometimes, no matter what we say, one's pride, ego, or ignorance won't make a person alter their beliefs. It's definitely not the end of a friendship if you can't agree with someone. If you don't want to risk losing their friendship, make sure to let them know that you respect their beliefs and stances and ask for their respect in return. You can

still be friends with someone that doesn't agree with you on everything, but if you truly believe that you've been hurt by their words or their beliefs, it may be a better idea to step away from that friendship until you feel comfortable talking to them about it. Let them know how you feel and have a conversation about your differences. If you do end up losing that friend, it probably wasn't the right time for you to meet them, and that's okay. You were at least able to express your thoughts and feelings to them in a calm manner. They may even look back one day and remember the way you were able to converse with them despite your differences.

You won't be able to get along with everyone, no matter how outgoing or social you are - it's just the truth. Your political views may be the reason, or it could be a plethora of other causes. It's always good to be friends with people who you can get along with despite your differences. If your views are bigger than just you two and you can't meet in the middle, it may be the time to rethink your relationship with them. Don't be afraid to step away from people whose morals and values don't align with yours. Continue having the important conversations to better understand the people in your life and their ideas.



Social class and overall issues of poverty are large factors that contribute to educational inequality. Families living in poverty often have to choose between sending their child to school or providing other basic necessities. If their child is old enough, they might need them to help provide instead of attending school. Even if families do not have to pay tuition, school comes with the added costs of textbooks, supplies and/or exam fees. Poor children and children from minority groups are not only less likely to be identified as gifted and talented, but are also more likely to require special educational services. Educational inequality between white students and minority students continues to perpetuate social and economic inequality. Whether the educational inequality is based on economic disparities or because of a minority status, it is never right. Understanding the history of educational inequality and acknowledging the present day inequality many still face is the first step to dismantling this broken system. Everyone has the right to academic resources and a quality education. It is our job to spread awareness and demand equal educational

THE TRANSITION FROM

MIDDLE^{TO} HIGH SCHOOL

For many, the transition from middle school to high school may seem daunting.

How much work will I have? Will I have time to do the things I love? What do I do to prepare? However, you should always have a positive attitude and try your best no matter what.

As a rising freshman, there are some things which you should be prepared for. One important thing is what classes you choose to take. When you are a freshman, choosing classes is stressful as many people want to take as many challenging classes as they can. However, you should take into consideration what you personally want for yourself. If you feel Advanced Placement classes are not the right fit for you, you shouldn't feel pressured to take them! The classes you take don't define you as a person or how smart you are. It's important to your mental health that you don't overwhelm yourself with all the classes that may be too difficult or you have no interest in. As for electives, these should be your passions, a class you would actually look forward to, whether that be band or orchestra, digital art or sports.

Another thing to bear in mind as a freshman is that you may feel like a little fish in a big pond. They might seem intimidating but upperclassmen are usually supportive and they understand your experience. They were freshies once!. If you have any questions, you should not be afraid to go to the upperclassmen when necessary. After all, teachers can't always answer all your questions.

If you are having trouble making friends, just remember that most freshmen are in the same boat. The friends you make in your freshman year could be your friends throughout high school! Make good choices and surround yourself with supportive and kind people.

The workload from classes sometimes gets heavy. Many extracurriculars like band and sports require extra practices or perhaps your theater club is getting closer to a performance. No matter what, you should try to manage your work and extracurricular to avoid stress or burnout. Keeping a planner and using your time wisely is important in such situations.

We have all fallen victim some point, let's face it. every student faces not. If you ever have putting it off for the last something you want to to feel overwhelmed and assign different tasks for different days to even out your workload. Doing small tasks throughout the week will make your workload much more manageable. This is especially useful if you want to enjoy your weekends!



to procrastination at It's a problem almost whether they like it or excessive amount of work, day is definitely avoid. This will cause you stressed out. Instead,

High school is different from middle school in quite a few ways. It's possible that drama might pick up, your workload gets heavier and preparing for the future becomes much more intense. Your school might become bigger and you won't be getting as much individualized attention that you're used to from teachers. You may know people from your middle school but you will also meet people from different schools. This is great since there is more possibility to make friends! It is also possible that you could get lost! This is totally normal and, in fact, sometimes as a sophomore, I get lost, too! Using a map is perfectly fine and you shouldn't feel embarrassed. Freshman can expect pep rallies, these are basically cheerful events which are organized on certain days. For example, the week of a homecoming dance might have a rally. These are definitely events to which you should try to attend with friends. This is also an opportunity to make some new friends!

Since COVID-19 hit, there may be differences as many students have to go attend virtual classes. However, you should still try to make new friends through possible class meetings and you should work your hardest at all times. You only get out what you put into high school

It may seem scary and difficult as first, but the transition from middle school to high school is altogether an amazing experience. Don't waste a single precious moment!

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PEER PRESSURE

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, 'peer pressure' is defined as "the strong influence of a group... on members of that group." Everyone is educated on peer pressure growing up and how it can be dangerous. We learned in health class that kids are often pressured into drinking, smoking or sexual behavior because of their friends or those around them, and are taught to combat those situations. We were taught to exit the scene if we are presented with something uncomfortable and practiced how to say "please stop" or "I'm not too comfortable with that." While avoiding things like drugs and alcohol is important, that's not the only case where peer pressure is present.

One easy case is seen in academics. I'll be attending Cornell University starting this fall; however, the first AP class that I took was this past senior year. I didn't see

a prestigious college as doable for myself, in fact, question. Peer pressure physical things that can but also the ideas of the you need a straight 4.0 or into a 'good' college. I taken AP classes and because they thought class to get into college. peer pressure goes two



something that was it wasn't even in isn't limited to the be pushed onto you, people around; like that seven AP classes to get have friends who have completely failed they needed that AP In an academic setting, ways; you also doubt

yourself because of other people's expectations. For example, you might not see yourself as intelligent because you've been labeled the 'dumb class clown.' You don't see yourself being good in school because everyone tells you that your skills lay elsewhere. You begin to doubt your academic abilities because of the possible labels your peers put onto you. In other situations, you hold yourself to the standards of others. If the norm at your school is to take AP or accelerated classes, it's more likely you put yourself in a class you aren't ready for yet. Sometimes people might ask you what AP class you plan on taking; leading you to make one up on the spot. Then you'll end up taking a class you don't enjoy or do well in. I almost didn't apply to Cornell because I judged my abilities based on others expectations; that I only took one AP class so I wouldn't get in; that my SAT score and GPA wasn't good enough. Peer pressure can also be classified as people forcing their expectations onto you.

