

# Avatar



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[www.teenhelp.org](http://www.teenhelp.org)

## WHO SUFFERS FROM MENTAL ILLNESS?

THE SINGLE LIFE  
PART ONE

AVATAR'S  
VOICE



# EDITORS' LETTER

WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE OF AVATAR.

This month, tune into Avatar's Voice in News and Debates, where you'll find an article on Libya, which invites you to think and respond with your own ideas.

In Mind and Body, as well as the regular Dear Avatar section, we have an article on the causes of mental illness, which looks at genetics, the environment, and the events in your life, and how they all relate.

Over in Lifestyle, we have the first of a two-part series which looks at the benefits of being single. Head over to Fun and Games for trivia, word of the month, and all the other regulars. As always, remember to check out the Self Expression and Horoscopes.

Until next month,  
The Avatar Editors.

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# CONTENTS

## NEWS & DEBATES

- 03** AVATAR'S VOICE Robin (PSY)  
This month: Libya, revolution, and the rest of the world.

## MIND & BODY

- 04** WHO SUFFERS FROM MENTAL ILLNESS? Robin (PSY)  
Genetics, the environment, and life events: how they all contribute.

- 06** DEAR AVATAR: ADVICE FOR YOU Robin Chess  
Requests for advice from users like you! (PSY) (Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x)

## LIFESTYLE

- 07** THE SINGLE LIFE, PART ONE Dave Katrina (dr2005)  
Part one: Loving the benefits, living it up, and demystifying the myths.

## FUN & GAMES

- 09** MOVIES, TRIVIA, AND WORDS Nat (Gymnophoria/Natsumi)  
Have a laugh, and have some fun with this month's Fun and Games.

- 10** MOTIVATION STATION Robin Chess  
Get up and get motivated this May! (PSY) (Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x)

## MORE

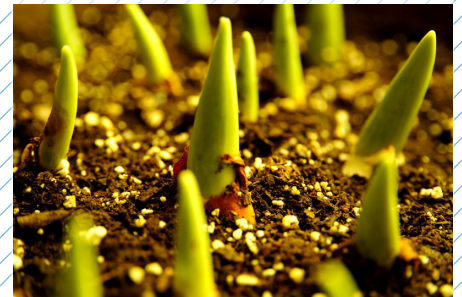
- 11** SELF-EXPRESSION AND PHOTOGRAPHY  
Expressing life through your fingertips.

- 14** ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & WINDING DOWN

# feature

ON 08

THE SINGLE LIFE, PART ONE  
BY DAVE (DR2005) AND  
KATRINA



Part one: Loving the benefits,  
living it up, and demystifying  
the myths.

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

by Chess  
(Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x)  
and Lyndsee (Amoroso)

12

HOROSCOPES



## CONTACT US!

Are you a writer? Photographer? Artist? We need your submissions! Valuable contributions from readers like you are what make Avatar so unique and successful! Please consider emailing your submission to [avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org) or submit content online by visiting [www.teen-help.org/avatar/submit](http://www.teen-help.org/avatar/submit).



# AVATAR'S VOICE

## VARIOUS OPINIONS AND INSIGHT ON CURRENT EVENTS

By Robin (PSY)

*Avatar's VOICE gives you the opportunity to respond to the pieces we publish. All opinions and further insight on current events are welcomed, and we will attempt to present as many differing viewpoints as possible. Let your VOICE be heard!*

### Current Event: Libya and NATO's Involvement

I'll be honest: when my friend told me about the revolution in Egypt a few months ago, I had no idea why it was happening and what led up to its occurrence. After doing some research, however, it soon became clear to me that Egypt has had significant problems for quite some time. Poverty, inflation, unemployment, and government corruption have severely diminished Egyptian citizens' quality of life, and after witnessing the uprising in Tunisia, it was only a matter of time before other countries used the momentum of the successful Tunisian revolution to strengthen their own cause. My friend, who happens to be Egyptian, experienced mixed emotions for the first week of protests. She was glad to hear that Egypt's citizens were finally taking matters into their own hands, but she feared for many of her friends' safety as police forces under control of the Egyptian government cracked down on protesters. Fortunately, things seem to have quieted down in Egypt. The former president of Egypt has resigned, along with other government officials, and the citizens of Egypt

will have the opportunity to appoint new leaders in September.

