



TeenHelp.org presents...

# Avatar

TeenHelp.org's eZine  
Volume 1, Issue 9 / February 2008

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## Editorial

Hello everyone, and welcome to this edition of Avatar!

In this issue we have a few great articles to help you through Valentines Day and beyond. With articles containing great information, you're all sure to find a little something that will be of use to you.

We will be kicking off this edition with a little bit of Valentine's Day history; a little something to give you lot some insight as to how this wonderful day first came about. There is also an article with some gift ideas for your significant other, along with wonderful self-expression written by you! As always, we also have some informative articles. As depression is quite common, we have some information on symptoms, how to get help, how to cope and so on. We also have an article that is focused on abuse, which will give you general information on the different kinds of abuse, what to do if you're being abused, the effects that abuse can leave on you and so on. Finally, we're going to finish off this edition with zodiac sign details and a horoscope for all of you Aquarians!

We hope that you enjoy this edition. Please keep in mind that all of your contributions are important to us! Keep the submissions coming!

Have a happy Valentine's Day!

Mel & Rob,  
The Avatar Editors.

# The history of Valentine's Day

by *unknown*

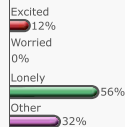
Every February 14th, across the country, candy, flowers, and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine. But who is this mysterious saint and why do we celebrate this holiday? The history of Valentine's Day -- and its patron saint -- is shrouded in mystery. But we do know that February has long been a month of romance. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. So, who was Saint Valentine and how did he become associated with this ancient rite?

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men -- his crop of potential soldiers. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself. While in prison, it is believed that Valentine fell in love with a young girl -- who may have been his jailor's daughter -- who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter, which he signed 'From your Valentine,' an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic, and, most importantly, romantic figure.

*A poll on the views of TeenHelp members.*

## Valentine's Day makes me feel...



# Valentine's Day gift ideas

by .Infinity.

That time of the year is here again! With Valentine's Day just around the corner, gift ideas for your wonderful partner are probably rushing through your minds. What should you get for your partner, though? What will he or she like? What's over the top? These are just very few of the questions that you may be asking yourself at the moment. While sometimes dazzling expensive gifts may give your partner the "wow" effect, remember that the thought behind each gift usually means more than the price. So if your funds are low at this time of the year, or if you don't know what to get, worry not! There's always something out there that will meet your needs or be within your limits.

## Gifts for her:

The most traditional gift for "her" has always been flowers. While red roses are the most popular choice, remember that any flowers will do the trick. Along with the flowers, it has always been within tradition to throw in a box of chocolates or a cute teddy bear. Throwing in both or either is completely up to you, though.

Another great gift idea for her is jewelry. Whether you get your significant other a necklace, bracelet, earrings or a watch, jewelry is a very popular gift to be giving on this special occasion. Getting her a nice smelling perfume is also something nice.

Finally, the most inexpensive, yet thoughtful gift idea is for you to make something for her! Whether you write her a thoughtful letter telling her how much you love her or why you appreciate the time you've had with her, write her a poem or make something, giving her something which was made with love always speaks louder than anything.

After finding her the most great and thoughtful gift, taking her out or making her a home cooked meal is always the best way to make the evening just right! As long as your date or female other feels special through this evening, everything else will be perfect too.

## For him:

As women like to feel special, so do boyfriends! Remember that just as you would appreciate all of the things above, your boyfriend may appreciate some of the same things. Which things? Well, even guys like getting things made by you. Poems, cute appreciation letters or anything self-made is always great. Letting him know just how much you love him can never be a bad thing.

As you may like getting jewelry, getting him something jewelry-wise is alright to do, too. You could get him something such as a watch, chain or a ring! Getting him something like that will be giving him something that he can have for a long time, something that he can remember years down the road. Cologne is always a great touch, too.

Another great idea is to get him a ticket or reservation to an upcoming event that he may have his heart set on. Whether it's a sport game, concert or anything at all, if he wants to go there he would appreciate it a lot.

You could play it by ear too, and see if there is something else that he may really want. After all of the gift choosing, make him a meal! Make him feel just as special as you'd wish to feel.

In the end of it all, what you decide to choose is entirely up to you. Make sure that what you get for your partner will be something that he or she will like, and that it's something that he or she can use for more than just one day. Everyone loves gifts that they can hold close to their heart for a long time.

When you're done choosing your gift, just make sure that your partner feels like the most important person in your life. At the end of it all, both of you will feel great.

Have a happy Valentine's Day!

# Depression

by \*xxjessxx\*, Katiee & .Infinity.