A scenario in which peers force an expectation of what you're supposed to be is most true in a friendship/relationship perspective. The relationships in your life may hold you to a standard or push an expectation they have onto you. Perhaps in a friendship someone expects you to pick up all the time, and expects you to tell them everything. Peer pressure in a friendship can also be seen as people pressuring you to hang out, talk, and share personal information. Sometimes it's not super deep, as insignificant as them pushing their music taste onto you; sometimes it's them pushing something they like; that you don't like, onto you. While it is good to try new things (like music and food) it's also good to know when to draw those lines. Depending on how your friends approach the circumstance, you can judge whether or not your friends are sharing something with you, or pressuring something onto you.

It can be easy to not realize you're a victim of peer pressure, because you might unconsciously abide by what others like to do or think because of the environment you're in. If you act differently when you're alone than you would with others, it might be time to reassess your environment. Once again, while it is okay to have a variety of friends, sometimes it's important for you to stay true to you.

So, if you don't want to drink, stay true to your values and say it's not your vibe or thing to do. Fighting peer pressure can come in two different ways. Either an immediate protection of yourself, or an internal realization. 'Immediate protection' refers to coming up with an excuse of why you won't abide by the expectations or wants of others. An excuse like tomorrow your sister has a soccer game early in the morning, and you have to go to it. So you can't stay out drinking today. In reality, your sister doesn't play soccer; but this immediate protection, an excuse that gets you out of the situation. In reality, it is better to be honest, and say you don't want to drink because you aren't ready yet. Even if it may be nerve-racking, try using honesty, because some people will let it go. And if they don't, that's when you can protect yourself from whatever it may be. As an academic example, maybe you don't want to take an AP class. You can say the same thing; that you aren't ready to take an AP class at the moment but you'll think about it. Put your energy into your own expectations rather than into the expectations of others. In the relationships you have in life, being honest is the best thing you can do. Because if your friends don't respect your honesty, it might be time to rethink those friendships.



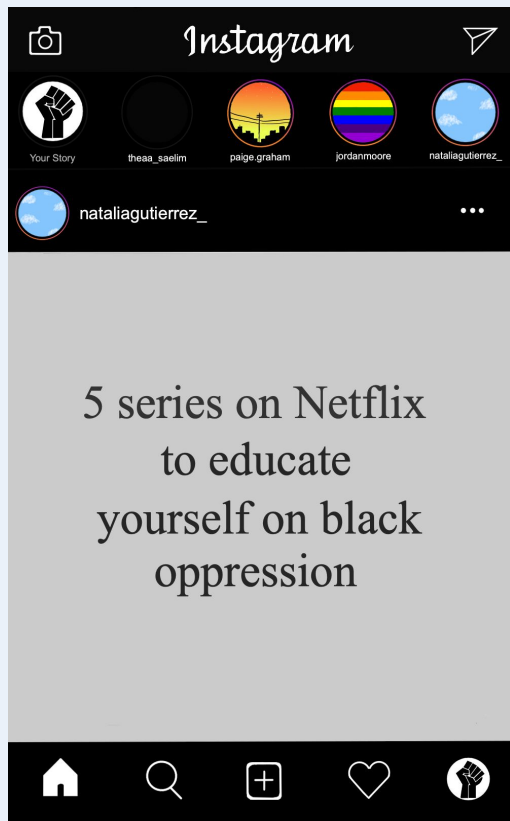
Always embrace what you expect, and your values. Then push yourself, so you don't compromise to the pressures of the environment around you. Take the classes you want to take and do the activities that you enjoy; but in order to know what those may be, you need to take the time to reflect on yourself. The moment you begin to embrace who you are and apply what you value, you will no longer be a victim of peer pressure. Some people apply pressure with the intent to get you involved and improve your social wellbeing. While it is a genuine act of care, you might not be ready for something or be wanting the same thing. If their act of pressure roots in genuine care, they'll let it go.

Remember that peer pressure comes in different forms. In health class we may talk about a few important circumstances that involve drinking and drugs, but everyone needs to be aware that peer pressure can be more subtle, and learn to not become a victim of peer pressure. Work on being honest with yourself and stand up for your voice. You're in control; so don't forget that.

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Layout Designer: Sana Bashir
Photographer: Leighton Gammage

Social Media and Activism

Ever since the dawn of the internet, the usage of it has varied and evolved over time. Social networking sites such as Twitter, Instagram and even TikTok, for that matter, have faced much controversy and are either loved or hated by all. Gen Z in particular has taken up social media as its most powerful tool to fight against injustice and uses it for social advocacy. With the rise of fascist governments, the continuation of misogyny in our patriarchal society, and internalized homophobia, (just to name a few current phenomena) social media has given a platform to the common public from across the globe to collectively raise their voices.

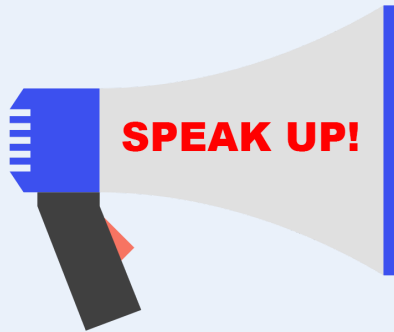


Social media, as an institution, serves as a news portal for millions worldwide. Older adults tend to dismiss news on online sites as "fake" and a sham; they throw around phrases like "armchair activism" to justify their views and look down on the younger generation for turning to one of the key sources of insightful knowledge in the 21st Century. Spreading awareness is the first step toward unlearning society's primitive norms, yet where we gather this information from (whether it's a reliable source or a made-up political tactic) can be daunting at times. With the upsurge in circulation of fake news on Twitter and WhatsApp, which even politicians use to put forth their "ideologies," it's tough to find the distinction between what is valid information and what is not. Fake COVID numbers flying about and false remedies to the virus are the number one example of faux information being reposted on Twitter. Using social media as a platform and using it to get your daily news isn't wrong, but one has to thoroughly look through, research, and verify whether the news channel is delivering the truth or is sending a twisted message. Social media, at times, can be used by narrow-minded individuals to spread hate and pit communities against one another, especially those involved in politics.

Eventually, if one delves deeper into the matter, one will find that the positives of social media can outweigh the negatives. For people across the world, especially the youth, it serves as a tool to fight the dominant majoritarian groups. The #MeToo movement that gained momentum some years back—and continues to thrive—gave courage to people worldwide to open up about their experiences of sexual assault and was a revolutionary step in the fight for feminism. One case of a woman opening up about her scarring experience allowed thousands to share their stories and fight against assaulters. Survivors of sexual assault and victims stood with each other and are still continuously working towards dismantling rape culture in society. Celebrities called out their co-stars and spoke up against the injustice faced by women in the industry.