Leaders in countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Germany urged the Egyptian government to end the violence against protesters, and they praised the citizens of Egypt for successfully bringing about changes in their country after their president stepped down from power. Despite the violence taking place in Egypt, however, other countries did not intervene by sending troops to protect the Egyptian citizens. That has not been the case with Libya, another African country that is currently experiencing a great deal of turmoil as the citizens attempt to overthrow their leader. Unlike Egypt's former president, who only used police forces to suppress protesters, Libya's leader has not hesitated to use the country's military forces to retaliate against protesters. As a result, the death toll in Libya may be as high as 30,000 compared to Egypt's estimated 300.

Clearly, the high risk to Libya's citizens has prompted a response from numerous countries who are members of NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization). The organization has called for a ceasefire and has authorized military action in order to protect the citizens of Libya. Over the past month, NATO's military forces have conducted airstrikes against Libyan military resources, as well as enforced a no-fly zone over Libya in order to prevent Libyan military bombings

on innocent civilians. NATO has been authorized to use "any means necessary" - except for foreign occupation - in order to protect the citizens of Libya. Which seems strange, considering that the United States and other countries haven't hesitated to resort to military occupation in the past (ex. The War in Iraq).

Given how many lives have already been lost in Libya, should NATO reconsider its decision to avoid foreign occupation in Libya and other countries that are experiencing political and social unrest?

Want your voice to be heard? Think there is a current event we should discuss next month? Submit your responses and suggestions to us by visiting <http://www.teenhelp.org/avatar/submit!> ■







MENTAL HEALTH | DEAR AVATAR

# WHO SUFFERS FROM MENTAL ILLNESS?

By Robin (PSY)

**M**any of you may be familiar with the nature vs. nurture debate in regards to mental illness. To briefly summarize, some people believe that genetics determine whether or not individuals will suffer from mental illness, while other people believe that the environment and life events are more responsible for this. In reality, nature AND nurture interact with each other. So what does this mean for those who worry that they or their loved ones may be at-risk for developing mental illnesses?

**Genetics.** We all know that genetics determine many things about a person – for example, their sex, height, or eye color. What you may not know, however, is that genetics can also play a role in determining our mental health. For example, major depressive disorder is more likely to be present in individuals with two short alleles of the 5-HTT gene. In layman's terms, the composition of specific genes may cause individuals to become more at-risk for developing mental illnesses. Since genetics are hereditary (passed down from parents to children), children whose parents suffer from mental illness may be more likely to develop a mental illness themselves. This conclusion has been supported by identical twin studies for numerous mental illnesses. Since identical twins share the same genetics, it can be assumed that if one twin suffers from a mental illness, the other twin should be more at-risk for developing a mental illness as well. In 1930, four identical sisters (named the "Genain quadruplets") were observed by the United States National Institute of Mental Health. All four sisters were diagnosed with schizophrenia. It has been estimated that approximately 51 million people (or roughly 1.1% of the world population) over the age of 18 suffer from schizophrenia. Given how rare this mental illness is in the general

population, the presence of this mental illness in all four sisters clearly demonstrates that there is a genetic basis for schizophrenia, as well as for many mental illnesses, including depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.

**Environment.** Wow, that was a lot of information about genetics! Does this mean that if our parents are alcoholics, and if our grandparents are alcoholics, and if our siblings are alcoholics, then we are doomed to become alcoholics as well? Not necessarily. Some genes become "activated" early on, such as the genes that determine what color our eyes will be. Other genes, however, may only become "activated" based on our environment. Again, this conclusion has been supported by identical twin studies. Researchers observed twins who had been separated at birth, and determined that the effects of genetics can either be enhanced or reduced by one's environment. For example, let's say an alcoholic mother gave birth to twins. If both children remained in the home and were exposed to physical/emotional abuse by their alcoholic mother for many years, then they may eventually turn to alcohol themselves in order to cope with the hostile home environment. Based on their genetic composition and the environment in which they were raised (learning that consuming large amounts of alcohol is acceptable, based on their mother's example), they may be more at-risk for becoming alcoholics than the average person. In studies where one twin was removed from their unhealthy environment, however, researchers found that the twin growing up in a loving, nurturing environment was much less at-risk for becoming alcoholic!

**Life Events.** What about highly emotional or traumatic life events? Unfortunately, some people find it difficult to

cope with one-time life events such as the loss of a loved one, a break-up or divorce, or being forced to drop out of high school/college. We see this fairly often with members of the military. Some soldiers can witness a comrade's death and eventually "move on" after a great deal of therapy. Other soldiers never quite get over the shock of the traumatic event. As a result, they may develop major depressive disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder. Even the healthiest person, who doesn't have a genetic/hereditary history of mental illness and grows up in a loving, nurturing home environment can develop a mental illness based on one or two highly emotional life events.

