

Preparing
for Prom

Special Olympics

LGBT Mental
Health

Cover photo
by **Konstantine**

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Avatar

The Truth about Eating Disorders
Erasing misconceptions about eating disorders and those living with them.



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Contact

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
Email: avatar@teenhelp.org



Letter from the Editors and acknowledgments.

Letter from the Editors

Hello TeenHelp, welcome to the May 2010 issue of Avatar!

Spring has sprung! Has it stopped raining yet? You know what they say: "April showers bring May flowers!" Hopefully you're not too waterlogged, because we've got some great articles and fun waiting for you this month!

We'll kick things off this May in **TeenHelp Times** with some news events that occurred in April 2010, concerning a variety of topics and issues that matter to you. There you'll also find an interesting piece on the UK elections, which discusses some of the major parties running and some policies they hope to implement as well as our May **Cause of the Month**, the Special Olympics!

Over in **Mind and Body** we have an informational article that discusses both the myths and truths about eating disorders. While you're there, be sure to read about LGBT Mental Health, in addition to our advice for you in **Dear Avatar**!

Moving on to **Lifestyle**, this month we're sharing some tips for you on what you can do to better prepare yourself for prom. Additionally, we have an informational piece on doughnuts and their origins! Over in **Fun and Games** we have a few tasty recipes for you, some trivia, movies you should check out, and much more. Be sure to check it out! If you're interested in some more fun, stop by this month's **Self Expression** and **Horoscopes**!

We hope you have a great month, Avatar readers, and we hope that you enjoy this issue!

See you in June,
The Avatar Editors.

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The Avatar Editors would like to thank the following TeenHelp users for their valuable contributions.

Contributions from readers like you are what make Avatar so unique and wonderful. Please consider submitting content to a future issue!

**www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit or
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Images
Halcyon



News that Affects You: April 2010 in Review

by Jessie (Asylum)

Absent in April? Would you rather spend your spring outside than indoors reading the news? In case you missed the headlines, here's a glimpse of what people were talking about, or should have been, in April 2010!

Health

Inhalant epidemic. A survey from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration finds 12-year-olds are intentionally misusing inhalants to get high at an alarming rate—more than they are using marijuana, cocaine, and hallucinogens combined. According to the report, 5.2 percent of 12-year-olds have smoked cigarettes, while 6.9 percent have tried inhalants. The discouraging numbers may be due to the availability of inhalants in conjunction with the difficulty young people may face obtaining other substances.

Don't speak. NHS cuts threaten talking therapies for psychiatric patients. It is estimated that up to half a million people with mental health disorders may lose access to therapy in the UK in the name of saving money. Patients affected could include those with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression.

Merry mommy. For the first time in decades there has been a significant drop in the number of women dying each year from pregnancy and childbirth, worldwide. Maternal deaths are reported to have fallen from 526,300 in 1980 to approximately 342,900 in 2008, an astonishing and welcomed reduction which may be attributed to more efficient and widely available routine maternal care, improved medical training for birthing attendants, increased knowledge of complications related to pregnancy and how to treat them, and increased education among communities.

Faux-sun junkie? Tanning beds may be addictive, says research from Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, USA. The study suggests that approximately one third of tanning bed users may become addicted to the effects of tanning, and that those who become addicted to tanning beds may be more likely to engage in other harmful behavior and may suffer from higher levels of anxiety.

Entertainment

Saga or Gaga? The new "Queen of YouTube" was crowned April 16th Lady Gaga, breaking records with

more than one billion views, has beat out the popular "Twilight Saga" channel, which boasts a massive 980 million views. These numbers only represent official channels, and don't include unofficial uploads. It's still pretty impressive, if you ask us.



Natural Disaster

Planet in peril. Throughout the month of April, deadly natural disasters have battered and bruised the Earth. Mudslides and floods have devastated Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, while landslides struck in Taiwan. Earthquakes have rattled the world from Adelaide, Australia to Afghanistan, Tangshan and Qinghai, China, Indonesia, the southern Solomon Islands, Spain, and Taiwan. Perhaps most publicized this month was the April 14th volcanic eruption in Eyjafjallajökull (no, I can't pronounce that), Iceland which has disrupted air travel and international trade and is causing health concerns. Also in April, tornadoes slashed the US states of Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.

Say what?

But his ticket is paid! Two women tried to take a dead man on a flight from Liverpool to Berlin, Germany, on April 3rd in what can only be described as peculiar. The women, arrested for failure to give notification of a death, claim they were unaware their travel companion was deceased. We're not so sure about that.

For more news check out the Current Events and Debates forum, or reputable online sources like www.bbc.co.uk or www.cnn.com! ■



UK Elections 2010

by Casey (Cas*)

General elections in the UK will be held on May 6th 2010. Whether you're registered or not (and we hope you or your parents are!) it is important to know what is going on in the government. Do you know who is running and what they stand for?

First, let's have a quick lesson on the basics of political parties in the UK. There are many parties in the UK, including minor ones like the Green Party or the British National Party (BNP). There are three major parties running for election this term, among the several smaller parties, and they are the Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, and the Labour Party. So who leads them and, more importantly, what do they stand for?



Leader:
David
Cameron



The Conservative Party wants to ensure all future Prime Ministers are elected, expand the Freedom of Information Act, provide direct funding to neighbourhoods, and make a new Right to Data Act.