Even if we take up the recent case of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement: it brought about a massive change because of the power the internet and social media hold. The only sad part about this case is that many teens quickly reposted "#BLACKLIVESMATTER" solely for the trend.

How else can one justify that there were 20 million reposts of “#BlackoutTuesday,” yet hardly 10 million signatures on the petition which was demanding justice for George Floyd? Is this selective activism? Or performative activism? With the rise of social media campaigns amidst the pandemic, (and rightly so) the digital world is a platform for people to speak from the comfort of their home—but how helpful is this? Performative activism is when people "hop on the bandwagon" of whatever social issue seems to be



talked about the most. It is detrimental because, despite spreading awareness being equally important, your activism doesn't stop there. You have to believe in the cause. Start conversations about the matter. Actively work toward using the privilege you have to help others. Can't donate? Look up the alternatives. Sign the petitions. Raise your voice.

On the other hand, we also have selective activism. If a teenager or even a celebrity in India is raging about the Black Lives Matter movement yet doesn't care about the lynching taking place within their very nation; this is unjust.

Social media activism isn't wrong; social media is and will continue to evolve and it is up to us for how we plan on using it. As Gen Z ages and soon enters the age of politics, we need to make sure to use

what we have at the moment: our Instagram handles and Twitter accounts to raise our voices and break the prejudices that occupy the minds of society—and not just when it makes you look cool.

Writer: Sana Bashir

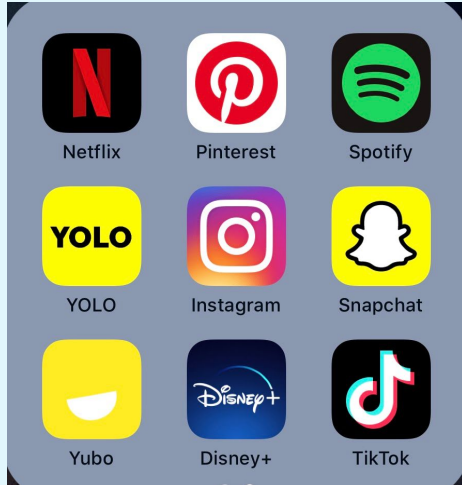
Editor: Claire Ottenstein

Graphic Designer: Katherine Chacon

Photographer: Sophie Hafter

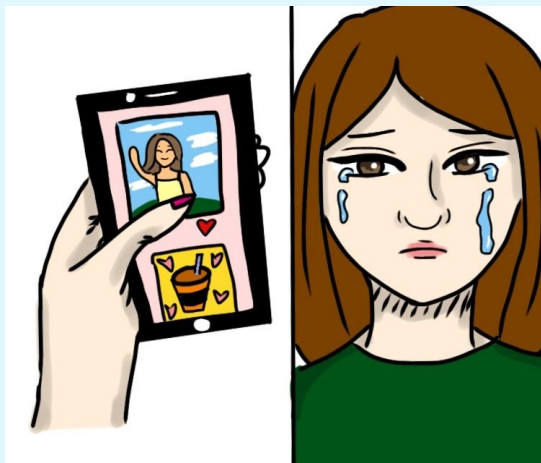
Social Media and Body Image

Today, social media has a huge impact on many teenagers' body image. On social media, teenagers such as myself have a fixed image of what our body is "supposed" to look like. Social media not only affects our self image, but also our mental health. The pressure teens feel to project a certain image of themselves on social media can be extremely degrading to their mental health.



Social media has influenced not only my body image, but the way I perceive myself. I remember telling my friend one day that I deleted Instagram after she asked why I had not posted in a few weeks. She was shocked, knowing how much I use the app and love posting on it. She asked why I deleted it, confused as to why I would ever delete the app. I told her I felt my self esteem and confidence deteriorating as I constantly began to compare myself with people in posts. Whether it was a skinny girl in a bikini, or someone at a cool-looking party, I instantly felt self conscious about my body not being skinny enough, and by not being at that party, I felt inferior or not as cool as them. I worried about not getting enough likes on an Instagram post—believing that if I got over 400 likes, my post would somehow be good enough. Good enough for who, though? I

became so obsessed with the amount of likes that I got that if I did not reach a certain amount of both likes and comments, I would delete the post no matter how much I liked it. I used the amount of likes I got as self validation: if I got my desired amount of likes on Instagram, I was good enough. Social media was once the platform I used to express my interests but now it became a burden. I stopped valuing my opinion of myself and began using social media to dictate my self worth. I constantly body shamed myself for not having the “ideal body” that I saw in Victoria’s Secret ads or on models’ Instagram accounts.



The way I personally prevented myself from feeling down after scrolling through my Instagram feed was, instead of comparing myself to the posts I saw, I found ways I could benefit myself in healthy ways. Instead of wishing I had clear skin, I started using my face wash I had neglected for the past few weeks and my skin cleared up. I used what I saw on social media to motivate me to better myself instead of envying what I might eventually accomplish. I used to constantly say to my friends, “I wish I had her body” or “I wish I had her hair color.” However, instead of saying these things which only brought me down, I began to think to myself, “She has a great body, but so do I” or “I love her hair

color, but mine’s pretty great too.” Not only am I complimenting the other person, but also myself. Changing your mindset is key in preventing social media from negatively affecting your mental health. Unfortunately, no one can ever completely rid themselves of negative thoughts. Even with all the

confidence in the world, you will still find your mind comparing yourself to others. However, you can prevent this from becoming an unhealthy, constant habit.

I have learned that there is no such thing as an “ideal body type.” Every person’s body is different and beautiful. I did not learn to love my body overnight. I still struggle with comparing myself to others. There is no revelation where you suddenly love every part of yourself. It is a process. Of course there will still be days, maybe weeks, or even months, where you feel insecure about your body. However, by using the few tricks I do, you will find yourself obsessing less over comparing yourself to others.

