

Women's  
History Month

Make March  
Merry!

March Playlist:  
Share your Smile

Cover photo  
by **Asylum**

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Issue 9

# Avatar

**Drugs and Your Brain**  
Learn how the chemicals from drugs affect your brain.





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Your valuable contributions are what make Avatar so unique. Please submit us your content, whether it be an article, poem, joke, game, photo, drawing or anything else you have to share!

Submission form: [www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit](http://www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit)  
Email: [avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org)



## Letter from the Editors

Hello everyone, and welcome to the March issue of Avatar. We're glad to see you again!

Spring is in the air, and there's no better time for fresh ideas and positive change! As the weather warms and winter comes to a close, we hope you'll join in the celebrations. Whether you're celebrating Share a Smile Day on the first, I Want You to be Happy Day on the third, Music in Our Schools Month, Youth Art Month, or the Spring Equinox, we hope you have a fantastic and exciting March!

We're going to kick this issue off in **TeenHelp Times** with an interesting article on Women's History Month, which celebrates the accomplishments of some women in history from various parts of the world at various different times. We also have an informative review of the events from February 2010 that matter to you, in addition to our **Cause of the Month**, Rosa Loves. So if you've missed some events, want to brush up on your history, or would like to read up on a cause – this is the perfect time!

Moving on to **Mind and Body**, we have an article on drugs and your brain. In this article we discuss some of the most common drugs and the effects they can have on you. Additionally, we also have an article that explains a little on self harm. If you have any questions about self harm, understanding self harm or how you can help someone you know, be sure to check it out!

In our **Lifestyle** section we have some more of the relaxed articles you love; one with an awesome playlist of songs for you to check out, and another on making March merry. While you're at it, stop by **Fun and Games** for some recipes, comics and more! Last, but not least, don't forget to check out this month's **Self Expression** and your monthly **Horoscope**.

We hope you have an awesome month!  
The Avatar Editors.

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## Contributors

The Avatar Editors would like to thank the following TeenHelp users for their valuable contributions published in this month's magazine.

Contributions from readers like you are what make Avatar so unique and wonderful. Please consider submitting content, whether it be an article, poem, photograph, or anything else.

[www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit](http://www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit) or  
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## Celebrating Women

by Casey (Cas\*)

**Every March, in the U.S., we celebrate women's history month.** The international day for women's history also falls on the eighth of March. Why is women's history, and not men's, so important that it has its own month? Throughout history men have had more rights and acknowledgment than women. On the other hand, women were excluded from many history books and texts and weren't allowed to do many things, like vote or work as doctors, so celebrating all of the things that women have accomplished celebrates that change.

It doesn't seem fair that women only get a single month, or even just a day, out of the whole year dedicated to them, while men are celebrated every day (from Columbus Day to Martin Luther King Day and more). And it's not because women did not do anything until after the 1920s. Women did plenty, and we know some of those women: Amelia Earhart, Clara Barton, and Susan B. Anthony. But there are some lesser known women who also made a great impact on the world we live in today, either in the things they did or how they lived their lives.

**Tz'u Hsi** (1835 – 1908), also known as Empress Cixi, was the first female regent in China. She was actually regent twice, after her husband's death. Once with her son, who was around five. After his death, she placed her nephew, who was three, on the throne, and acted as regent until her death. She died a day after her nephew, whom she had arrested for radical ideas.

**Jeannette Rankin** (1880 – 1973) was the first woman to be elected to the House of Representatives (United States) in 1916. She was called "the Lady of the House", as she was the only female member of Congress at that time. She was also the only person in Congress to vote against United States entry into World War Two.

**Rosalind Franklin** (1920 – 1958) helped discover the helical structure of DNA, but that is not all she did. She was a scientist in her own right, and she made many important contributions to the understanding of the molecular structure of viruses, coal, RNA, and graphite. It wasn't until the late 1960s, years after her death, that she was actually credited for the work she did.

**Jane Goodall** (b 1934) is well known for the work she does, and

and the time she spends studying chimpanzees. She studied the social and family structure of chimpanzees for forty-five years! She is a global leader in the attempt to protect chimpanzees and their natural habitats.

**Indira Gandhi** (1917 – 1984) was the first female Prime Minister of India. After her father's death, and the death of his successor, she was appointed to the position of Prime Minister. She nationalized banks, brought a peaceful end to the war with Pakistan, boosted trade, along with many other things. She was Prime Minister for three consecutive terms, and then from 1980 until her assassination in 1984.

**Joan of Arc** (1412 – 1431) led the resistance to the invasion of France in the hundred year war. She was born a peasant, and claimed divine guidance. Whether you believe that or not, she led the French to many decisive victories during the hundred year war. Sadly she was burned at the stake when she was nineteen, because she was believed to use magic and witchcraft.