Leader:
Nick Clegg



The Liberal Democrats Party wants to cut taxes, abolish the income tax for 3.6 million lower class families, cut class room size for better learning, and return banks to lending money to boost the economy.



Leader:
Gordon
Brown



The Labour Party wants faster health care services including results in one week, to build a high speed rail service, accessible broadband for everyone, and to increase the minimum wage.

As mentioned, there are also several minor parties in the UK. Maybe you want to vote for one of them instead. Who are they, and what do they stand for?

British National Party (BNP): stricter immigration laws, repatriations for existing immigrants.

Democratic Unionist: Northern Ireland remaining with the UK.

Green Party: sustainability.

Plaid Cymru: Welsh independence.

Scottish National Party (SNP): Scottish independence.

Sinn Féin: Northern Ireland independence.

UK Independence Party (UKIP): UK withdraw from the European Union.

Whether you support the Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, or one of the minor parties, remember to get out and vote on May 6th and ensure that your voice counts! ■



The Truth about Eating Disorders

by Jessie (Asylum)

Eating disorders are characterized by abnormal eating habits resulting in insufficient or excessive food intake. There are many types of eating disorders including anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder and eating disorder not otherwise specified. Like many other psychiatric disorders, there are misconceptions surrounding eating disorders and those living with them. Here are some of those most common myths revealed:

Myth: Eating disorders aren't serious; they are just a phase.

Fact: Eating disorders are very serious conditions which develop due to a combination of biological, environmental and psychological causes, and can cause life threatening complications and sometimes death. Anorexia nervosa is suspected to have the highest mortality rate of any psychiatric disorder, according to a 1995 analysis of mortality rate associated with anorexia published in the American Journal of Psychiatry.

Myth: Only famous women and teenage girls have eating disorders.

Fact: Anyone of any age, gender, socioeconomic status and race can have an eating disorder. In fact, according to a June 2002 report in the Alternative Medicine Review, eating disorders are believed to affect one million males and five to ten million females in the United States alone.

Myth: Eating disorders are about food.

Fact: In many cases, eating disorders are about the perceived gain and feelings one gets from restricting, indulging, purging, or engaging in other disordered behaviors. A person with an eating disorder may feel the only source of control they have over their life is their food intake, so they control their eating in an attempt to gain a more desirable state of existence.

Myth: The media causes eating disorders.

Fact: The media is an environmental cause of eating disorders, but is not the source of the problem. While glamorization of unhealthy body weight and thinness by the media may be a contributing factor to the development of eating disorders, the media is not solely responsible for this epidemic.

Myth: All people with eating disorders are severely underweight.

Fact: Although those with eating disorders are at risk of becoming dangerously underweight, low body weight is not always an indication that someone has an eating disorder. In the same sense, it cannot be inferred that everyone of healthy or above average body weight does not have an eating disorder.

Myth: People with eating disorders do not eat candy or other sweets.

Fact: Although it is common for a person with an eating disorder to have rules about foods they cannot eat, people with eating disorders eat foods of all types, including sweets.

Myth: One cannot recover from an eating disorder.

Fact: It is not impossible to become fully recovered from an eating disorder. Although full recovery rates for eating disorders are estimated to be low, remission rates for those with eating disorders are estimated at between 75 and 83%.

With increased awareness and understanding of eating disorders and those who have eating disorders, both remission and full recovery rates can rise. And with proper support, those suffering through life with an eating disorder can begin to live again. ■





LGBT Mental Health

by Maria (Gidig)

Mental health is brought up in many topics we talk about in this era. A huge part of living in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community is hearing about our own mental health. There is unfortunately a large difference between the mental health of LGBT people and that of 'straight' (heterosexual) people.

We have finally reached a point in our culture that identifying as LGBT is not considered a mental health issue, nor does it mean that because you're gay you're automatically depressed – it's simply who we are. For a long time 'gay' was considered a disorder in itself, and although we now understand that it is not, LGBT people are still two and a half times more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, or substance abuse issues throughout their lifetime.

Many things could create such a disparity in mental health issues. The main cause researchers have found is most likely society and how LGBT people are viewed, including that they are discriminated against. Constantly hearing that one is hated, being called a "fag" in the hallway at school, and witnessing people

use the word gay as a synonym for stupid everyday can take a toll on a person's self-esteem and overall mental health.

There are many things people say that may offend LGBT people each day without realizing how offensive their words can be, and many LGBT people feel hatred from within their families, as well. Parents that aren't accepting of their LGBT child, or even their aunts, grandparents and even partner's parents, may unwittingly hurt someone with their words and through their actions.

Health care for LGBT people in our society is not always the best. Many people must take multiple recommendations before finding a doctor that truly understands their lifestyle. Sometimes even getting a doctor to listen to them is a huge challenge! Some therapists may automatically jump to the conclusion that a person is depressed because they are bisexual or transgendered, but many of our health professionals are simply uneducated. No one wants to go to a doctor who doesn't understand or won't listen, so some people simply don't ask for help at all. For example, multiple doctors truly believe lesbians are at less risk for STIs, which is, in fact, not true, and so a woman who sleeps with women may have to search harder to find good health care and a doctor who helps them take proper care of their sexual health.

Have you ever met someone that when you first started talking they hated homosexuals, and all the sudden they take a giant leap out of the closet themselves? It happens in many television shows and movies such as *Queer as Folk* where 'gay bashing' is done by a male interested in males himself. Internalized homophobia can be awful for a person's mental health, as the person internalizing this hatred ultimately hates themselves and many of the people around them. Self-hatred can cause anxiety, substance abuse, and depression as well as many other mental health issues.