Writer: Sheldi Kyin

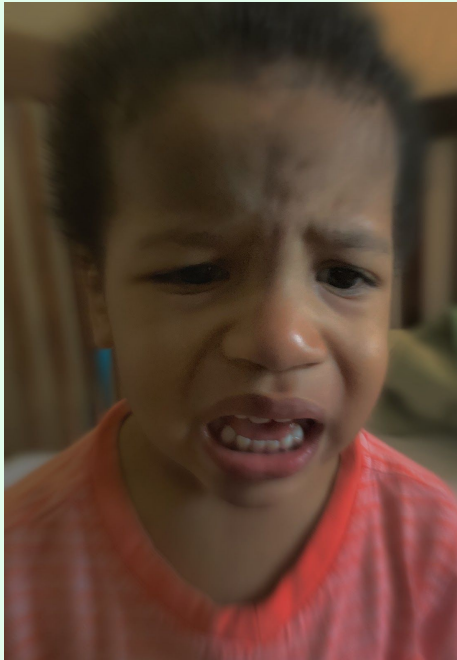
Editor: Claire Ottenstein

Graphic Designer: Tiffany Tran

Photographer: Sophie Hafter

Childhood Trauma

The word ‘trauma’ naturally comes with a negative connotation, and most people instantly think of it as a result of a near-death experience. At some point in our lives, we are all so negatively affected by someone or something that it torments us for the rest of our lives, with some being affected to a much more severe degree than others. Whether this be watching a horror movie one isn’t mature enough for or getting into a car accident, we’ve all been through it. That’s what connects us as humans.



‘Scary’ and ‘traumatic’ are used regularly and interchangeably in present conversations. However, they have very different literal meanings. What qualifies as a scary experience is one that causes you to be afraid; however, the fear eventually subsides and you are able to go about your daily routine. Each person is affected by fear in different ways. I may get scared from watching movies of people with button eyes, while others may find it hilarious. I may find dissecting animals interesting and informative, while others find it gory and unnecessary. On the other hand, a traumatic experience is one that causes you emotional, physical, and psychological distress that can stay with you forever if not treated properly. You’d find yourself jumping at every little sound. What’s even worse is going through a traumatic experience as a child, because being traumatized at such a young age may have a much more detrimental effect to one’s mental state as compared to being traumatized at a much more mature age, when we have developed worldly perspectives and gained insight and knowledge through previous experiences. Scary experiences

can be joked about and taken lightly; traumatic experiences cannot.

A child can develop an early onset of trauma from various experiences, such as a car accident, a severe illness, or verbal and physical abuse, although the list far surpasses just these common traumas. What is commonly misunderstood is that the child doesn’t necessarily have to go through that experience; just witnessing it may be enough to cause the child trauma. Childhood trauma can be dangerous because experiencing such psychological distress at an early age can impact brain function, as the child’s brain is still developing and making neural connections. Also, a child may not always be able to understand the situation and verbally express their reactions, but the damage the situation caused will still stick to that child even through adulthood.

After experiencing a traumatic event, a child may develop a heightened stress response as they grow up, which can affect their ability to regulate emotions and can lead to numerous mental and physical illnesses. In addition, statistics have shown that substance abuse, self-harm, anxiety, and depression are frequent among traumatized children, as a traumatic event may lead an adolescent to resorting to dangerous habits. Not seeing from an early stage that a child is experiencing trauma may cause the child more harm both psychologically and physically, and late intervention may have little effect. That is why it is important to pay close attention to children who may be experiencing childhood trauma and get them the correct help right away.



Coping mechanisms for traumatized people may differ, as it depends on what exactly they experienced and how it made them feel. As children may not fully understand what happened but are still frightened by it, it is important to constantly support and be there for them. The effects of the trauma can go away for the child if one is considerate and careful in the way they treat/handle the child after the traumatic event. Here are some ways that you can help a child cope with a traumatic experience:

- Keep the child company and constantly reassure them that they are safe and loved.
- Have an open discussion with the child, allowing them to talk about how they are feeling and what they felt happened. Kindly explain to them what they are going through and tell them that you will always be there for them. Reassurance enforces a positive environment.
- Give the child extra encouragement and attention. This will help to make them feel less alone and scared.
- Do fun things with the child to keep them laughing and smiling. This will allow them to make good memories that can eventually overshadow the bad memories.
- Do not be too overprotective over them. Guide them until they are ready to go back out into the world to resume normal activities. This will help their growth and allow them to move on from the traumatic experience.

Everyone has flaws and wrongdoings, yet as a child, they start out like a blank sheet of paper. Over time, that sheet of paper is molded and crumpled by the harshness of life. But childhood trauma can tear this sheet of paper apart. Therefore, we need to watch out for children experiencing childhood trauma and help them to the best of our ability to save them from being torn apart; the children of now make up the leaders of our future.

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Photographer: Leighton Gammage

Teens Struggling with Depression

With the new found acceptance and awareness of mental health issues in the widespread media, more and more cases of mental health disorders have become apparent. Compared to 20 years ago, there is so much more acceptance and overall attention toward mental health issues. People are having conversations about these problems and more are realizing their symptoms and getting help. However, as a society there is still a lot of progress to be made. For the benefit of this article, we will be talking solely about depression. We will discuss statistics, reasons why teenagers are depressed, and how you can cope and manage with these feelings and issues. Depression is the third most common killer in teens 12-18, so it is important to understand the basics of the disorder. Sometimes it's not you "just feeling sad" and forcing yourself to "just get over it" might do more harm than good. So let's talk about mental health.



With 14% of teens suffering from a depressive episode within the past 12 months, depression is becoming more and more prevalent. According to the DSM 5, major depressive disorder or clinical depression is persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest that continues for over 2 weeks. Of course "sadness, hopelessness, and loss of interest" are extremely broad, with depression these symptoms are to the extreme. Aside from just "being sad," here are some physical and emotional lesser known symptoms

Crankiness/ irritability	Unexplained body pain and aches
Tiredness all the time or sleeping too much	More school absences
Changes in appetite	Paying less attention to hygiene & appearance
Lack of empathy and motivation	Risky behaviors
Desire to do less than normal	Acting out
Acting "forced or fake" more often	Self-harm (excessive piercing or tattooing also; with negative intent)

Slowed thinking and speaking	Drop in grades
Low self-esteem	Use of drugs or alcohol

With depression, the symptoms are not always noticeable to the naked eye. It's important to note that seeing a change in your behavior or someone else's, can be an important indicator of depression. Four out of five teens that have attempted suicide gave vital warning signs beforehand. If you are unsure, don't be afraid to reach out and ask the person about their feelings. Simply having a discussion with someone who is struggling, can help them out tremendously.