## An introduction - What is depression?

Depression is an illness that affects your body, as well as your mood, thoughts and behaviors. As your self-esteem levels tend to change, your eating and sleeping patterns can change as well.

Despite what some people say, depression isn't just something where you can just "pull yourself together" from. It takes a lot of time and effort to overcome this illness. It can be really hard and isolating when you feel upset, sad and tired all the time, like no-one cares and like you're all alone.

Despite all of this, you will find that depression is a lot more common than you may think. On average 1 in 15 teenagers are seriously depressed each year, and many go untreated.

## Symptoms of depression

Sometimes it can be hard to put into words how you are feeling because of how overwhelming all of these feelings can be. There are some common symptoms that you may experience, these symptoms may include:

- You keep feeling sad and upset.
- You don't seem to be able to have fun anymore, just don't see the point and can't get motivated.
- You feel really bad about yourself, maybe worthless or guilty.
- Your sleeping patterns change a lot.
- You may keep getting strange headaches or other unexplained illnesses.
- You may cry over small things.
- You gain or lose weight without meaning to.
- You can't concentrate on anything.
- You feel helpless.
- You don't want to go out with your friends anymore.
- Lack of energy.
- Low self-esteem.
- In some cases, thoughts of suicide.

## Types of Depression

As there are many different symptoms of depression, there are also many different types. Types of depression may include, but are not limited to:

**Mild Depression:** Symptoms of mild depression are usually less intense than those that are found in people who have severe depression. The symptoms found in people who have mild depression are usually less noticeable or less frequent. This type of depression often goes undiagnosed, as the person feeling the symptoms doesn't feel them as harshly as others with a more severe depression would.

**Severe Depression:** Also known as Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) or clinical depression. Symptoms of severe depression are usually more intense; resulting in extreme negative feelings. All symptoms of this type of depression are usually severe enough for others to be able to see or feel whilst in your presence. Severe depression usually requires immediate treatment by a professional. Being left untreated could have very serious negative results.

**Bipolar Disorder (BPD):** Also known as manic depression. Symptoms of this disorder usually involve emotional highs and lows. People with this form of depression usually meet symptoms intense enough to be classified as severe depression, then their mood swings up to the complete opposite, most commonly known as mania.

# Depression

by \*xxjessxx\*, Katiee & .Infinity.

**Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):** SAD is commonly known as the mood change that occurs when the weather season changes. This type of depression is most commonly known to take place in the winter months, but can occur at any time. It has been said that the amount of sunlight consumed is less within the autumn and winter months, causing these affects.

**Postnatal Depression (PND):** PND is a type of depression that occurs shortly after a woman gives birth. This type of depression usually occurs because of all of the bodily and environment changes that have and still are occurring whilst giving birth and raising the child.

As said before, these are just some of the main types of depression. There are many different feelings or types that a person can experience.

## How to cope with depression

The main thing that you should always try to do is to keep yourself well through this all. Staying well means that you need to focus on eating balanced meals, exercising daily and by making sure to get enough sleep.

You should also always try to find positive outlets. Whether you write about things that are bothering you, draw things or just do something else that you like, being positive about what you do is very important. While you must do positive things, you must always try to think positive, too. Try to recognize the good in yourself and try to pat yourself on your back for the good things that you've done.

Another thing that you can do is to try to keep yourself busy. Try doing things that you like or try setting goals and picking up new hobbies. By doing either of these things you are not only involving yourself in things that you may love or can love again, but you're also giving yourself positive things to look forward to doing. If you decide to set a goal, try to set something that you know you will be able to work towards and finish.

Furthermore, don't be afraid to show your emotions! Whether you feel upset or anything at all, don't be afraid to cry. Crying is a very healthy way to release pain and emotions from within. Never turn to negative ways of coping such as drugs or alcohol. Neither of those actually solve any issues, they usually just create more problems in the long run.

Finally, reach out for help!

## Getting help

Asking for help isn't always an easy thing, but it is the right thing to do.

When ready to get better, most people who have depression should usually go to see a doctor or a counselor about it. By seeing a doctor not only can you get diagnosed as to whether or not you have depression or any other disorder, but you can also get medication for it. Medication isn't always required, but it is an available option.

By talking to a counselor about this you can also let out your thoughts, feelings and emotions. Letting out your thoughts, feelings and emotions is usually something that helps a person a lot. Keeping things bottled up inside usually only eats at you, making you feel worse. If this option is chosen, not only can you let all of your thoughts, feelings and emotions out, but you and your counselor can also work on solutions to your problems.

# Depression

by \*xxjessxx\*, Katiee & .Infinity.

By trying either of these things one must always remember to be completely honest with whichever professional speak to. They need to know everything in order to help you their full abilities. One must also remember that trying either of these options doesn't promise direct results, but each person who tries either usually starts to feel better within a few weeks.