Many families do not believe that their child is LGBT, and some parents may kick their LGBT child out of the house. Straight people with mental health issues tend to be more open with their parents and family and have support to work through whatever problems arise. Due to earlier circumstances of coming out, however, LGBT families tend to not be as strong as a unit, and therefore LGBT people may not lean on their family for support, which may cause mental health issues to worsen. ■





Cause of the Month: Special Olympics

by Katrina

Many of us see Special Olympics related programs at our schools or places of employment. In theory, it's great, but in practice, it's far more inspiring than even describable! Think about it, the Special Olympics is giving athletic opportunities to individuals who would not have the same opportunities with any other organization. What's more important than the athletic opportunities given to these individuals, though, is the opportunities they're given to grow both physically and emotionally, and the opportunities to establish life-long friendships with others.

It all started in June of 1962 as a summer day camp organized by Eunice Kennedy Shriver. A little over six years later, this summer camp geared towards addressing the needs of children and adults with intellectual abilities had grown into the 1st International Special Olympics Summer Games, including over 1,000 individuals from both the United States and Canada. The organization really turned heads when it held the first Special Olympics Winter Games. From there out, news stations from across the United States began to cover the events and the organization, informing people of the great things this organization was

doing. As more people found out about Special Olympics, it became bigger and bigger.

Most recently, Special Olympics has expanded to gain the support of popular musicians and was able to release it's seventh annual Christmas CD with proceeds benefiting the organization and allowing them to continue their amazing journey. In August of 2009, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the founder, unfortunately passed away, but received massive amounts of letters and stories from people all over the world sharing what a great impact Special Olympics made on each and every one of them. Though Shriver is not able to continue the good works she set out to do with Special Olympics, the baton has been passed to many amazing individuals who will continue what she started, and her legacy lives on forever.

To find out more check out:

www.specialolympics.org





A unique way of seeking help.

I want to tell someone that I like them, but I don't know how. Can you help me?

many have experienced something similar in the past. It is completely normal. I think that it's great that you've found someone who you like; it must be quite frustrating for you to feel unable to explain to them the extent of your feelings.

Firstly, how long have you known this person? Often relationships work better if you have known the person quite well before you start dating. If you don't know the person very well then I would suggest becoming closer friends with them before you ask them out. Perhaps get talking to them on MSN or go out with them and a group of friends. Just get to know them, learn to trust each other and have fun! As an added bonus, as you get to know them more, not only will you confirm if your feelings for them are true, but it should help you to work out if they have mutual feelings for you.

After you know this person better, I would fully recommend you telling them how much you like them. The best way to do it would probably be face to face, this is more personal and will help to get your relationship off to the best possible start. You could organise something for just the two of you and ask them to it (eg a trip to the cinema) or you could try and speak to them about your feelings for them. It would probably be best to speak to them about going to this place in a more private place where you can be alone. Not only will this be more personal, but the other person is more likely to take you seriously as they won't think you're just doing it as a joke in front of your friends or something like that.

A few other things I would say regarding the relationship in general is that you should always be yourself. That way, at least if they say no, they're turning down the real you, not someone who you've invented. Also, the relationship won't work very well if the whole time you are around the other person; you're pretending to be someone else. Make sure that you're honest with each other and that you communicate! Communication is the key to any relationship. And generally just have fun! Take it easy and try not to stress about it too much!

I'm sorry to hear that this has happened to you. I know what it's like to drift apart from a close friend so I can appreciate how hard this must be for you. A friend drifting away when they get a partner is an age old problem which many people will experience. I know I have and I bet if you asked many other teens, they would say that they had to. I think that it happens to most people, and the good news is, it will pass. Soon enough he should realise what he's doing and will come back to you, they might break up and he'll come back to you, something else could happen, and he'll come back to you. However, that does not mean that the situation you're left in right now is any easier or that your feelings aren't valid.

My best friend and I have been drifting apart now that he has a girlfriend. At first I left it; I loved seeing him happy and I thought it would change. I've tried talking to them about it but it doesn't work, she won't even let me talk to him! I miss my friend.

Have you tried speaking to him over the internet? This may sound like a strange suggestion, but if he's online, he won't have his girlfriend with him so it will just be the two of you. This way you could tell him what he's doing and how it's making you feel. He may well not even realise that he's become self absorbed, it might come as a shock to him.

If you would find this uncomfortable then maybe you could write him an email or a letter? Ask him to read it when his girlfriend isn't around. In it you could explain everything to him, just as you've explained it in your help request above, what he's doing and how it makes you feel. Make sure you tell him that you don't want him to break up with his girlfriend of anything like that, try to make it as clear as possible so he knows exactly what you mean.

It may also be worth speaking to his girlfriend. Explain to her the type of friendship that you had, how much he meant to you, how much you helped each other, etc. Hopefully she will see what a strong and special relationship you have and will let you speak to him again. She might be slightly jealous which could be the reason that she won't let you speak to him at the moment, so make sure that you tell her you're just friends with him, you love seeing him this happy and you have no intention of breaking them up. This should put her at ease and make her happier for you to continue having this friendship with him.