Causes of depression are very abstract as well. Depression, similar to other mental health disorders, are based on personal issues and experiences. However, there are some common threads throughout these causes:

- Family conflict
- Peer pressure
- Romantic issues
- Traumatic events
- Genetic factors
- Family financial struggles
- Physical/emotional neglect

Because 80% of teens do not receive help for their depression, the need for at home and self-coping mechanisms is high. Here is a list of things that could help:

- Maintain a schedule (gives you something to look forward to)
- Talking to a friend or an adult
- Journaling your emotions
- Exercise (I know, it sucks but it does help!)
- Developing a new hobby (i.e. coloring books, developing a garden, cooking etc.)

- Meditating
- Reward yourself after accomplishments
- Listen to happy music
- and overall, do things that make you feel good!

However you decide to cope is truly up to you and your personality. Whatever you choose to do, make sure it is healthy and safe for yourself and everyone around you.

Depression is a serious issue, and can lead to unhealthy behavior such as self-harm or suicide. Remember that you are so important and loved by many. Sometimes it is hard to remember the good things when life feels so sad. I promise you that it will get better. If you or someone else you now feels like have there are no options left, I urge you to call a mental health hotline:

- 1-800-950-6264 is the national depression and mental health hotline
- 1-800-334-4357 and 1-800-366-8288 are self-harm helpline
- 1-800-273-8255 is the national suicide prevention lifeline

These all are 24/7 resources! You are so valuable. Even if you feel like you haven't accomplished anything, you woke up and read this article. That is pretty amazing to me!

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/teen-depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20350985>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/teen-depression/index.shtml>

<https://www.rawhide.org/blog/wellness/teen-depression-in-america-troubling-statistics-trends/#:~:text=How%20Does%20Depression%20Affect%20Teen%20Life%3F%201%2030%25,have%20conduct%20disorder%20as%20a%20result%20of%20depression>

Writer: Leighton Gammage

Editor: Nathalia Ramkissoon

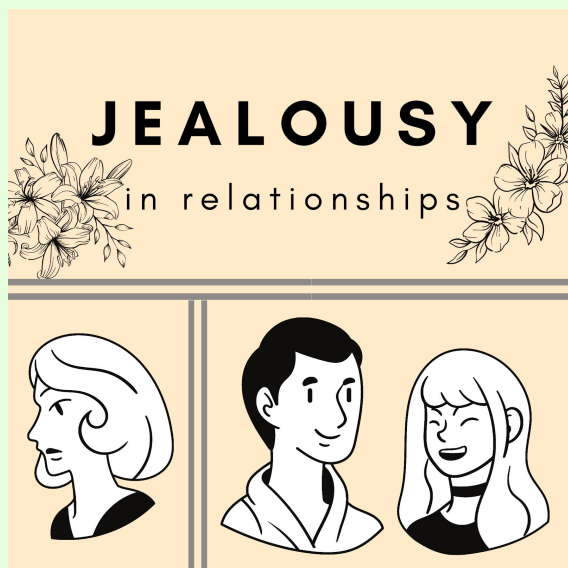
Graphic Designer: Isabelle Thym

Photographer: Leighton Gammage

Jealousy

Jealousy is an emotion generally rooted in insecurity and feelings of self-inadequacy. Feelings of anger, fear, helplessness and resentment are also factors that contribute to a person's jealous demeanor. Jealousy is a very normal experience in relationships, often seen in romantic scenarios. It's important to understand why we feel jealous in our relationships and to identify how we can tackle and change those harmful thinking patterns.

In romantic relationships, jealousy is a reaction to a perceived threat whether it be real or imagined. It is important to differentiate rational jealousy from delusional jealousy. Both rational and delusional jealousy can be a valid threat to relationships. Delusional jealousy persists despite the absence of any probable or real threat. By acknowledging the signs of romantic jealousy and by examining the roots of our jealous feelings, we can effectively learn to cope with it. Like most difficult emotional experiences, jealousy can be a trigger for increased self-awareness, overall growth and greater understanding of your relationship.



Jealousy in romantic relationships is basically rooted in one basic problem, low self-esteem. In a general sense, people with healthy self-esteem won't settle for romantic partners who treat them badly or enforce insecurities in the relationship. If your partner does things to intentionally make you question their loyalty in the relationship, then your concerns are valid; you have every right to step away. If your jealousy is irrational and stems from no actual reason, then you are projecting your insecurities onto the entire relationship. If seeing your partner interact with others makes you jealous, then you need to understand that your restrictions and/or unreasonable attitude will only push your partner further. If you aren't secure with your partner doing things independently, then you need to dive into your emotions and identify exactly

why you are feeling a certain way, handling that first.

Start by simply acknowledging your jealous behaviors and thoughts. Try to figure out exactly where your insecurities come from. It could be from bad childhood experiences or even failed past relationships. It's important to remember that past experiences don't always repeat themselves; don't project your past partners' wrongdoings onto your current partner. You may have preconceptions when going into a new relationship, but you have to let go of those ideas to really appreciate and enjoy your new relationship.

The best way to tackle these problems will be with communication. Enable yourself to talk about your emotions and discuss situations that made you uncomfortable. Admit your insecurities and openly converse with your partner about how you are feeling. Hopefully by having these discussions, you will be able to gain more security and confidence from your partner.

Jealousy can be extremely harmful to your relationships and your overall happiness. You need to love and value yourself to attract quality people who are trustworthy and deserve your time and energy.

Don't hesitate to walk away from a partner who isn't treating you with the respect you deserve, but make sure that your own insecurities or irrational suspicions aren't factors contributing to the breakup.

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Long Distance Relationships

Long distance relationships can be challenging and difficult to navigate. Not a lot of teens talk about long-distance relationships or understand the issues that may arise before they commit to one. Here are some points that can help you better understand these types of relationships and figure out if it's something that you would consider committing to.



Long distance relationships are actually quite common. While there is no formal study conducted on teenage long-distance relationships, adult long-distance relationships have an average success rate of 58%. Seems like the success of a long-distance relationship can be predicted with a coin flip! Unfortunately, 37% of long-distance relationships end within the first 3 months. Studies reveal that the four-month mark is usually the most challenging time in these relationships. With adults long-distance can be successful, but they can also be very challenging; this can be assumed for teens as well.

Let's talk about how many teenagers are actually willing or open to being in a long-distance relationship. I polled some high schoolers and found that 96% of them said they would not want to enter a long-distance relationship while in high school. When asked why they wouldn't engage in a long-distance relationship, there were a few recurring answers. Many of them said that they would find it extremely difficult to trust the other person in the relationship; they said not being with them, in person, would make them feel less secure in their relationship than if they were in the same place. Additionally, several teenagers said that for them, physical contact was one of the most important aspects of a relationship; The absence of it would make it difficult for them to stay committed to the relationship. Lastly, a few of the high schoolers I polled said that they viewed their teenage years as a chance to experiment and learn about relationships, so they felt that being in a long-distance relationship isn't something they would consider. They felt that they would not be able to experience as much (such as in-person dates, etc.) On the flip side, the 4% of high school students who said they would get into a long-distance relationship. They were currently in love with the person they were dating and would consider long-distance because they wouldn't want their current relationship to end.