Some of these women you may have heard of, some you may have not, but their influence over our world has been great, even if you don't notice the changes, or the liberties, that women now have. Women in developed countries can vote, hold government offices, work outside the home, work in the sciences and maths, and can lead nations. In some third world countries, women are still living unjustly, without these liberties we have today. Women in these places

have little political power. They take care of the home, the children, and they work, but they do not influence the government. It is something we are not used to; most of us have never been third rate citizens, most of us are used to having a voice in our lives and futures.

So this March, I encourage you to learn more about the important women who made it so that you could be free, and to also help those women who are still finding their voice, whether in another country, or by helping out at a local women's shelter. But most importantly, this March, celebrate the women who have made a difference in your own personal life. ■







## News that Affects You: February 2010 in Review

by Jessie (Asylum)

**From entertainment to new health studies**, our world is a rapidly changing one. But the news can be so boring! When you find yourself thinking "what a drag, the news is on again," never fear! If you don't like the news, can't be bothered with the paper, and would rather not spend your time on CNN's website, check out this section for synopses of news events from the past month that your peers are talking about!

### Entertainment

On February 12, 2010 the **XXI Olympic Winter Games begin in Vancouver**, British Columbia, Canada. A shadow of grief loomed over the opening ceremony, as the world grieved the tragic loss of twenty-one year old Georgian luger Nodar Kumaritashvili.

### Human Rights and Military

On February 2, 2010 a hearing is held in the United States to discuss the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. A **repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy** would allow openly gay Americans to serve in their country's armed forces.



On February 9, 2010 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reports that **Iran could be making nuclear warheads**. Iran responds with reports of "peaceful nuclear activities", saying they do not plan to make nuclear weapons but to rein nuclear power for energy.

### Mental Health

It was announced in February that the **Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders is being revised**. Proposed changes include the addition of non-suicidal self harm and binge eating disorder, among others, as well as the revision of numerous disorders currently included. For more information check out [www.dsm5.org](http://www.dsm5.org).



### Health

Results of a University of California at Berkeley study suggest that **napping during the day may improve the brain's ability to learn and retain information**. Some cynics suggest that those with improved memory after sleep cannot be distinguished from those individuals that are less tired, while others argue sleep enables the brain to store short term memories, thus creating room for new ones.

On February 2, 2010 the The Lancet medical journal issued a **retraction of a 1998 report linking autism and the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine**. The study was already widely accepted as inaccurate by the general population and the scientific and communities.

For more news check out the Associated Press ([www.ap.org](http://www.ap.org)), BBC ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)), CNN ([www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)), or other trusted sources.





## Drugs and Your Brain

by Maria (Gidig)

**Many teenagers and adults do drugs everyday,** whether they're legal or not. But very few of those people know how exactly each drug works or the effects of drug use. It's important and healthy to know what may happen inside your body, if you choose to use drugs. So here some of the most common drugs, and how they affect you, are explained.

**Marijuana:** Most commonly marijuana, also known as weed or pot, is smoked. It then travels into your lungs where alveoli (sacs where gas exchanges are made) absorb the various substances. This exchange happens quite rapidly after you inhale. From there chemicals go through your bloodstream and into your brain. The other way marijuana is used is through ingestion. Most people eat them through baked goods such as brownies or cookies. In this case your stomach absorbs the chemicals and they make their way into the brain.

In your brain you have what's called cannabinoid receptors that are activated by anandamide, a neurotransmitter. When under the influence of marijuana the active ingredient, THC, activates the cannabinoid receptors as anandamide normally does. Many of the receptors are located in or near the hippocampus and cerebellum, as well as other places in your brain. This means these are the most effected areas and they each have specific functions. The hippocampus affects short-term memory, and the cerebellum controls coordination. Of course these are not the only effects, just a select few.

**Alcohol:** Usually alcohol comes in a drink mixed with other liquids that make the alcohol consumption more enjoyable. When you drink alcohol your small intestine absorbs it, and it is pushed into your blood stream where it dissolves into the tissues of your body. This is how it begins to affect you. When in your brain, alcohol usually affects the nerve cells in the brain by blocking and deterring various nerve cell exchanges which essentially confuses your mind.

**Cocaine:** One way cocaine is used is by smoking what is called crack cocaine. When it reaches the brain, it then affects the area called the ventral tegmental area. Within this area, the cocaine attaches to the dopamine transporter which aids in dopamine increasing pleasure. When it's attached, it hinders the absorption of dopamine. Therefore, it continues to stimulate the receptors which absorb the dopamine.

The other, most common way, that cocaine is used is through insufflation, or snorting. This is when you



breathe it up through your nose and into your sinuses. Here it's absorbed by mucous membranes. The extra cocaine that's not absorbed is collected in mucous which is eventually swallowed, causing the cocaine to affect the dopamine transmitters similar to that of when you smoke crack cocaine.

