



# WKU®

# Counseling & Testing Center

February 2015

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## Valentine's Day

### Just another day in the grander scheme of things

By Dr. Karl Laves

**F**ew 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 publically in love on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 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?

**Y**ou 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 Gumdrop Day  
Singles Awareness Day

#### *February 16*

National Almond Day  
National do a Grouch a Favor Day  
President's Day

#### *February 17*

National Random Acts of Kindness Day  
National Cabbage 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/](http://WWW.WKU.EDU/HERETOHELP/)

# SPOTLIGHT

## BRIAN LEE



I received a B.A. in psychology and M.A. in clinical psychology from Western Kentucky University (WKU). After completing the master's program at WKU, I earned licensure as a Psychological Associate and spent some time working as a behavioral health professional in the community. In 2013 I was blessed with an opportunity to come back to WKU and join the staff of the Counseling and Testing Center (CTC) as a Staff Counselor; I am beyond thrilled with this wonderful opportunity. My passion resides within higher education and I feel extremely fortunate to have been given the opportunity to give back to the WKU community that has given me so much. In addition to my primary responsibilities at the CTC, I also teach various undergraduate psychology courses

part-time. For leisure, I enjoy spending time with my family, doing yard work, and playing music.

## BETSY PIERCE



I received my MA in Clinical Psychology from WKU in 2000, which proves that it is never too late to go back to school! As Outreach Coordinator, I help schedule and provide programs to the campus community. However, most of my time is spent with students for

individual counseling, and I have a particular interest in eating disorders. I love reading, gardening, and chocolate, not necessarily in that order, and am a firm believer that we need to laugh about something every day, including ourselves!

## 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 counsel-

ing services to help with coping strategies, conflict resolution, and crisis situations related to:

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

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

## 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](http://www.registerblast.com/wku)

PRAXIS testing dates are at [www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis).

Questions may be e-mailed to: [testingcenter@wku.edu](mailto:testingcenter@wku.edu).

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