Here's my take on it; I believe that you shouldn't close yourself off to the idea of a long-distance relationship completely. Sometimes they work out and who's to say that yours won't! However, I do caution you if your long-distance relationship is with someone you have never met in person. You don't really know who you are talking to and meeting up with them could be potentially dangerous. So I would shy away from that option for your own safety. If you know the person, I would make sure that both of you are committed to the relationship. Long-distance is

time-consuming and takes a lot of effort. You're truly the only person that will be able to know if a long distance relationship is right for you. You should do whatever your heart desires when it comes to your relationships but also do what is best for you. In the long run, you want to make sure that your well being is prioritized and that you aren't going to be sacrificing friends, experiences, or fun just to cling onto a relationship.

Long-distance relationships are tricky to navigate. Make sure you enter with caution or figure out if it's better to let go of your significant other. These types of relationships can be extremely difficult, but if you're willing to put in the effort, it can definitely work out!

<https://nypost.com/2018/10/31/long-distance-relationships-are-more-successful-than-you-think/>

<https://datingatadistance.com/long-distance-relationship-statistics/>

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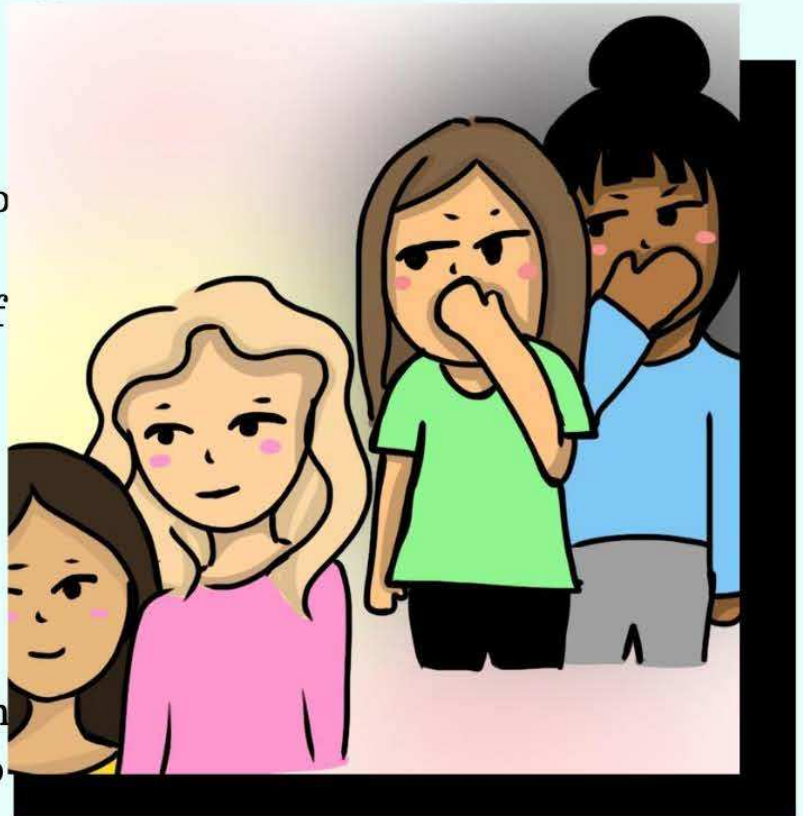
Changes with Friend Groups

Just when we think life is settled down, we encounter a shift in what we consider stable: friends. While every dynamic of a friend group is different, there are commonalities to reflect on that can help you understand yourself as a friend. Most importantly is the “what” kind of change is happening. Are you dropping your friends? Are your friends dropping you? It is extremely important to understand what type of situation you are facing. If you find yourself outgrowing them and wanting to move forward without them, then you would be dropping them. However, if your friends drop you or possibly ghost you, there could be something you’ve done or a way you are acting that causes your friends to leave. Both of these are changes in friend group dynamics and can alter how you see yourself as a friend and what you might need to do when encountering these situations.