So what does all of this mean for you and your loved ones? Basically, no one is "doomed" to develop a mental illness. Genetics can make an individual more at-risk, but a loving, nurturing environment can also counter those effects. On the other hand, someone who is not genetically at-risk may become at-risk based on their hostile home environment and/or certain life events.

What can at-risk individuals do in order to prevent the development of a mental illness (or minimize the effects of a mental illness)? Those who know they have a family history of mental illness can take steps to protect themselves by seeking help from a psychological professional and ensuring that their environment does not enhance the effects of any genetic predispositions toward developing a mental illness. For example, teens who know their parents suffer from major depressive disorder can talk to a school counselor whenever they begin to feel depressed themselves. They can also surround themselves with friends who are upbeat and optimistic about life, rather than gravitating toward friends

# MIND AND BODY

who also suffer from major depressive disorder. Changing the environment can help counter the effects of genetics. Those who are exposed to hostile home environments can also take steps to protect themselves by seeking help from a psychological professional and changing their environment. For example, teens who live with abusive parents can call Child Protective Services (or similar agencies who protect the welfare of minors) in order to be placed in the care of a more loving, nurturing legal guardian. Continuing to seek help can help coun-

ter the effects of environment, no matter how long those teens lived with abusive parents and no matter what they were exposed to while living with abusive parents.

In conclusion, while genetics, the environment, and life events can play a ma-

ior role in determining whether or not someone develops a mental illness, people are rarely "lost causes". There is ALWAYS hope for those who are at-risk, no matter how severe their situation may be! ■





# DEAR AVATAR

By Chess (Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x) and Robin (PSY)

**My boyfriend broke up with me a few weeks ago and he already has a new girlfriend. I see them together all the time and it hurts a lot. I don't understand how he could move on so quickly and easily. Help me please.**

I'm sorry to hear that things didn't work out with your ex-boyfriend. It can be difficult to come to terms with a break-up, learning how to cope with the pain, and eventually moving on to enjoy the single life or pursue new relationships in the future. Some people manage to do all of this in a matter of days, but most people need a few weeks, months, or even a year or more! It sounds like one of two things happened with your ex-boyfriend: either he's managed to gain closure over the past few weeks, or he's

currently experiencing what I call a "rebound relationship". A rebound relationship occurs when someone jumps into a new relationship before they have given themselves the opportunity to gain closure for their previous relationship. As a result, many rebound relationships fail, because there are unresolved feelings or emotional baggage that interferes with the healthy development of the new relationship.

Unfortunately, you may never know why your ex-boyfriend has managed to move on so quickly and with such apparent ease. All you really can do is focus on your own happiness and well-being. Recognize that everyone copes with break-ups in different ways. What your ex-boyfriend is doing is not necessarily the only way to cope with a break-up, and it may not necessarily be the best way, either. What's important is figuring out

what works for YOU! Rather than focusing on your ex-boyfriend and what he's doing, focus on what YOU are doing right now and plan for the future. Spend time with your family members and friends. Take some time off to pamper yourself. Keep up on homework assignments so you won't fall behind and have something else to worry about. Think about what you want to do after graduating and going on vacation! It won't always be easy, but I promise that time will heal these wounds if you allow yourself to stop dwelling on what your ex-boyfriend is up to. ■

**My doctor says that I am slightly overweight. As a result, I have drastically cut back on the amount of food I eat every day. The problem is that I never feel hungry now! I started doing this about 5 days ago because I enjoy controlling what I eat, but I'm concerned by this lack of appetite. What is going on?**

As I'm sure you know, it's never a good idea to start a diet of any sort without getting a doctor's approval. If you want to lose weight, it's important to do it the healthy way - which involves getting a professional opinion, and learning how to properly manage your diet so you can get to a healthy weight, and stay there.

By restricting what you eat, you've taught your body to expect less, which might explain why you're losing your appetite. Your body tends to adapt to whatever happens to it, so when you eat less, your body assumes that's what's going to keep happening, and it adjusts accordingly.

It sounds like you're developing a somewhat unhealthy attitude to food. While it's good to be aware of what you're eating, and make sure you're eating the right things, being too caught up on your eating habits, and trying to completely control them, is usually not beneficial for you. I'd really recommend talking to someone about this, like your doctor, so you can get your eating habits back

on track, and learn how to control your weight in a more healthy way.