**LSD:** LSD, or acid, is normally eaten after it's been absorbed onto small pieces of paper. It is yet to be proven exactly how LSD creates the effects it does, but it is thought to affect serotonin neurotransmitters. Serotonin is important for mood regulation, sleeping patterns, appetite, and more.

Some also say that LSD is stored in your brain for long amounts of time. When it's released again, it causes what are called flashbacks. This means you feel the effects of the LSD once again, even if it was over ten years ago that you took the LSD. But this is not proven to be an after-effect of LSD.

**Crystal Meth:** This addictive drug can be insufflated, injected, smoked, or taken orally. When you take crystal meth it floods your brain with mass amounts of dopamine, more than your body normally releases. This increases pleasure, emotions, and multiple other things. There are many after effects of using this drug. Eventually the amount of dopamine your brain naturally makes will decrease, meaning even when sober it will more difficult for your brain to make you happy.

**OxyContin:** OxyContin is a pain killer that many doctors prescribe to help with chronic pain, but now has a lot of recreational street value. OxyContin usually comes in pill form, and you can insufflate it or take it orally. Once in your brain it stimulates opioid receptors which controls happiness, pain relief, and has various other effects. ■





## Self Injury

*by Emily (bringontherain)*

**Self injury is intentionally hurting oneself** to the point of causing tissue damage or leaving marks for more than a few minutes. About 1% of the population, three million people in the United States alone, have intentionally harmed themselves at some point in their lives. This intentional harm can range anywhere from scratching to limb amputation. The most common forms, especially in teens and young adults, are the moderate types such as cutting, burning, and hair pulling.

Anyone can be a self harmer. It is not dependent on gender, race, sex, age or any other factor. It tends to be more common among girls between the ages of 16 and 25, but can still be found everywhere. Some things that self injurers have in common are a low self-esteem, being unable to express or cope with difficult emotions, and internalizing feelings.

One of the most difficult things about self harm is the general lack of understanding received. For people with the ability to cope in healthy ways, it can be really hard to grasp why someone would intentionally inflict pain on themselves. While self injury is harmful and is in no way good, it does serve a purpose to those who rely on it. Often times inflicting pain is the only way for a self harmer to deal with the situation that they are in. It can be an escape from emotional emptiness, a physical outlet for what is going on inside, a way to ground oneself, punishment, or for many other reasons. It does something a bit different for each person, but overall it is an unhealthy coping mechanism that develops when we don't learn how to deal with things in a healthy way. An important thing to remember is that while self harm is dangerous and unhealthy,

it is not suicidal behavior. Accidents happen, but more often than not, self injury is a way to deal with pain in an attempt to prevent suicidal thoughts and actions. It's still dangerous and unhealthy, but the idea that all self harmers are suicidal is a misconception.

It can be really scary when you find out a friend is hurting his or herself, especially when you know little about it. The best thing you can do for a friend who self abuses is to be supportive and try to understand what it is they are going through. Educate yourself on self harm and talk to them about it. Don't push or judge or give ultimatums to try and get someone to stop - it's ineffective and quitting has to be the self harmers own choice. Let them know you are there and that when they're ready, help is available. Know that it is never your responsibility to make someone better though. Ultimately it is their choice and you can't make it for them. All you can be is supportive.

After self harm has become a large part of your life and the way you deal with emotions, it can be really hard to overcome. Anyone who's gone through it knows of how addictive it can be. Hopefully there will come a time when you are ready and truly want to stop self harming though - a time when you recognize it's unhealthy and are ready to find better ways to cope. When you reach this point, the best thing you can do for yourself is to seek help and support from others. Talk with parents, a teacher, school counselors, a religious leader or any trusted adult. Get involved in individual or group therapy where you have the support of others and of someone trained to help you work through your self harm. And, don't give up. Recovering from self harm can be a long and difficult road. If you slip up, it's okay. Learn from it and keep trying.

Every year, March 1st is a day to help make the general public more aware of the epidemic that is self harm. It's found everywhere and among anyone, regardless of race, gender, social class, or other differences, and yet there is such little understanding of it. Self Harm Awareness Day is here to help increase education of what self harm is and how to help those struggling with it. You can hand out flyers and put up posters for self harm awareness, or you can do something as simple as wearing orange to support those recovering. This day is what you choose to make of it. Maybe it will be that day where you finally decide to tell someone about your own self harm or someone opens up to you. ■







## Cause of the Month: Rosa Loves

by Katrina

*"We are everyday people aware of a need in our community. We realize that we are capable of performing tangible acts of service that will meet individual and immediate needs in order to affect wide scale encouragement. Rosa Loves is an example, an inspiration, and will serve as a possible backbone to many more grassroots 'love projects' around the world."*

Rosa Loves takes a different approach than many of the other causes TeenHelp has featured in the past. In 2006, Rosa Loves started to form under the watchful eyes and open hearts of three guys really wanting to make a difference in the world: Mike Fretto, Chris Lewis, and Jeremy Dean. Rather than just supporting one large cause, Rosa Loves donates money to smaller causes and individuals doing good works around their communities.