In the end, friendships are just as, if not more important than girl/boyfriends at this stage in your life. Friends will always be there for you but girl/boyfriends may break up with you or leave you. He will eventually get over the novelty his new girlfriend and begin to speak to you again. They will eventually stop being so self absorbed and his girlfriend will let you speak to him. It might just take time. I do realise that none of this really makes the situation any easier but there is a light at the end of the tunnel.



A unique way of seeking help.

My friends are bullying me. They push me around and call me names like stupid, loser, and other hurtful things. They also get everyone to be their friends so that no one becomes my friend. I don't know why they're doing this to me, but they think that it's funny. I've tried talking to them about it, but they don't seem to care. What should I do?

The first thing I want to say to you is that what these people are doing to you is not okay and it's not your fault.

They have no right to be treating you this way. They're not any better than you, nor do they have any authority over you. You are a special, unique person who, I'm sure has a lot going for them.

The first thing that you can do is to try and show them that you're not bothered by what they're saying, even if you are. If you don't respond to it then they will get bored and stop. Also, if you react to it and they tell someone then you could get into trouble for it.

Bullies are often quite insecure within themselves which is why they feel the need to put others down, it makes them feel better. They think that it makes them look big and clever in front of other people. So just remember that really, their lives probably aren't any better than yours.

With regards to the fact that you have no friends, is there any way that you could join some sort of club, possibly outside school and make friends through that? When I found it difficult to make friends at school, I used to get all of my homework done in my lunch hour so that I had time to hang out with my other friends after school. Perhaps you could try something similar to that?

Try and block out what these people are saying to you and remember that it's not true, but if it gets to the point that you can't deal with it any more then I think that you need to tell someone. Perhaps a teacher or another adult you trust. If it was a teacher then maybe ask them to look out for you and stop it if they see it happening, or ask them if you can do odd jobs for them at break/lunch times to keep you out of the way of the bullies. You could ask them to have a quick word with the bullies but this will need to be done sensitively as it could make things worse.

Eventually, this will pass and they will get bored of making fun of you. I know it doesn't seem like it now but schools can be very mean places and things will get better in future.

I started self harming again three days ago. I didn't want to do it, but I'm not very good at controlling myself when I get urges. My friends keep getting angry and disappointed with me because of it, so now I'm worried that they're starting to dislike me. I want to stop, but I don't know how. Can you help?

It sounds like you're going through a rough patch right now. Sadly, there are a huge number of people who use self harm as a coping mechanism in this day and age, it's a very difficult addiction to break and often needs professional help.

When dealing with self harm, it is important to try and identify triggers (reasons why you're cutting). I think that the first thing you should do is to make a diary. In this diary write down every time you cut and the things causing you to be triggered to do so. This will hopefully help you to see a pattern develop over time. It could be when you're feeling angry, lonely, inadequate or something else.

Once you have identified the trigger, you need to learn how to deal with this trigger in a more constructive way. Perhaps through art, writing, music or sport. There is a list of self harm alternatives on the TeenHelp website in the Self Harm forum. If you take a look at these, I think that they could really help you. I want to mention that if you try one alternative and it doesn't work, don't give up on the list altogether. A different alternative works for everyone. Keep trying them until you find one that works for you. If you get to the end of the list and you still haven't found one that works for you then all is not lost, because all the time that you have spent working down the list, you haven't been cutting!

I also think it would be beneficial for you to speak to someone. Perhaps a teacher, youth worker or another adult you trust? They would be able to talk things through with you and help you talk about your emotions and work out ways of dealing with them in a safer way. They may also be able to get you other help if they feel that you need it. On top of this, it may put your friends' minds at ease if they think you're getting help which could stop them from getting so mad at you.

Ask us for advice!

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



Kicking off your month with pizzazz.

Preparing for Prom

by Brittany (.Brittany.)

At the end of high school, many schools around the world have a prom, which is also known as a promenade or Leavers' Ball in much of Europe. Prom is a formal dance at which young people celebrate the ending of high school and the beginning of a new chapter in their lives. Many plan for it months before the actual event or much sooner, some don't plan or go at all. Others have a small party with friends instead or go out and go to the movies or go out for dinner. It's different all over the world!

For those of you who are making decisions and plans, you may be asking yourself a lot of questions right now. Like how to present yourself, what to do for dinner, where to go for an after party, or how you can manage to get to all places in a safe manner. If you are, not to worry! We're here to help.

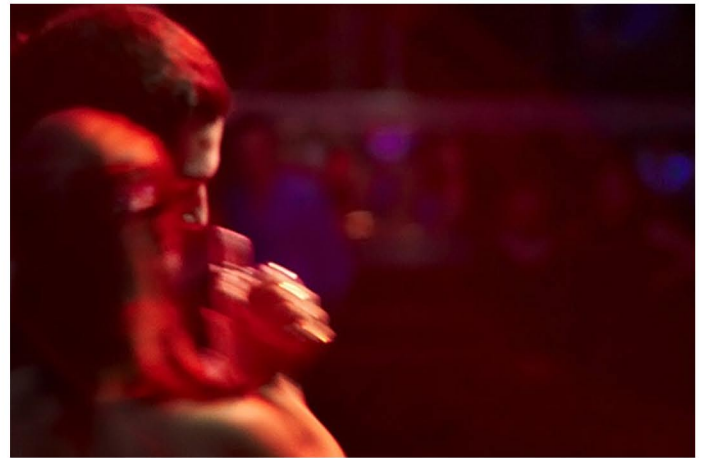
How to Present Yourself

Traditionally, the females wear long formal gowns purchased from boutiques, online stores or shopping centers. Most department stores hold big sales on prom dresses in the months leading up to prom, so your great look can be both a knock-out and affordable!