Bear in mind, also, that you can be the 'perfect' weight and still be unhealthy, or you can be a bit over or under the ideal weight, and be healthy anyway. That's why it's best to consult someone who knows about this sort of thing, like a GP or nutritionist; they can help figure out what needs to change, if anything.

Good luck. ■





# L I F E



## THE SINGLE LIFE, PART ONE

By Dave (dr2005) and Katrina

As one enters adolescence, the pressures of being in a relationship are intensified, perhaps by the social networking relationship statuses open for the public to see, or the tendency to feel as though all of one's friends are in relationships. As we've all seen in the movies, teenaged relationships can grow into marriages of "high school sweethearts," and others still can turn into long term relationships stretching into the twenties. However, there's an entirely different lifestyle that many seem to have an odd negative stigma against: living the single life! Here, we discuss the "ups" of being single along with several tips on living the single life to the fullest. We also debunk several of the negative stigmas associated with not being in a relationship and finish up with each of our own responses to some frequently asked questions regarding this topic.

### **Positive Aspects of Being Single; Learning to Love the Benefits**

One of the first steps to becoming content with being single is to consider the many benefits that come with not being in a relationship. Being "footloose and fancy-free" is something which, far from being viewed as a reflection on a person's prospect, is a real opportunity to take stock of who you are as a person as well as enjoy being unattached. Healthy relationships of any kind are best supported by the person being comfortable in their own skin, and time spent on yourself can boost self-esteem and self-image which in turn can lead to more fulfilling future relationships. As such, think of being single not as a spell in Purga-

tory but instead as a chance to look after yourself. As a single person you can also go on dates, flirt and attract attention, go to parties and generally go out with whoever you want to - or you can do none of the above and spend time doing things you enjoy or just putting yourself first without having to worry about what your partner may or may not think of it. Some people will actually be quite envious of that, believe it or not.

Now, once you have considered the positive aspects of singularity, utilize these as you learn to be content with being single. Just because you are not in a relationship at this specific moment in time, it doesn't mean you've been left "on the shelf", "over the hill", "unlovable" or any number of clichés. A lot of people are actually single through choice, either because they cannot commit to a relationship due to other demands or because they prefer being single and the freedoms that come with it. Being in a relationship, of course, does have many benefits, but on the flipside it can be restrictive in ways as well - as a singleton, by contrast, the only restriction on you is yourself. That can be quite an appealing prospect in itself. Leaving that aside, while being single means you do not have a significant other in your life, it does mean you can spend your time with friends and/or family and on other activities you may not have had chance to otherwise.

### **Living It Up**

In a time in which it seems like almost every article concerning relationships

and dating addresses fun date ideas for couples or how to maintain a healthy romance with your significant others, we'd like to take the opposite route and give a few tips on how to find fulfilment in outlets other than a relationship.

Do NOT, under any circumstances, define yourself or your life on the basis of "being single". This is an easy trap to fall into and can colour your thought process and outlook on life, as well as raising concerns in others about you. When you introduce yourself or describe yourself to others, begin to frame your description not around the fact that you are single, but instead around those really great traits we know you have! For example, an introduction of "Hey! I'm Katrina; I'm a nineteen-year-old Family Studies major, and I absolutely love to dance" is probably a bit healthier than "Hey! I'm Katrina - I'm single and totally cool with it!" First impressions do count, and not only are you portraying yourself as someone who is completely overly concerned about his or her singularity, but you're also trapping yourself in your own method of thinking of yourself in this way. How we come across to other people is a pivotal part of all relationships, which leads nicely into the next point.

Do NOT judge yourself by comparison with your friends in relationships. Judging yourself by comparison with your friends is always a bad move because of the very nature of the thought process it breeds. It can be difficult if you are in a group of friends where everyone else is in relationships, but it should not be taken as a reflection on yourself and again



you should not define yourself as “their single friend”. You are their friend, end of story, and your relationship status does not and should not come into it. Just as you may be single and they in relationships, so it can swap around quite easily. You can also provide a means for your friends to get time away from their boyfriends/girlfriends, which can be good for them as well once in a while. That said, you should be wary of letting yourself be steered into a position where you DO become “their single friend” and attempts to change this are ward off – it is your life and not theirs. All we’re saying is don’t dwell on other people’s relationships but enjoy being you and your life.