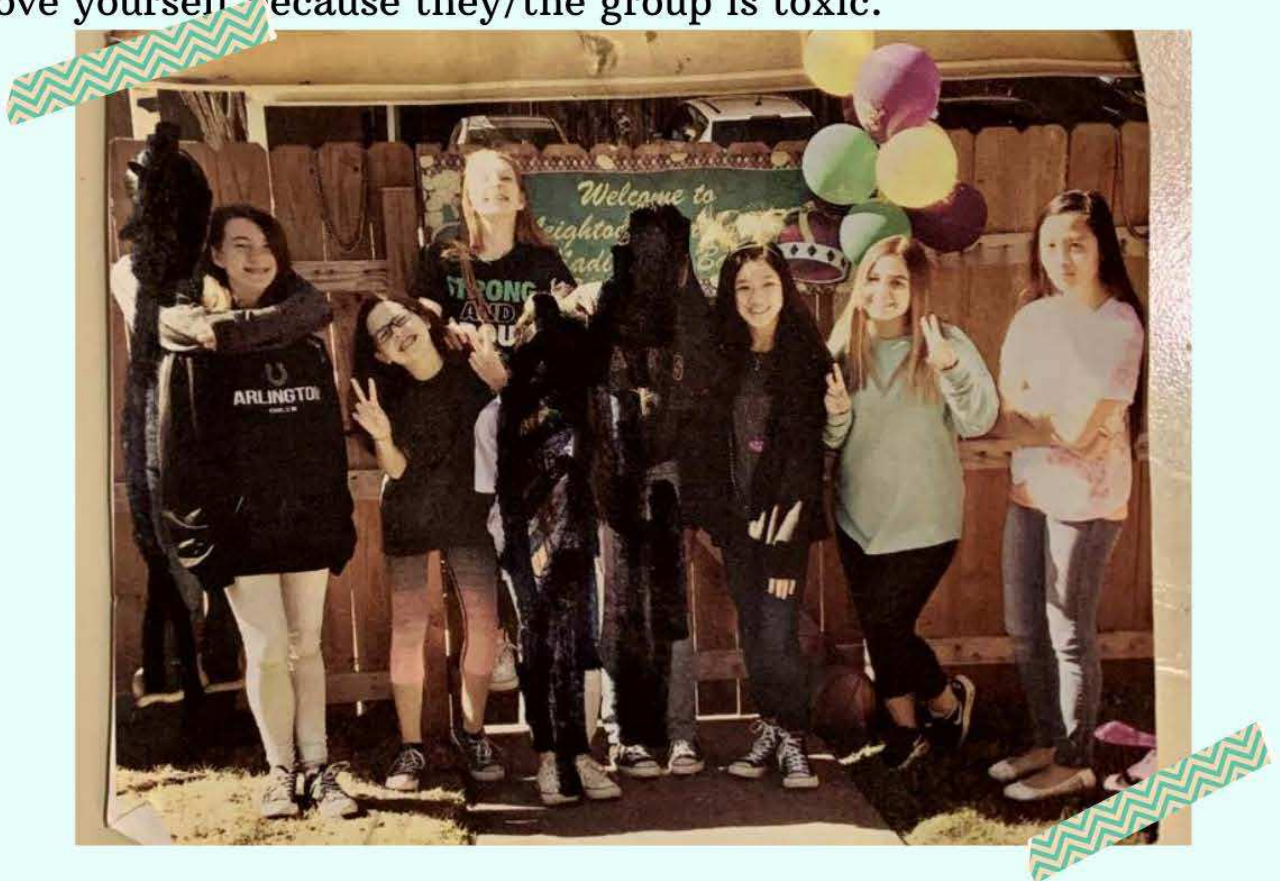
Evolution of Friendship

When considering a change with a friend, think about how you felt at the start of the friendship compared to how you feel now. If you feel like you have been your best self throughout the friend group, or at least a good version of yourself, then you probably have a great friendship. That being said, if you find yourself feeling bad after being with them and maybe comparing yourself to them, your friendship is likely to be unhealthy.

Oftentimes, we make friends and they turn out to be someone you were not originally friends with. Sadly, this happens, but things do not always end harshly; you can outgrow friends and part ways without harsh feelings. It is important to recognize how you felt at the start of the friendship in comparison to now.



Some people believe that everyone in their life serves a purpose. Personally, I believe in three purposes people can serve when they enter someone's life: teacher, soulmate, or angel. Teachers make us learn hard lessons, so friends like this probably won't end up being good friends because they teach you what a real friend is. Soulmates are a bit more complex; these people feel like family or like you have been with them before. They are comforting and can last a lifetime. Lastly, angels. Angels walk into your life unexpectedly, for maybe five seconds or five months. They guide us and help us right when we need them and usually you do not know their purpose until later. When looking over a friendship, take note about their purpose to your life. If it is good and you are not making excuses for them, then it is a healthy friendship. When dealing with change it is important to remember how the group or the person contributes to your life, and it is perfectly okay if you need to remove yourself because they/the group is toxic.



Handle Situation

Unfortunately, there are countless times when we have to face changes regarding friendships. In order to handle this situation depends on whether you lost someone or if someone lost you. If you have chosen to leave someone or a group, have a private and mature conversation with that friend (or group) discussing how you are feeling with your friendship.

This looks different depending on the dynamic, but having a mature conversation never hurts. However, if people lose you and you feel them changing, you can also have a private conversation with them. There is a huge difference between conversation and confrontation. When having a conversation, no one should have an argumentative tone or the mindset of a confrontation. Putting emotion behind your words to a person can backfire extremely and hurt more people in the long run. In the short term, snapping or confronting can help, but the long term is more important and you never want to completely burn a bridge.

Love to Learn

While changes can seem scary, especially with friends, at the end of the day there is a saying that can help: if it's not this, it's something better. Sometimes people we mistake for soulmates end up being teachers, and that's okay. Life is all about memorizing the good experiences and reliving the good feelings. Friends will always enter and exit your life, and therefore you should learn to love the comfort of yourself.

Adapting to the change of relationship dynamics will help you more in life than staying in a friendship that is toxic and refuses to become better.



Writer: Bella Pivo

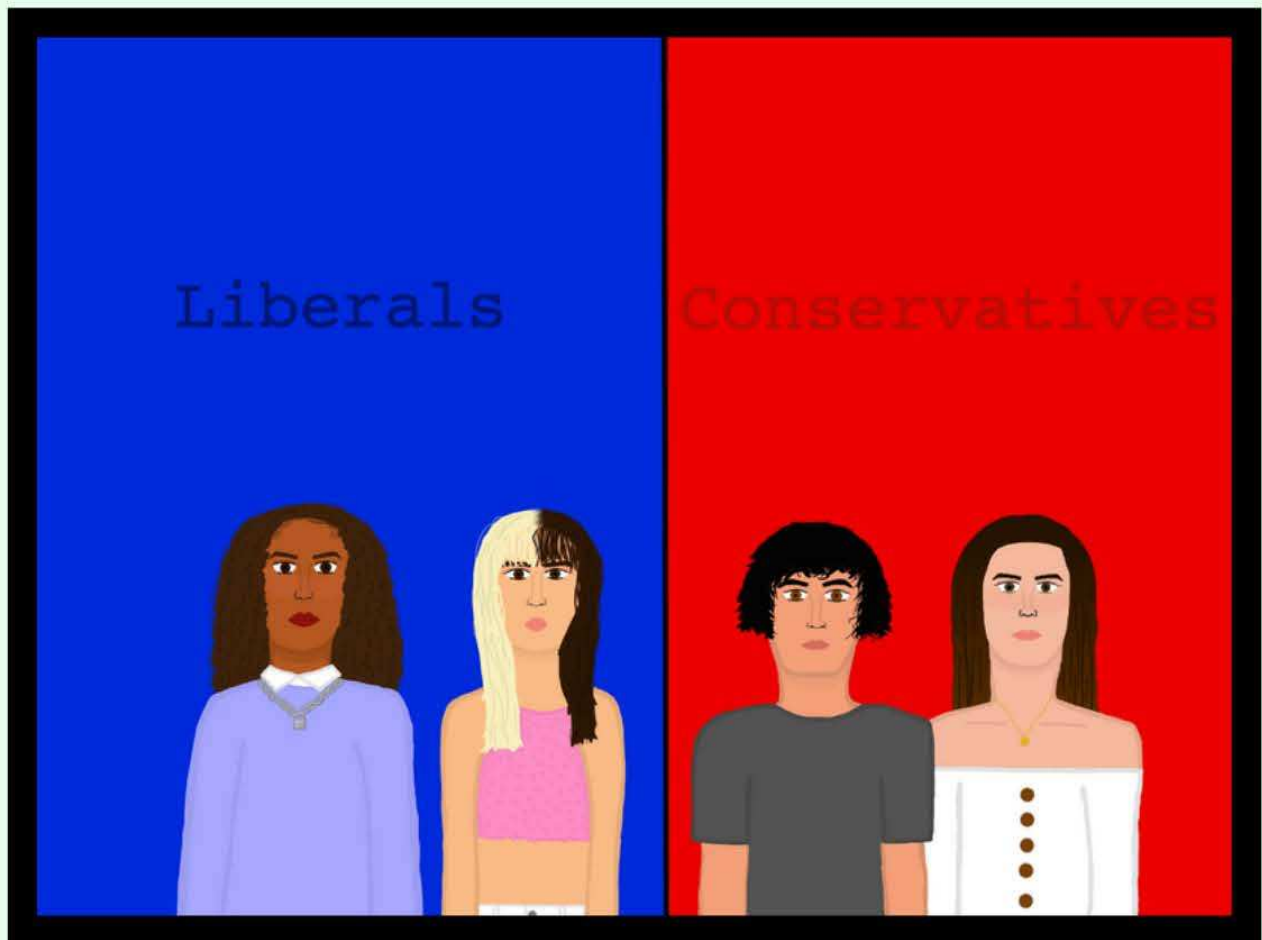
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Friendship and Politics