## What if I'm not ready to speak to a doctor or counselor yet?

Not being ready to speak to either is something that a lot of us feel. We sometimes feel scared, lack trust or just don't like talking to a strange person about it. While talking to a professional usually gives out the best results, you can talk to others about it.

Who? Talk to a person who you trust a lot, one who you feel very comfortable around. Whether you speak to a family member, take aside a best friend or even a mutual friend, talking to a person who you have known for quite some time can be a lot more comforting than talking to one who you hardly know.

## What if I feel suicidal?

If you feel suicidal you need to reach out for help immediately. Whether you go talk to someone, call a suicide prevention hotline or 911, you need to get a hold of someone who can help you immediately.

If you can't get to a phone, please take some time to think about it. When feeling suicidal you may feel so much emotional pain that you will fail to remember that there is a way you can get through whatever it is that is hurting you, that you can get help and that people do care about you. Think about why you feel this way, what positive way you can try to handle it and what you have around you. Remember that suicide and the affect of it is permanent, these feelings may not be. As hard as it may be, try to hang on tightly until you can get help for this.

## Suicide hotlines

Australia

**Kids Help Line:** 1800 55 1800 (24 hour, toll free)

UK -

**Child Line UK:** 0800 1111 (24 hour, toll free)

**Samaritans, UK:** 08457 90 90 90

**Samaritans, Ireland:** 1850 60 90 90

Canada -

**Kids Help Phone:** 1 800 668 6868 (24 hour, toll free)

USA -

**1 800 SUICIDE** (24 hour, toll free)

<http://suicidehotlines.com>

If you can't find any suicide hotlines in your area, try looking in the front your phone book. Look for keywords such as: suicide prevention, crisis intervention, hotlines - crisis or suicide. If you still can't find anything, dial 911 and tell the operator that you're in danger of committing suicide.

## Sources

[http://www.solveyourproblem.com/artman/publish/article\\_908.shtml](http://www.solveyourproblem.com/artman/publish/article_908.shtml)

<http://www.committment.com/depression.html>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Cope-with-Depression>

[http://www.helpguide.org/mental/depression\\_teen\\_teenagers.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/mental/depression_teen_teenagers.htm)

<http://www.psychologyinfo.com/depression/description.html>

<http://www.coolnurse.com/depression.htm>

# Abuse

by .Infinity.

Abuse is one of the most common heard terms around the world these days. We hear about it in television, from people we know, and most of all on the Internet. To abuse or mistreat something or someone is a very unlawful act, one which usually has horrible results.

Though many things can be abused or mistreated, the main target for such a thing is usually children. Whether the child is young, newborn or a teen, abuse does occur often. Worldwide, approximately 40 million children are subjected to abuse each year.

While abuse does occur often, not every child, teen or person you will meet has been abused.

## What are some forms of abuse?

The most common forms of abuse are:

- o Physical
- o Emotional/Verbal
- o Sexual
- o Neglect

**Physical abuse** means that the person (child, teen, et cetera.) are being hit, shaken, choked, bit or even burned. They can also have objects thrown at them as well as many other things. This sort of abuse usually means that their body is being hurt by whoever it is who is abusing them.

**Emotional or verbal abuse** consists of the abuser belittling the other person, taunting them, calling them names, embarrassing them, constantly disapproving of things they do or just doing anything that hurts the person emotionally. Examples include, but are not limited to, calling the person worthless, stupid, ugly, saying that they are pathetic or will never amount to anything, and so on.

**Sexual abuse** is when the child or teen is being sexually assaulted, molested or forced to have any unwanted sexual contact with the abuser.

**Neglect** is the form of abuse where the parent or guardian is dismissing the child or teen's rights and needs. Some of these necessities include food, clothing, a warm shelter to live in, medical and dental care, cleanliness, physical security, respect, emotional support, spending valuable time together and supervision for the times that require it when they can't be there themselves.

While these are only some of the ways how someone could be abused by someone, the definitions of abuse can vary.

## What affect can abuse have on the victim(s)?

Some of the affects that abuse can have on a victim are, but are not limited to:

- o Low self-esteem
- o Depression
- o Fear of physical contact
- o Difficulties in learning
- o Aggression
- o Trust issues
- o Anxiety
- o Withdrawal
- o Self hatred
- o Poor health
- o Suicide
- o Death



# Abuse

by .Infinity.

## What should I do if I or someone I know is being abused?

If you or someone you know is being abused, the best thing to do would be to let someone know that it's happening. Whether you tell a teacher, counselor, neighbor, doctor, close family member or any person who you feel you can trust, telling is important. Someone needs to know that it's happening in order for them to be able to help you or whoever else is being abused.