Don’t be afraid of showing off and having fun. You’re young, free and single – why not make the most of it? That’s not to say reckless abandon is the way forward, and at all times your safety and wellbeing are paramount, but provided you do so there are any number of possibilities open to you. Feel free to strut your stuff, go out on the town, talk to people (and flirt if you like) and generally be as open and outgoing as you like. Being single doesn’t come with the obligation that you shut yourself away in a darkened room and hide from the world – within limits, you should feel able to go out and have a good time. On top of this, don’t feel as though you have to race through singledom and get a boyfriend or girlfriend as soon as possible

– it isn’t healthy and being able to enjoy things for their own merits and not because your significant other does is an important part of life.

### **Demystifying Those Pesky “Single” Myths**

You’ve heard ‘em, and we’ve heard ‘em too. Are they begun by people in relationships? Quite possibly (and on that note, were we not all single at one point in our lives?). Are these started by singles who just haven’t quite grasped the concept of being content with being single? Yet another possibility. For the purpose of this article as well as the target audience, we focus specifically on debunking two of the most common misconceptions that may be held by singles themselves.

**Myth #1:** “If I’m single now, I’m going to be single forever.” To be completely honest, taking this mindset is detrimental for an entirely new set of reasons! If you take that mindset, chances are you will be because your lack of confidence will be like a warning claxon to any would-be partners. Confidence is a key part of attraction, and is at its most convincing when it comes from within rather than being an act, so treating singledom as a millstone around your neck will sap away the effect. You should also avoid, at all costs, attempts to deal with your single status by lowering your standards or going off with anyone you can – that

can end up becoming self-destructive and make you feel worse about things. Everyone has lean patches, but the key to getting through them is not to dwell on them and instead to focus on the plus points, of which hopefully we have shown there are a lot. Relationships can and will follow in due course.

**Myth #2:** “If I’m single, it must be because I’m not ‘good enough’ to be someone’s girlfriend/boyfriend.” As previously mentioned, confidence is going to either be your biggest enemy or your best friend in approaching the reasons why you may feel as though you’re single. Rather than focusing on these issues, stop using relationships as a barometer for your attractiveness/prospects altogether. Whether or not you are in a relationship has nothing to do with whether you are good boyfriend/girlfriend material, or whether you’re “good enough” to be in a relationship. Don’t believe us? Take a look around you! George Clooney, to name but one, was famously single for a long time, and stars such as Rihanna, Hugh Grant and Keira Knightley are also single despite being highly eligible. Being single has nothing to do with your eligibility level, and allowing it to shape your self perception can be poisonous!

Be sure to check out next month’s issue for Part Two! ■





By Nat (Gymnophoria/Natsumi)  
and Chess (Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x)

# JUST FOR FUN



## WORD OF THE MONTH

Anneal (verb): To toughen or temper.

(dictionary.reference.com)

## CAN YOU SAY...

### Cranberry?

English – Cranberry  
Croatian – Brusnica  
Dutch – Veenbes  
Finnish – Karpalo  
Indonesian – Cranberi  
Latin – Oxycoccus  
Lithuanian - Spanguolė  
Portuguese – Arando  
Turkish – kızılçik

## TRIVIA

Which categories are in the TeenHelp Forums but not in the Articles section?

Hint: There are 7

Challenge: Which category is in the Articles section but not in the TeenHelp forums?

Answers:

-Lifestyle	-Chit-Chat
-Goals and Ambitions	-Religion and Spirituality,
-Good Days!	Science and Philosophy
-Why Me?	-Self Expression

"Causes" is a category in the Articles section but is not in the TeenHelp Forums.

## MAY MOVIES

-Thor  
-Jumping The Broom  
-Bridesmaids  
-Pirates of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides  
-Kung Fu Panda 2  
-The Hangover Part II

(<http://www.the-numbers.com/movies/release.php>)

## RECIPES

To go with the 'word of the month', here's two interesting recipes revolving around - you guessed it! - cranberries.

### Wild Cranberry Sauce

Ingredients:

- 4 cups wild cranberries
- 3/4 cup apple juice
- 2 ripe pears, cored and sliced
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 teaspoon liquid sweetener

Method:

- Combine cranberries, apple juice, pears, raisins, and sweetener in a medium sized, heavy saucepan.
- Bring this to the boil over a medium heat.
- Reduce the heat, cover the saucepan, and simmer for ten minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Chill the sauce before serving.

Note:

This sauce will keep for two weeks in a refrigerator.