*"For Rosa Loves, the act of listening is something as important as it is subtle. Without listening, one can't hope to know someone else. This knowing enriches our lives and calls to us: to hear the stories of people in need, to feel true compassion, and to act."*

In order to be able to donate to all these great causes and individuals, Rosa Loves has t-shirts on sale that support each of the causes. Once a goal is reached, the t-shirt goes out of print. Examples of the stories behind the t-shirts include:

**Food for the Panti:** Proceeds from the Food for



Photograph by Holly (xHolyValorx)



Photograph by Holly (xHolyValorx)

the Panti shirt, Rosa Loves' latest t-shirt, goes to purchasing various agricultural tools to help the "Panti Asuhan" project.

**Armonia #2:** Proceeds from the Armonia #2 (as well as the original Armonia) go to a Mexican organization that works to send various prominent members of society to college. Once these members graduate from college, they come back to the town and help out other members achieve their individual goals.

**Simple Machine:** Proceeds from the Simple Machine t-shirt go to St. Augustine, Florida. Because many members of this town have no way of transportation, the money from this shirt goes into buying eco-friendly bicycles for easier transportation.

These are only a few of the amazing causes supported by Rosa Loves. To find out more or to find out how you can help, please visit:

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

### Contact us!

*Do you have any comments or feedback on TeenHelp's Cause of the Month? Do you have suggestions for a cause you would like to see featured in future editions of Avatar? If so, we'd love to hear from you.*

Form: [www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit](http://www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit)

Email:  
[avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org)





*A unique way of seeking help.*

**Can you be a lesbian without actually having sex with a male? I've never done it so how do I know I don't like it? I'm not physically attracted to guys but I don't know if I can say I'm completely gay. Do you any any input on this?**

Some people may have different opinions on this subject, but I'm sure many people would agree with me on this: I think you can certainly say you're completely gay without actually having sex with a male. There are girls who haven't even kissed a guy who call themselves completely gay. Especially seeing you say that you're not really physically attracted to guys. That is perfectly normal and you can certainly call yourself completely gay. Remember, if you're not comfortable having sex or doing anything sexual with a guy, don't. You see people saying that they are straight without having sex with the same gender right? It's the exact same thing. If you want to experiment though go ahead, that's completely up to you. Just don't do anything you're not comfortable with. Have fun and be safe!

**Since school started there has been a lot more work. I've been known for having "episodes" sometimes. I've been feeling really sad and depressed lately, I get really stress out during tests. I usually cry every night and every little thing seems to bug me. I hate being like this because I'm usually a pretty happy person. Me and my friend are in a fight because everything she says or does makes me go crazy! I want help but I don't know how to talk to someone, please help me!**

Hey there! School can be really stressful, especially tests! We all have experienced stress before at least one test in our lives. When it comes to tests, remember of course to be prepared! You could possibly ask a teacher to see the test. The occasional teacher will allow that, I know a few of mine do. Remember, be confident and you shouldn't be as nervous! As for crying every night, remember it's okay to cry and be upset. Though if it's happening a lot and you're feeling depressed and anxiety is getting to you, you should get some help, seeing you already know that I'm proud of you! Admitting you need the help is the first part of recovery. First off I'd start with telling the person you trust the most. Get them in private and tell them you think you need some help because you're feeling some depression and anxiety. Most likely they will understand and you can get some help and return the the happy person you used to be. Best of luck.

**My girlfriend was raped about five months ago by her brother, her dad is mentally disabled, and her mom abuses her. She doesn't want to call the police because she has nowhere to go. She told me not to tell anyone. How can I help her?**

This is a sad story to hear, sadly things like rape and abuse happen to good people who really don't deserve it. Dealing with rape can be hard for anyone and is certainly something they shouldn't have to deal with alone. Be proud she told you because that means she trusts you, and they she doesn't want to deal with it all by herself. I'm glad you want to help her, though there isn't too much you can do besides be there to help her, support her, and give her ideas to solve the situation. Though she should call the police to get out of a home like that. This could cause her serious problems in the future, not just hurt her now. I can understand why she wouldn't want to, being taken away from your house could be hard. After looking for somewhere to go if she still can't find a place to go there are many families who would love to take her in. Families she may not even know, but will love her and take good care of her. It will be hard on her especially if she's put in a home with people she doesn't know but that's when you come in and stay by her side, choices like these can change how your future ends up and how much the abuse and rape effects her in the future. Good luck to both of you!

