Valentine's Day

Just another day in the grander scheme of things

By Dr. Karl Laves

Few things pull me into a Lewis-Black-like rage than hearing people express deep sorrow and regret about being lonely or alone on Valentine's Day. I can think of few situations that better illustrate the idea "we have met the enemy and he is us." In the words of David Powlison, "Feeling sorry for yourself is one of the strongest, most addictive narcotics known to man. It feels so good to feel so bad. Self-pity arises so easily, seems so plausible, and proves so hard to shake off."

Folks, I have sympathy and empathy for people's pain, but I also think we set ourselves up for a great deal of the pain we experience in life. So what if so many hundreds of years ago a bunch of people decided to dedicate a day to love, or whatever the origin of Valentine’s Day is. Some say it was a liturgical celebration, a remembrance of a martyr. Today it is another mainstream American McHoliday where you dump a ton of cash at Heart-Mart in yet another socially validated celebration of shared narcissism. Too obscure a reference? Erik Erikson wrote about how many adults based their romantic relationships on a quid pro quo notion. It isn’t that I love you so much as it is I love that you love me.

Get the drift here; I am on a rant and I may not be making sense. The divorce rate in America is ridiculous, the prevalence of cheating and domestic violence is epidemic and yet people want to get all pitiful on one day of the year because they are alone. What is it about Feb. 14 that makes one’s life so miserable? Is it the alignment of the planets? Does the inner core of the earth shift and send shockwaves only felt by the broken hearted? C’mon, were you any less miserable on Feb. 13, or April 10, or July 7? In the manner of a true cognitive-behavioral therapist, which I am not, let me ask “what are you choosing to believe about Feb. 14 that requires you to despise yourself?”

How many of those couples, so deeply and publicly in love on the 14th, will be broken up by March? How many of them are cheating on each other already, hence the need to bribe one another? Are you that vain or needy that you would rather have a pretend relationship instead of a real one? Can you imagine that there really are people who would rather be alone than be in a bad relationship?

You don’t have to beat yourself up for being alone. Love, done well, takes time and you sure don’t want to rush it. Forgive me for this comparison; love is like money. If you get a whole lot quickly, you probably did something hinky to get it. Let’s get some perspective here my friends. On one day of the year you are going to mope around and feel horrible because you don’t have a special someone? Because on the same day there are people walking around wishing they had a home, a meal, a safe place

“Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose.”

Lyndon B. Johnson

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to play….there are people wishing they were not poor, hungry, or abused. On the day you think you have to be sad because you didn’t get a box of chocolates there are other people wishing they had a few more days with their family before the cancer ends their lives.

Yes, it can be unpleasant to be alone or lonely. But it is not a permanent condition. And it certainly is not a condition that magically becomes worse on Feb. 14. Unless you say it does….but that is just you saying it…..nobody else is thinking it. Well, maybe some people are thinking it …those narcissistic, thin-skinned, vain and entitled people I mentioned before.

So, here are my revolutionary thoughts for Valentine’s Day. Don’t have someone special? Good!!! Send Valentines to people who are hurting for other reasons. Make some goody bags and drop them off at the hospital, local school, or police station. Take yourself out for an excellent dinner and movie. Better yet, find three or four fellow wonderful humans who are not currently dating, etc., and all go together. The origin of Valentine’s Day, according to some, is a celebration of a person who suffered for others, who gave time and energy to those around him. This Valentine’s Day why don’t you honor the true meaning and share the love and don’t get so wrapped up in the material Kardashian bull hockey of chocolates and roses.

This Feb. 14, send a valentine to someone who really deserves it…….you!

How are we doing?

There are plenty of ways to get feedback thanks to technology. While the Counseling and Testing Center uses a variety of surveys to get feedback on how we are doing, we would certainly like to get some “old school” feedback as well. If you would ever like to drop us a note, please do. It can be anonymous, that is fine. We would just like to hear from you about our image. Is there something we could change that would make our services more accessible? Are we not explaining what we do in a clear enough manner? Are there things we could do to make people feel better about using our center?

We would love to hear from you; the good, the bad, the ugly, and, of course, your favorite recipes. Just drop us a note at the Counseling and Testing Center, 409 Potter Hall, WKU.

CTC plans Sexual Assault Awareness Month events

There will be a screening of “The Invisible War” Feb. 24, at 7:30 p.m. in the Downing Student Union auditorium. A discussion led by, Trina McDonald who was a featured person in the film will follow the film. This is a great opportunity!

We will also be doing a proclamation signing at the Kentucky Building at 1:30pm declaring March as Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) at WKU by President Gary Ransdell.