Though letting someone know about it may be very hard, letting someone know is one of the most important steps to be taking.

## Will they get in trouble if I tell?

It is more than likely that the person who did this to you will get in trouble for it, but the most important thing about it is that they will no longer be hurting you how they have been. If the person doing this to you gets in trouble, it is very important that you remember that none of this is your fault. They chose to do this, not you.

## What if they don't get in trouble and no-one believes me?

Though people sometimes do not get in trouble, continue telling someone that it is happening. Do not give up on trying to get help, no matter what the person may say to you. The only reason why they would be telling you to NOT tell is because they know that what they're doing is wrong. They know that they will get in trouble for it, too.

So if you are getting abused, in spite of what you are being told, remember to let someone know! It could save your life.

## More information...

**The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline** (USA & Canada)  
1 800 4 A CHILD

**ChildLine** (Speak about any problem, UK)  
0800 1111 (24/7)

## References

[http://www.childhelp.org/get\\_help](http://www.childhelp.org/get_help)  
[www.child-abuse-effects.com](http://www.child-abuse-effects.com)  
[www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**Untitled**  
by Blake\_2010

## Verse 1

The horizon glows brightly,  
As the sun sets beyond.  
My mind wanders slightly,  
And my heart begins to respond.

Oh this would be perfect,  
If you were here.  
Oh this would be perfect,  
If you were near.

I'm lost in this moment,  
Feeling your warmth beside me.  
You're the missing component  
And I'm living off the memory.

## Chorus

I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
In you.

They say life is a beautiful thing,  
But what would it be without you?

## Verse 2

I can see the smile across your lips.  
And the glowing of your eyes.  
I'd give it all for one last kiss,  
Because you make me feel alive.

A dream this must be,  
Suddenly we're hand in hand.  
"Please don't let go of me",  
"I'll do everything I can".

I've come to the verdict,  
That for me, you're the one.  
Now nobody is perfect,  
But you're the closest that'll ever come.

(Continued...)

## Chorus

I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
In you.

They say life is a beautiful thing,  
But what would it be without you?

## Bridge

You are everything...  
You are everything...  
You are everything...  
Yes you are.

I could go back to before I met you,  
But I wouldn't make it too far

And I'm holding on...  
And I'm holding on...  
And I'm holding on...  
To you.

Don't doubt it for a second,  
Everything I wrote here is true.

## Chorus (x2)

I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
In you.

They say life is a beautiful thing,  
But what would it be without you?

I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
I've found everything...  
In you.

They say life is a beautiful thing,  
But what would it be without you?

What would I be without you?

## Horoscopes for January

### Aquarius - January 21-February 21

A Solar Eclipse occurs on the 6th in your own sign, Aquarius, bringing dramatic changes to your outlook, manner, and confidence level. You are presenting a new face to the world, and February is a time for reinventing yourself in some personal way, such as with a new look or manner of expressing and presenting yourself. February is a personally busy time for you, when you are especially brave and ready to enjoy new experiences. After the 18th, your relationship with a lover or a child will begin to improve.

#### Zodiac Information

Aquarius, the water bearer, challenges authority and seeks the new and unfamiliar. It stands for knowledge and friendship toward all. Aquarians are charismatic leaders, non-conformists who try to understand the world as it is and reinvent it. They are objective, unemotional and can be detached. They are original, unpredictable, intellectual and independent. It rules the legs and ankles.

*Famous Aquarians include:* Oprah Winfrey, Norman Mailer, Richard Gephardt, Jack Lemmon, Charles Darwin, Babe Ruth, Boris Yeltsin, Clark Gable, Thomas Edison, Jack Benny, Lord Byron and Sinclair Lewis.

- \* *Element:* air
- \* *Quality:* fixed
- \* *Ruling Planets:* Uranus and Saturn
- \* *Key phrase:* "I know"

#### More information...

##### Horoscope

[www.cafeastrology.com](http://www.cafeastrology.com)

##### Zodiac

[www.astrorstarcharts.com](http://www.astrorstarcharts.com)

## Thanks and Legal

### Thanks for reading!

Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of Avatar! Any comments, suggestions or criticisms can be directed towards the editors, Mel and Rob. You can also send any submissions you have for Avatar to us, which are a really important part of keeping Avatar alive. We appreciate any submissions that are made to us. We look forward to hearing from you, and hope you enjoy the next edition of Avatar!

Mel & Rob,  
The Avatar Editors.

Please visit us at the Avatar page, [www.teenhelp.org/avatar](http://www.teenhelp.org/avatar), or email us at [avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org).

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