**I've been trying not purge anymore, it's not much but I haven't purged in a week which is the longest I've gone in a long time. I'm personally freaking out my stomach hurts horribly and I feel numb without the purging. I'm not sure how much longer I can keep this up.**

First of all, just like getting over anything else, getting over an eating disorder is extremely hard. Congratulations for going a whole week without purging! That's awesome. Yes, it is "much"! Trying is a lot and going a whole week, wow, keep up the great work! Your stomach is going to hurt seeing it's not used to having food in it. Try maybe eating just a little bit every once and awhile and eventually work your way up to bigger portions. It's okay to break sometimes but try your hardest not to. Maybe thinking of the consequences of purging, like how bad, or even fatal this could be. I understand you may slip, and that is okay! Just keep trying your hardest. You can do this I know it. If you feel the need to purge try talking to someone either here on TeenHelp, a friend, or a family member. You could also try writing some positive things about yourself. Good luck! You can do it.





*A unique way of seeking help.*

**I think I'm online TOO much. My mom yells at me for it, I'm online for probably for more than 12 hours a day aside from being in class and doing certain things at work. I can still use the internet at work. (I'm a secretary). Help!**

Little might you know, many people have this problem. The computer can be great, but can also take you away from the outside world. With some people their whole life starts to revolve around it. I was personally like that myself. However, it's not a good thing at all. What you need to do is try to push yourself away from the computer. My obsession was so bad about a year ago my parents disconnected my internet for about a month. Once I got it back I found that I wasn't quite as hooked on the computer. Although at first it might seem like you're going to go crazy, or completely lose it keep yourself away from the computer as much as possible. Try to stay as busy as possible. Go out with friends and family, enjoy the outside world, not just the cyber world! Maybe at work, you could do what you have to on the computer, then involve yourself in other things when you don't NEED to be on the computer. Going on the computer a lot is one thing, but when you feel you need it, is another thing. Remember, avoid it as much as possible and soon enough you should find you really don't need the computer that much. Good luck!

**I've been dating this girl for a year and a couple of months, and yesterday we decided it was best we took our own paths. Last night was my first night sleeping alone and it felt wierd, I woke up a couple of times and had a little hard time getting some sleep, I've lost my hunger and I feel down. I know time heals, but I look at my days as long days, I find myself not even looking foward to the weekends.**

Hey there. First of all, break ups are really hard especially when you really care about the person and you dated them for a long time. Remember to stay strong though! I know it hurts right now but slowly you'll begin to get over it. Time heals all wounds. It may seem like you have no hope anymore, and you're depressed, but that's perfectly normal. The first step to getting over a breakup is closure and admitting to yourself that it is over. It wasn't meant to be, and what you need to make yourself think is that that's okay. You're going to come in and out of so many relationships. The best thing to do right

now is get rid of things she gave you or anything that reminds you of her. Try to spend as much time out with friends and family as possible. Stay busy and you won't have as much time to think about her and eventually you will get over her. Just give it time, and stay busy. Also avoid contact with her until you feel you can be friends, if you're both willing, without falling for her again. All the best!

**I have been a bully for about five years now, it started after I switched schools and after my parents died. I even bullied one of my closest friends and lost her. I want to stop being a bully, to have a better life, and not have people scared of me. I don't want to live my life like this. How can I change?**

First of all congrats on wanting to change and realizing that you are a bully! It takes a lot for someone to do that. It's a known fact that a lot of bullies have had some sort of trauma or hurt in their life and hurt other people because it eases there pain. This seems to be the case, but obviously deep down you don't want to be like this and you're a nice person. Always remember that. You know what you did was wrong, and that is the first step to fixing it. Maybe you could first start off apologizing the the people you hurt. Most of them will forgive you. Have you talked to your friend about it? If not try it, and if you did then this is just another one of life's lessons for you. Whoever forgives you, that's awesome, but for those who don't, and I'm sure there will be the occasional person, just remember it's a lesson. You're a nice person for wanting to solve your problem and wanting to get help to change yourself. As long as you can accept who you are, and accept the past, and accept the people around you everything will fall into place. Once again, I'd like to say, Congratulations for being a bigger person and deciding "I don't wanna hurt people anymore, I don't want to be a bully." Every little thing makes a difference, and you truly are a nice person because you know right from wrong. Wishing you the best!

## Ask us for advice!

If you would like to submit a question for us to answer, you can email us at [avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org) or PM any of our Avatar Editors. We would love to hear from you!





Kicking off your month with pizzazz.

## March Playlist: Share Your Smile

by Jessie (Asylum)

**Positive music can be hard to find**, or at least to identify. We could be obvious, cliché, and go with songs like "Don't Worry, be Happy" by Bobby McFerrin or "Walking on Sunshine" by Katrina and the Waves. But let's face it, our good moods vary from "I'm happy to be with you" to "I'm happy you're gone!" And so this month, in honor of Music in Our Schools Month, Share a Smile Day (March 1) and I Want You to be Happy Day (March 3), we bring you ten songs that we think might make you smile, no matter your mood!