When it comes to hair, a lot of girls like to get their hair pinned up so that it's out of the way when the dancing begins. If you're not sure what you want you could try flipping through magazines at the bookstore or library for different hairstyles that you can do yourself, or you could try scheduling a haircut the same day as prom so that your hairdresser can help pick out a look that suits you.

Make-up can be tricky if you are not used to putting it on all the time. You can always ask your friends and family for help when testing out a new look and applying certain products. I'd suggest trying out your make-up in advance so that you can figure out what you want beforehand. You shouldn't do anything over the top, so using a new eye shadow or eyeliner in a subtle way can make all the difference in creating a fresh and beautiful look.

While some might say getting your nails done is a waste of money and time, others love feeling pampered on this special day. A lot of salons give great prices on nails, but it can also be a great activity to do with all your friends or with your sister or mother. So think about how you'll do it! When you've decided and are ready to start, try to pick either a neutral color or something that blends with



your dress. You don't want anything that will stand out too much – it could catch the wrong attention.

Dinner, Parties, Transportation, and Safety

Some schools have dinner included with the prom. If yours doesn't, planning an outing for dinner with some friends before heading over to prom would be a great idea. You could call around and find a fancy restaurant where you will get good food, for a good price. Also, for your way to prom, you could rent a limousine. They are more expensive than other methods of transportation, but splitting the price with friends may take the cost down significantly.

With prom often comes an after party. Some places have a school-wide party that is sponsored and coordinated by the school, while in other areas individuals have their own parties. Parties that are not hosted by schools may be accompanied by underage drinking or usage of drugs, so it's important that you be careful. With all the excitement going on, some people might not think about the consequences of their actions before it's too late, which is often a huge issue and concern for parents.

So what can you do to stay safe on prom night, and to keep all of your friends safe, too? Go with friends that you trust and avoid after parties where there may be underage drinking or drug usage. Your best bet would be to stick with people you trust to make the right decisions for you and for them. You could go to a friend's house and have a mini-party with pop, chips and candy. That way, everyone is safe! Make sure that you communicate with your parents all the necessary information as well, and that keep your phone on you at all times. If you're responsible, going to prom will be a great experience.

We hope that you have a good time! ■



Kicking off your month with pizzazz.

Doughnut Madness

by Cheyenne (Desert)

With Doughnut Week coming up in May, you may be wondering where this delicious, sweet food came from. The exact origins of the doughnut are shadowy, but there are many different theories and stories as to where it might have come from.

In prehistoric Native American settlements, archaeologists have unearthed bits of what look like donuts!. Donuts first arrived in Manhattan, then known as New Amsterdam, under the Dutch name 'olykoeks', or oily cakes. The Dutch immigrants are said to have discovered the doughnut when a cow kicked over a pot of boiling oil onto pastry mix, creating this delicious dessert! They did not share this new-found delight with their homeland, but it became a culinary staple during harsh times.

In 1847, a woman named Elizabeth Gregory, a New England ship captain's mother, created a deep-fried dough that used lemon rind, nutmeg and cinnamon, from her son's cargo hold. The resulting cakes were given to her son, Hansen, and his crew since they would not spoil and would help to prevent scurvy with the addition of lemon. Sometimes Gregory would put hazelnuts or walnuts in the centre of the cake, where the dough didn't fully cook through. Although Hansen always took full credit for the hole in the middle of the doughnut,

there are many theories as to how it actually came about. Some say that he was just stingy and wanted to save on food costs, but there are still others who have a slightly more heroic view of the story. They say that he jammed one of the doughy desserts onto the spokes of the ship's wheel during a storm to stop it turning. Another, slightly more religious claim states that after a visit from an angel he decided that the middle of the doughnut had to go. The reasons for this are unknown but most chalk it up to just that—a dream.

Today there are many different varieties of donuts, from the traditional ring-shaped ones to the ever-popular Timbit. The fast food chains Dunkin' Donuts and Tim Hortons are huge across the United States and Canada, and their main products are donuts. Nowadays, many people make donuts a prime breakfast food. People also have devised many games to play with these sweet treats, such as stringing them up and trying to eat them without using their hands. Fun but messy!

Whether you play with them or just enjoy them as a morning snack, pretty much everyone can agree that they are a delicious and fun treat anytime of day! ■





Start your month off with a tasty treat!

Recipes

Lemon Squares

2 C Flour
1/3 C lemon juice
1/2 C confectionary sugar
1 C granulated sugar
4 tsp lemon zest
3 eggs
5 shakes of salt
2 sticks of butter
Yellow food dye

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine flour, salt, butter, 1 teaspoon of lemon zest, and confectionary sugar in a food processor and process until the dough forms into coarse chunks. Grease a glass pan (9x13) and place the dough into the pan, spreading it evenly on the bottom. Cook crust for 15-20 minutes (depending on your oven) so that it is beginning to turn golden brown, especially around the edges.

While dough is cooking, beat eggs, granulated sugar, 3 teaspoons of lemon zest, yellow food dye (if wanted), and the lemon juice with a mixer until well dissolved using a medium setting.