Counseling and Testing Center will be participating in “Healthy Days” at Preston Center, March 3, from 2-5 p.m. We will have a table and be involved with the display of “The Clothesline Project.”

March 17 will be “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” which is part of SAAM events, this is a fun way to raise awareness about a serious topic. Men walk a mile around campus in high heeled shoes to support that you don’t always know what it’s like until you’ve walked a mile in their shoes. This is sponsored by WKU Inter-fraternity Council and all money raised goes to Hope Harbor, Inc., our local sexual trauma recovery center! Men! Come walk!

March 26 at 6 p.m. will be our annual “Take Back the Night” event! Deadline to guarantee you a t-shirt is TUESDAY, MARCH 17 at 8a.m.!!!

Look for a full calendar of events for March, Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), coming mid February on our website!
National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

National Eating Disorders Awareness Week 2015 begins Feb. 23! On that evening, we will host a discussion panel on eating struggles and disorders. Panelists will include a registered dietician, a parent/support group facilitator, and a therapist. Bring your questions and join us at 7 p.m., DSU auditorium, for this swipable event.

Did you know . . .

February is
American Heart Month
An Affair to Remember Month
Black History Month
Canned Food Month
Creative Romance Month
Great American Pie Month
National Cherry Month

Daily observances

February 6
National Lame Duck Day
February 7
National Send a Card to a Friend Day
National Fettuccine Alfredo Day
February 8
National Boy Scouts Day
National Kite Flying Day
February 9
National Toothache Day
National Bagel and Lox Day
National Clean Out Your Computer Day
February 10
National Umbrella Day
National Cream Cheese Brownie Day
February 11
National Make a Friend Day
National Don’t Cry Over Spilled Milk Day
National White Shirt Day
National Shut-In Visitation Day
National Peppermint Patty Day
February 12
National Plum Pudding Day
Abraham Lincoln’s Birthday
February 13
National Tortellini Day
National Blame Someone Else Day
February 14
National Organ Donor Day
National Ferris Wheel Day
National Cream-Filled Chocolates Day
Valentines Day
February 15
National Almond Day
National do a Grouch a Favor Day
President’s Day
February 16
National Random Acts of Kindness Day
National Cabbage Day
February 17
National Gumdrop Day
Singles Awareness Day
February 18
National Battery Day
National Crab Stuffed Flounder Day
February 19
National Chocolate Mint Day
February 20
National Cherry Pie Day
National Love Your Pet Day
February 21
National Sticky Bun Day
February 22
National Margarita Day
National Cook a Sweet Potato Day
February 23
National Banana Bread Day
National Dog Biscuit Day
February 24
National Tortilla Chip Day
Spay Day USA
February 25
National Chocolate Covered Nut Day
National Clam Chowder Day
February 26
National Pistachio Day
National Tell a Fairy Tale Day
National Chili Day
February 27
National Kahlua Day
National Strawberry Day
National Polar Bear Day
February 28
National Public Sleeping Day
National Chocolate Souffle Day
National Floral Design Day
National Tooth Fairy Day
Rare Disease Day USA

For more information on the WKU Counseling & Testing Center
Check out our website at www.wku.edu/heretohelp/
Testing Services
Available

The Counseling and Testing Center offers most national tests such as CLEP, MAT, LSAT, DSST, ACT, NBCC, PCAT, HESI and COMPASS. Residual ACT and Chemistry Placement tests are also available. For more information on testing dates, see www.registerblast.com/wku.

PRAXIS testing dates are at www.ets.org/praxis. Questions may be e-mailed to: testingcenter@wku.edu.

Become a fan of WKU Counseling & Testing Center
www.facebook.com/WKU.CTC

Counseling Services
College should be challenging, not overwhelming

That’s why we’re here to help, offering our services Monday thru Friday from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. There is a ONE-TIME $20.00 fee for paperwork and documentation. After the one-time fee, students have access to unlimited visits for their entire college career here at WKU. Our services are confidential and NO information is released without the student’s written permission, unless in an emergency situation. So if your mom, grandma, or next door neighbor calls to learn about your counseling appointment, “mums” the word.

We offer individual and group counseling services to help with coping strategies, conflict resolution, and crisis situations related to:

- College Adjustment
- Decision Making
- Problem Behaviors
- Grief/Loss
- Relationship Issues
- Sexual Assault/Abuse
- Eating Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- Stress Management
- Depression/Anxiety
- Suicide Prevention
- ....and more!

Don’t Forget! We also offer counseling for couples of all kinds: friends, relationships and roommates.