*And all at once the crowd begins to sing.  
Sometimes the hardest thing and  
the right thing are the same.*

Feeling nervous to take a step forward, but positive about the possibilities of your journey? With an upbeat tempo and hopeful message of love, **"All At Once" by The Fray** is a fun song about building the courage to take that scary step forward! We hope you find that strength within yourself this month. What do you have to lose?

*So don't wait  
for someone to tell you it's too late,  
'cause these are the best days..*

You hear it all the time—these are the best days of your life. And although it can be hard to believe sometimes, we all feel that way every now and then. **"Best Days" by Graham Colton** is an optimistic song about making the best of difficult circumstances, and is great for getting up and motivated. And just remember, the next year of your life will always be the best!

*'Cause I'd get a thousand hugs  
from ten thousand lightening bugs  
as they try to teach me how to dance.*

Looking for something with an upbeat tempo and fun lyrics? **Owl City** delivers! We recommend **"Fireflies"** for a bit of fun, a random dance, or whenever the mood strikes you! It is impossible to sit still through this disco and electronic inspired song about insomnia, so give it a listen!

*Let it slide, let your troubles fall behind you.  
Let it shine, until you feel it all around you.*

Feeling overwhelmed and ready to move on? **"Little Wonders" by Rob Thomas** is an optimistic song about letting go of troubles, facing the future head-on, and making the best of the one life you have, with a positive message about loving who you are to boot!

*We want to know the face of freedom.  
We want to make a place where we can learn to love,  
build a world that we can be proud of.  
This is my generation.*

It is not unusual for adults to scoff at the more liberal-minded youth of younger generations. But we know that they're wrong! When you're feeling inspired by your peers, achievements of our time, or just feel excited about being young, **"Generation" by Emerson Hart** is a fun and positive song about being youth and achievement!

*Everywhere I'm looking now,  
I'm surrounded by your embrace.  
Baby I can see your halo.  
You know you're my saving grace.*

Being in love is powerful and it can give you the warm and fuzzies like you wouldn't believe (until you've felt it!) If your good mood this month stems from that special someone, check out **"Halo" by Beyoncé**, a soulful love ballad that is sure to make your heart smile!

*You see, I can be myself now, finally.  
In fact there's nothing I can't be,  
I want the world to see you'll be with me.*

If Owl City isn't the upbeat music you're looking for, why not check out **Train**? We recommend **"Hey, Soul Sister"**, a fun and fast-paced song about finding someone you feel comfortable with, no need for inhibitions! The silly, quirky lyrics and up-tempo music is sure to make you want to get up and dance!

(Continued on page 12.)







*Kicking off your month with pizzazz.*

*And it's strange how soon you forget  
that you're like stars...  
They only show up when it's dark,  
'cause they don't know their worth.*

**"Shine"** is an amazing song by **Anna Nalick** about rising above stereotypes, trials and names to be everything you can be, to shine! Anyone can relate to this song, and we hope you find inspiration within it this month!

*Show me a smile then, don't be unhappy.  
Can't remember when I last saw you laughing.*

Okay, we had to include just ONE cliché, so we decided to go with **"True Colors"**. Cyndi Lauper made it famous, and for a fresh feel we recommend the **Glee Cast cover**, but any version will do because this song about being yourself is a classic straight from the 1980s!

*Feel the rain on your skin.  
No one else can feel it for you,  
only you can let it in.*

Facing a new day can be hard, but it gets easier when you're listening to **"Unwritten" by Natasha Bedingfield**, a heartfelt, buoyant song about taking control and making the best of each new day.

We hope you make the best of things this month. Remember to share your smile! ■



## Make March Merry

*by Casey (Cas\*) and Jessie (Asylum)*

**March is just another month. Right?** Wrong. It's a time to value your friends and loved ones, to share with them: encouragement, pride, joy. It is a month for helping others, to give them a gift more valuable than gold: happiness. Why? March is host to Share a Smile day, on the first, and I Want You to be Happy day, on the third. And what better time than now to do both of those things? Why not do something to make someone smile, to make them happy, just because? After all, there's no such thing as too much happiness!

We can hear you asking "But what can I do to make someone smile? What can I do to make someone happy?" It sounds like a daunting task, but we're sure you're up for the challenge. There are lots of ways to give someone a smile, even in doing something as simple as smiling at a stranger on the street.

### A simple card or flower has a way of making someone feel special and appreciated...

One great way to spread joy is through volunteering! Organizations like Habitat for Humanity help to build homes for people in need. Many communities, especially during these difficult economic times, are home to soup kitchens and homeless shelters, and both of these places are always looking for extra hands. Other places you can volunteer include youth groups, churches, and nursing homes. And of course, don't forget about TeenHelp! Although we cannot all afford to donate money or goods, our time and care is a much more valuable resource.