Let the crust cool for at least 10 minutes before placing the lemon mixture on top. The crust will be warm, but not too hot at this time. Place the crust and lemon mixture back into the oven for another 15-20 minutes, or until golden brown on the edges/ the lemon gel is set.

Remove from oven and let it cool completely. Add sifted confectionary sugar on top.

Chocolate Doughnut Glaze

1/4 C unsalted butter
2 T whole milk, warmed
1 1/2 tsp light corn syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 oz bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1 C confectioners' sugar, sifted

Combine butter, milk, corn syrup, and vanilla in medium saucepan and heat over medium heat until butter is melted. Decrease the heat to low, add the chocolate, and whisk until melted. Turn off heat, add the powdered sugar, and whisk until smooth. Place the mixture over a bowl of warm water and dip the doughnuts immediately. Allow glaze to set for 30 minutes before serving.



Yeast Doughnuts

3/4 C milk
1 1/4 oz vegetable shortening
1 package instant yeast
3 T warm water (95 - 105 F)
1 egg, beaten
2 T sugar
3/4 tsp salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground nutmeg
12 ounces AP flour, plus more for dusting surface
Peanut or vegetable oil, for frying

Place milk in medium saucepan and heat over medium heat just until warm enough to melt the shortening. Place the shortening in a bowl and pour warmed milk over. Set aside.

In a small bowl, sprinkle the yeast over the warm water and let dissolve for 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, pour the yeast mixture into the large bowl of a stand mixer and add the milk and shortening mixture, first making sure the milk and shortening mixture has cooled to lukewarm. Add the eggs, sugar, salt, nutmeg, and half of the flour. Using the paddle attachment, combine the ingredients on low speed until flour is incorporated and then turn the speed up to medium and beat until well combined. Add the remaining flour, combining on low speed at first, and then increase the speed to medium and beat well. Change to the dough hook attachment of the mixer and beat on medium speed until the dough pulls away from the bowl and becomes smooth, approximately 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a well-oiled bowl, cover, and let rise for 1 hour or until doubled in size.

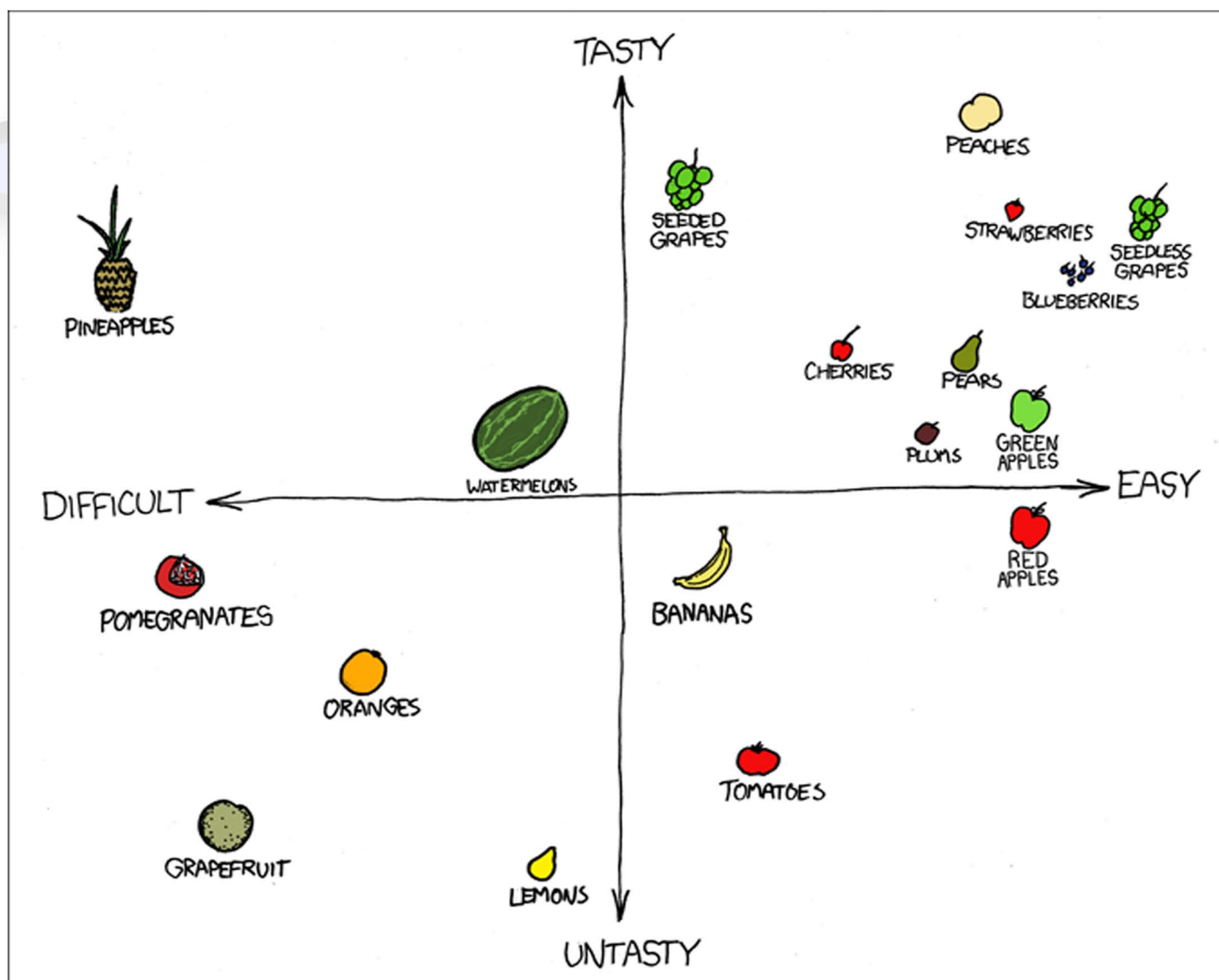
On a well-floured surface, roll out dough to 3/8-inch thick. Cut out dough using a 2 1/2-inch doughnut cutter or pastry ring and using a 7/8-inch ring for the center hole (I used a biscuit cutter and an apple corer to make my doughnuts). Set on floured baking sheet, cover lightly with a tea towel, and let rise for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oil in a deep fryer or Dutch oven to 365 degrees F. Gently place the doughnuts into the oil, 3 to 4 at a time. Cook for 1 minute per side. Transfer to a cooling rack placed in baking pan. Allow to cool for 15 to 20 minutes prior to glazing, if desired.