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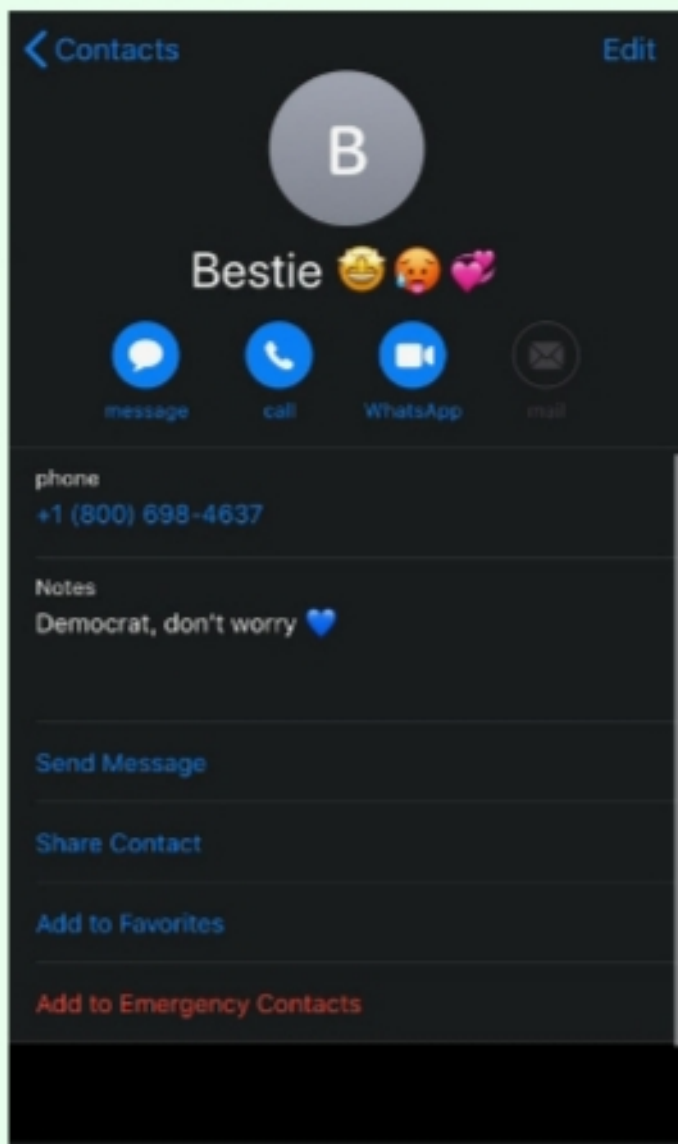
Think of someone you know personally that has different political views than you. Who comes to mind? Are you on good terms with them? Are you, dare I say...friends? Everyone has their own view of politics based on their experiences and values. No two people are the same and being friends with someone with differing political views or parties can be frustrating yet beneficial. There are many factors to consider when being friends with someone who has opposing views from you. It's important to remember that you don't have to get along with everyone, but knowing what to do when you're stuck in a heated argument can help you preserve your friendships. Whether or not you choose to discuss politics with your friends is up to you. Politics will always be a sensitive topic, especially with people who you're close to. It can make or break friendships and even familial relationships.

People become very passionate about things that hugely impact their lives and can lash out when someone close to them doesn't see eye to eye. The first step to coming together despite your differences is to listen. This is something that people don't do enough. We jump to conclusions too quickly and speak our mind before we know the entirety of the situation. We can ask our friends more in-depth questions about their political stances. Have them explain their reasons for supporting a certain candidate or condoning a certain law or action. This will allow them to form a comprehensive response for their stance. Having these open-minded conversations will help us better understand each other and our ideologies. Another approach people don't take as often is empathizing with others. Look at the situation in the other person's shoes. Ask yourself, why does he or she believe in this? What is his/her background in terms of culture, ethnicity, and possibly religion? There are various reasons behind people's political beliefs, but the arguments won't end until we understand why we're arguing in the first place. The first step to improving the world we live in is to acknowledge and understand the many different perspectives we all have.

Even after discussing your views, you and your loved one still might not be able to see eye to eye. The next step is to agree to disagree! Sometimes, no matter what we say, one's pride, ego, or ignorance won't make a person alter their beliefs. It's definitely not the end of a friendship if you can't agree with someone. If you don't want to risk losing their friendship, make sure to let them know that you respect their beliefs and stances and ask for their respect in return. You can

still be friends with someone that doesn't agree with you on everything, but if you truly believe that you've been hurt by their words or their beliefs, it may be a better idea to step away from that friendship until you feel comfortable talking to them about it. Let them know how you feel and have a conversation about your differences. If you do end up losing that friend, it probably wasn't the right time for you to meet them, and that's okay. You were at least able to express your thoughts and feelings to them in a calm manner. They may even look back one day and remember the way you were able to converse with them despite your differences.

You won't be able to get along with everyone, no matter how outgoing or social you are - it's just the truth. Your political views may be the reason, or it could be a plethora of other causes. It's always good to be friends with people who you can get along with despite your differences. If your views are bigger than just you two and you can't meet in the middle, it may be the time to rethink your relationship with them. Don't be afraid to step away from people whose morals and values don't align with yours. Continue having the important conversations to better understand the people in your life and their ideas.



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