Sharing happiness through giving, in ways other than volunteering, is also a great way to donate your time and afford people a smile. Spend the day helping your parent's out around the house or garden, cook your partner dinner, or play a game with someone! A simple card or flower has a way of making someone feel special and appreciated, and no matter how often we make fun of snail mail, letters and postcards are awesome!

*(Continued on page 13.)*





*Kicking off your month with pizzazz.*

If none of those things stand out to you, don't be afraid to get creative! Share happiness this month through the arts; music, artwork, and literature bring joy to people every day. Whether you rock out with your little sister to her favorite Miley song, finger paint with your brother, or read to someone, spreading laughter through creativity is a generous and fun way to spend your time.

They say that laughter is medicine! Whatever you do, don't forget to take care of yourself and spend time making you happy, too. You cannot be everything for everyone, and your happiness and wellness come first, always! Giving to others is about more than making them happy. We each have something to gain when we share good with the world—happiness of our own. Whether you apply for TeenHelp Staff this month or volunteer at a local women's shelter, share a bit of happiness and your beautiful smile with others throughout this month and the rest of the year. We want you to be happy! ■



## More Lifestyle?

***Want to read more Lifestyle articles?  
Check out past issues!***

"Ten Songs You Want to Hear" on page 15 of the February 2010 (Volume 3, Issue 8) release of Avatar.

"Siamese Fighting Fish Care" on page 16 of the February 2010 (Volume 3, Issue 8) release of Avatar.

"2010 Olympic Games" on page 14 of the January 2010 (Volume 3, Issue 7) release of Avatar.

"International Creativity Month" on page 15 of the January 2010 (Volume 3, Issue 7) release of Avatar.

"Recycling" on page 12 of the November 2009 (Volume 3, Issue 5) release of Avatar.

"Making it Happen: Volunteering" on page 9 of the October 2009 (Volume 3, Issue 4) release of Avatar.

## Contact us!

*Do you have any comments or feedback on any of our featured articles? Would you like to see one of your articles here or do you have any suggestions on what you'd like to see in future editions of Avatar? If so, we'd love to hear from you.*

Form: [www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit](http://www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit)  
Email: [avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org)





## March Comic

YOU JUST WON THE GAME.

IT'S OKAY! YOU'RE FREE!

## St. Patrick's Day Trivia:

1. According to the original legend, what are leprechauns?
2. Why do leprechauns wear green?
3. What is St. Patrick's real name?
4. What did St. Patrick drive out of Ireland?
5. Where is the largest St. Patrick's day festival held?

## PlayDough Recipe:



### Ingredients:

- 2 cups of flour
- 1 cup of salt
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar (NOTE: This is the most important ingredient. If you do not add it your playdough will stick to EVERYTHING.)
- 2 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tsp. food coloring (Mix with water.)
- 2 cups of water

### Directions:

- Mix all ingredients in a medium sized saucepan.
- Stir constantly, cooking over a medium heat until the dough thickens.
- Take the dough out and kneed.

## Movies Coming Out This Month:

Alice in Wonderland  
Diary of a Wimpy Kid  
The Last Song  
Stolen  
Our Family Wedding  
She's Out of Our League  
Repo Men  
The Bounty Hunter  
The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo  
I Love You Phillip Morris

## How do you say that?

English - dance	Spanish - baile
German - tanz	Russian - танцевать
French - danse	Italian - ballo

## Name that Tune!

*"Then you come crashing in  
Like the realest thing  
Trying my best to understand  
All the love you can bring."*

## Berry Smoothie Recipe:

- 1/2 cup of raspberries
- 1/2 cup of strawberries
- 1/2 cup of blackberries
- 1/2 of a banana
- 2 tablespoons of lemon juice
- 1 cup of vanilla ice cream (or frozen yogurt)
- 1/2 cup of ice







Expressing life through your fingertips.

Untitled by Jessi (Spazola)



**Pause**  
Cym

If humanity would pause  
for a space;  
slow down and look at the world  
in a silent, noticeable moment of  
discovery perhaps:  
clear the memory of the  
prejudice of the damaged,  
then there might be peace, sorrow;  
and the plenitude we seek,  
for about a week.

**Untitled**  
(Insert Name Here)

Oh gentle winds 'neath moonlit skies,  
Do not you hear my heartfelt cries?

Below the branches, here about,  
Do not you sense my fear and doubt?  
Side glistening rivers, sparkling streams,  
Do not you hear my woeful screams?

Upon the meadows, touched with dew,  
Do not you see my hearts a'skew?  
Beneath the thousand twinkling stars,  
Do not you feel my jagged scars?

Seek not my mournful heart kind breeze,  
For you'll not find it mongst these trees.