If you plan to fill your doughnuts, cut the dough into either rectangles or non-perforated circles before frying. When cool, use a sharp knife to cut a pocket inside each doughnut, angling it as you cut so that the opening is smaller than the pocket itself (like stuffing chicken breasts or pork chops). Make your desired filling and pipe it into the pockets, making sure to use enough filling to entirely fill the pocket. ■



May Comic



Word of the Month:

Tenacula: a long, slender, hooked surgical tool to help lift and hold blood vessels/ arteries.

Movies Out in May

Iron Man 2, Letters to Juliet, Babies, Robin Hood, Sex and the City 2, Shrek Forever After, Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time.

TeenHelp Trivia

When does the TeenHelp Newsletter come out?
Hint: The first one came out in April!

Can you say it?

Doughnut - English
пончик - Russian
Masa- Spanish
Beignet- French
Bombolone- Italian
Krapfen- German

Name that tune!

"Can we pretend that airplanes
In the night sky
Are like shooting stars
I could really use a wish right now"



Expressing life through your fingertips.

All I can say

Casey (Cas*)

I cannot tell you
all the words I wish to
say
I can feel my breath
starting to fade away

I wish to tell you
of all I've seen and done
of the beautiful moun-
tains
and the thundering sun
But the words don't seem
to come

I wish to tell you
of the wonders of the
world
the kindness of hearts
and the way things really
are

I want to tell you
that there is some evil
but it will be all right
that earth is such
a pretty sight

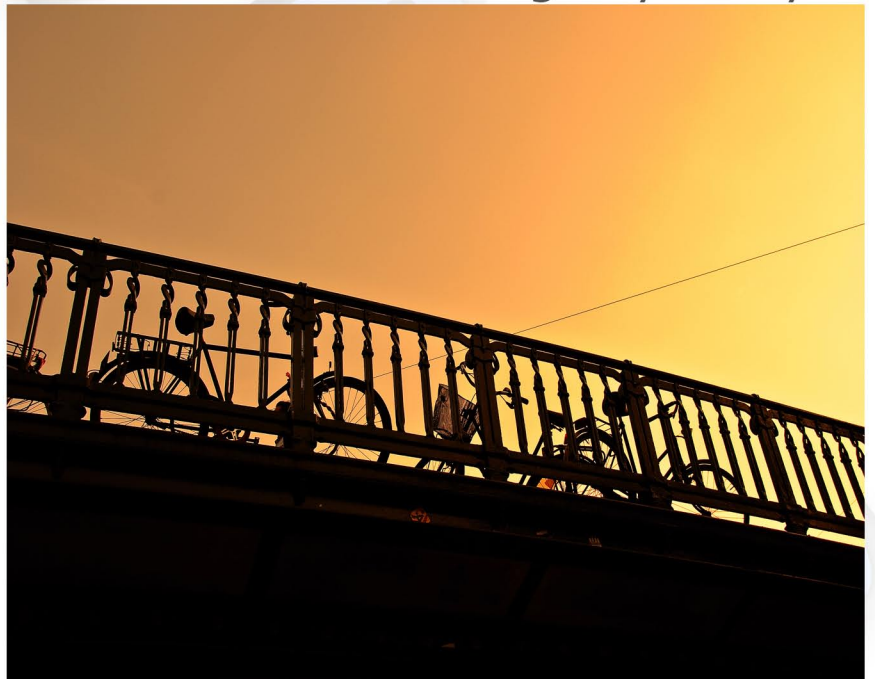
I want to say
all these things and more
but all that comes forth
is quite simple and very
true

All I can say is
I love you.



Untitled by Naomi (Naomi.)

Under the Bridge by Halcyon





Keep a firm grasp on that determination!

by Katrina

This month's sign: Taurus (April 20 - May 20) **:grad:** Happy birthday, Taurus! We couldn't be typical and choose the happy birthday smiley, so we chose the graduation smiley! Whether it's you that's graduating, or a friend, sibling, or relative, we know you know someone graduating from somewhere! Having graduated myself last May, I know that graduation can often be a very bittersweet process. Encourage whoever it may be in your life that is graduating to cherish the memories they have and to enjoy the last few days before graduation, but also to look to the future with a very optimistic outlook.

Strengths: Your life tends to be functional; no messes or confusion here! Order in life can make meeting goals (something that you absolutely love to do) easier and less stressful.