It's scattered 'cross the moonlit skies,  
Accompanied by heartfelt sighs.  
It's drifting ore the gentle rain,  
A symbol of my silent pain.

It's buried 'neath the meadow fair,  
Conjoined with all the sorrow there.  
It's lost among the stars this night,  
Too far to ease my quiet fright.

No gentle winds, seek not my heart,  
For simply ... it has torn apart.

**Butterfly**  
Casey (Cas\*)

Butterfly  
butterfly  
flying high in the sky

Soft lips  
Sweet kiss  
Butterfly

Gentle arms  
a loving warmth  
butterfly

Untitled by Stephanie (Konstantine)







*Dream big and swim strong, little fish.*

by Katrina

Happy March to all of you Horoscopes readers! As we head into (hopefully) warmer weather, these horoscopes will be based on fun activities to take part in whilst on Spring Break, a weekend vacation, or whatever you may have planned for the wonderful month of March.

**This month's sign:** Pisces (February 20 - March 19)

Happy birthday, Pisces. Many people with a birthday this month take a trip or a weekend vacation to celebrate turning another year older, and perhaps you should look to do the same! With all the stress you were under in February, a nice soothing vacation could certainly do you well.

**Strength:** You're a big dreamer and an empathetic soul.

**Possible Weakness:** You're prone to giving too much and failing to take care of yourself. Remember to keep both feet planted firmly on the ground!

**Famous Pisces:** Drew Barrymore, Jessica Biel, Johnny Cash, Glenn Close, Kurt Cobain, Jennifer Love Hewitt, Holly Hunter, Jon Bon Jovi, Spike Lee, Eva Longoria, Chuck Norris.

## Aries

(March 20 - April 19)

As you make plans for this month, be sure not to take over too much. While people typically do appreciate your ability to be strong-willed, make sure to let this be a group decision and a group effort to plan. I hope you have a marvelous March!

## Taurus

(April 20 - May 20)

This month, you may be feeling like you just need to spend a little bit of time at home with friends and family, and that's okay. With all the craziness going on in school or at the workplace, I don't blame you. So, don't feel bad if you decide to just relax and take it easy this month!

## Gemini

(May 21 - June 20)

Gemini, if you don't have anything planned yet, that's okay! I know many people wait until the last minute to plans for March vacations, but maybe this year it's time for you to take initiative and do a little organization of your own.

## Cancer

(June 21 - July 22)

If you're having a little conflict with someone you're going to be spending a lot of time with, it's probably best to just go ahead and work it out now instead of letting the fire sizzle and get out of control. With some calm conversation, I'm sure you'll be able to work things out.

## Leo

(July 23 - August 22)

Leo, you have so many different options for plans for March vacations, and you may be afraid of hurting someone's feelings. Perhaps you should just either choose where you'd feel more comfortable and politely say you already made plans to the other group(s), or just hang out at home and spend time with your family and friends.





*Poisonous scorpion for the win!*

by Katrina

## Virgo

(August 23 - September 22)

This is going to be a fabulous month for you, Virgo, whether you're going to take any vacations or not. Spend sometime outdoors soaking in the sun (which is a great source of Vitamin D!) and take time, since you have time, to smell the roses and appreciate the small things in life!

## Libra

(September 23 - October 22)

Though the beginning of this month might be a little hectic for you, hopefully things will start to die down by the end of the month as you head towards the beach, the mountains, or wherever else it is you may be going. Relax, you're going to have a great time!

## Scorpio

(October 23 - November 20)

Scorpio, if the stresses of the world around you are starting to bother you, it's okay to take a few hours off and just go hiking or go outside or even just go driving around. Even if you're busy, sometimes it's nice to take a mental health day to calm yourself down.

## Sagittarius

(November 21 - December 21)

Worried about vacation plans? Don't stress. Talk to other members of the group and establish a line of communication between yourselves, whether it's texting or Facebook or email, so that you can all keep in very close contact as you plan this fantastic trip.

## Capricorn

(December 22 - January 19)

Capricorn, it looks like you're going to meet someone very neat over your March vacation whether it's a new friend, a new "Spring Fling," or even just someone that you consider pretty cool. Whoever it is, be sure to stay in contact with them! Who knows how things could end up?

## Aquarius

(January 20 - February 19)

It looks like your plans might be a little shaky right now, but that's okay. If you need to, take the reins and help out the planner, I'm sure they would greatly appreciate it. In the mean time, take things one day at a time and don't get too overwhelmed with looking to the future.





## Acknowledgements

### Image sources

Comic: [www.xkcd.com](http://www.xkcd.com)

Drugs and Your Brain: [www.everystockphoto.com](http://www.everystockphoto.com)

Fun and Games: [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)

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## Thanks for reading!

Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of Avatar! Any comments, questions, suggestions or criticisms can be directed towards the editorial team. You can also send us any submissions you have for Avatar, 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!

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).