Potential weaknesses: You're pretty hard-headed and keep your eye on the prize, but that doesn't mean you know just what you deserve. Remember not to settle for less than what you can achieve. Dream big!

Gemini

(May 21 - June 20)

:o Hello Gemini! This month, your horoscope is based on the shocked smiley. The reason for this, however, will probably not come as such a shock. After having so many calm months, you knew there might be rough waters ahead, and you're right! This isn't to say, though, that the news you're going to receive is going to be bad news. In fact, it could be very good news. Basically, though, it's going to come as a surprise, so I just wanted to give you a heads up so you could be on the look out for that!

Virgo

(August 23 - September 22)

:nosweat: Hey Virgo! Recently you realized some very obvious news or found out something (or found someone) very obvious that was right in front of your nose for quite a while! Now that you do know the news, or have found the person, make sure you cherish them and don't take them for granted! As they say, keep your friends close and your enemies closer, and always be aware of your surroundings!

Cancer

(June 21 - July 22)

:innocent: Ah, yes, you've been quite an innocent person lately! Maybe too innocent? No, never too innocent. Anyway, I just wanted to commend you on your honest spirit and your incredible knack of never cheating even if it means you don't get to win. Always remember that what goes around comes around, and as they say, the last shall be first.

Leo

(July 23 - August 22)

:whistle: I know you're getting ready for summer, Leo. Don't deny it, diva! (I call you a diva because, let's face it, besides myself, they say the Leos are supposed to love attention and adore being in the spotlight!) I don't know how true that is for everyone else, but I guess it only applies to certain things for me. Anyway, you have the whistling smiley because you've been so sneaky lately! You've been very incognito about finding information out that you need, and that's okay. Just be sure you don't get yourself into any trouble!

Libra

(September 23 - October 22)

:D You are just having a ballin' out-of-control month, Libra! That's awesome, and I'm very happy for you. Not only will you receive some sort of promotion at the beginning of the month (not necessarily at work, but somehow), but you're also sure to end the month with a bang by meeting some new people and making some new friends that you just love to hang out with.



Keep a firm grasp on that determination!

by Katrina

Scorpio

(October 23 - November 20)

:dem: Congratulations, Scorpio, you got Teen-Help's favorite smiley, collectively! Why the 'demented' smiley? Well, you've been so busy for so long, and things aren't going to get any less busy until the end of the month, so hang in there! Fortunately, you usually have the type of personality that functions a lot better when you're busy than when you have tons and tons of extra time, so I guess maybe try to count the business as a blessing rather than a curse if you can.

Pisces

(February 20 - March 19)

:headphones: You are just a music-listening-machine this month, Pisces! You have got all the coolest tunes on your MP3 player, and you probably have all of your friends wanting you to burn CDs for them, which is always an honor. If ever you get stuck in a certain mood and don't know how to get out of it, turn to music! If you're upset, listen to a hopeful and inspiring song. If you're happy, further your happy mood by listening to some upbeat music!

Sagittarius

(November 21 - December 21)

:p This is going to be a funny month for you, Sagittarius. They say that laughter is the best medicine, and I find that you're a great example of that! Not only do you have this amazing ability to tell jokes or make comments that make people laugh, but you also find the humor in things and really use it to your advantage. One last bonus of laughing so much? It increases your core strength! Who doesn't want that?

Capricorn

(December 22 - January 19)

o.O I'm thinking this might be kind of a confusing month for you, Capricorn. It looks like you're going to have a lot of very important decisions to make, particularly in the middle of the month, and you're not always going to be able to clearly see which might be the right path to take. Don't hesitate to reach out to friends and family when trying to make these choices, though. That's what they're there for!

Aquarius

(January 20 - February 19)

:glasses: How's that studying going, Aquarius? Not that everyone who studies wears glasses, but it did seem like the most fitting smiley to use! With the end of the school year rapidly approaching, now is the time to buckle down and get those grades up. People say that high school doesn't matter, but I'd like to think otherwise. Students attend college, university, and graduate school for little to no costs because of their scores in high school, so if I were you, I would definitely take things very seriously from now until the end of the school year!

Aries

(March 20 - April 19)

:) You have the most commonly used smiley on TeenHelp, it would seem. The original smiling smiley! What an honor. Okay, but seriously, it looks like you're going to have a good month in May. It may not be off-the-wall fabulous, but sometimes that's okay. If you do encounter any rough patches, try to push through them with your incredibly optimistic attitude! Go get 'em, tiger!



Acknowledgements

Image sources

Cause of the Month: Special Olympics: en.wikipedia.org
Comic: www.xkcd.com
Doughnut Madness: www.sxc.hu
LGBT Mental Health: www.sxc.hu
News that Affects You: April 2010 in Review: www.sxc.hu
Preparing for Prom: www.flickr.com
Recipes: www.nibbledish.com
Star Signs: www.grafamania.net
The Truth about Eating Disorders: www.flickr.com

Articles

Cause of the Month: Special Olympics: www.specialolympics.org
LGBT Mental Health: www.nami.org
News that Affects You: April 2010 in Review: www.ap.org; www.bbc.co.uk; www.cnn.com
Recipes: Adapted from *Good Eats* with Alton Brown.
The Truth about Eating Disorders: ajp.psychiatryonline.org; www.thorne.com

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, or email us at avatar@teenhelp.org.