### Cranberry Pumpkin Waffles

Note: This recipe requires a waffle iron.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups plain flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ cup solid vegetable shortening
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup canned, pureed pumpkin
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- melted butter

Method:

- Place flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and ginger in a large mixing bowl. Stir with a fork until blended.
- Place milk, butter, and shortening in a small saucepan and heat over low heat until the butter and shortening have melted. Cool slightly.
- In a separate bowl, beat the eggs and the pumpkin puree. Stir in the cooled milk mixture.
- Add this to the dry ingredients and stir with a wooden spoon until combined.
- Stir in the cranberries.
- Preheat waffle iron. Butter the iron and add ½ cup of batter. Bake the waffles until they are crisp and golden.

(Both from About.com)



# MOTIVATION STATION

by Chess (Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x) and Robin (PSY)

**A quote to note:** Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve. - Napoleon Hill

**Reason for the Season:** Who doesn't love the smell of May flowers after April showers? Take a break from studying and enjoy all that nature has to offer by going for a walk around the neighborhood. Summer is just around the corner, but don't forget to enjoy the last month of Spring before the warmer weather arrives!

**Reveal the Real:** Falling – in a literal and figurative sense – isn't fun. It's even less fun when you're in the middle of a race, a whole grandstand of people watching you, and you land flat on your face. I've seen this happen, and heard the collective intake of breath as the audience realised what had happened. It would have been all too easy for the athlete to give up, and leave the race. Instead, we watched them get to their feet, and, limping, finish the race. At the end, they were surrounded by the other

competitions, who were all anxious to find out if they were okay. The entire audience applauded. It was such a heart-warming scene, seeing this person finish something they could easily have given up on.

**Send a Grin:** On that note, I know that sometimes it's easier to give up. When friends complain about work, homework, or even their family, it's tempting to join in with their complaints – but, while venting can be good sometimes, what does it really achieve? Most of the time, it's better to just do what you can, or what you have to, instead of wasting time complaining about it, or avoiding it altogether. If you start something, do everything you can to finish it, even if it hurts.

Dare to Share? Have you been inspired lately? Did you see something that just made you smile? Has a friend told you a piece of advice that really did change your life? Let us know, and get involved with the Motivation Station!



Photo by Lyndsee (Amoroso)

## Arms of the Sea

Let me rest my head,  
upon this pillowy bed.  
And the arms of the sea,  
Gently embrace me.  
Let me not awake,  
And my fear do take,  
Cradled in the beaches hands,  
As I reach the shimmering  
lands.  
Let them not see me cry,  
The dew upon mine eye.  
My wish not to fright,  
The jewels of the night,  
Let me sleep through the day,  
As the pain ebbs away.  
Quietly making amends,  
As the tide comes to cleanse.  
Let me pick up my head,  
From this thorny bed.  
You arms of the sea,  
No longer entice me.

By palmtoptiger

# SELF EXPRESSION

## Life Lessons

I believe that everyday should be  
lived as your last  
That you should never forget your  
past  
That you should always look ahead  
And never leave anything left un-  
said

Always say what you believe  
Don't always believe what you per-  
ceive  
Always believe what you say  
And enjoy every single day

Because today could be your last  
And all you leave with are your  
memories of the past  
You leave everything else here  
Even your loved ones that you hold  
so dear

You don't know when your life will  
cease  
So live everyday in peace  
Never settle for less than your best  
Because life is the ultimate test

Never say never  
Make every moment last forever  
Don't take for granted all that you  
got  
And forever teach the life lessons you  
were taught

Don't throw away what you know  
is good  
Never not do what you know you  
should  
Give everything all you can  
Always shoot for a ten

Make what's wrong right  
Sleep soundly every night  
Try not to doubt  
Instead, try and venture out

You are you  
You get to choose what you do  
No one can make your choices for you  
'Cause you can't undo

Don't be afraid to sing  
Don't be afraid to do anything  
Be proud of who you are  
Because you are everyone's superstar

Tell everyone how much you care  
Live isn't fair, and they might not  
always be there  
Make new friends, and keep the old  
Don't repeat something personal you  
were told

Always stand up for what's right  
Always stand up for yourself in a  
fight  
You have the right to be alive  
And you always have the strength  
to survive

These are life lessons to learn  
To you, they most definitely concern  
Life is a work of art  
No one can ever fully break your  
heart

Knowing these lessons will get you  
far  
They make up who you are  
Teach these to your friends and fam-  
ily  
These lessons are of universality

So again I say to live everyday as  
your last  
To never forget your past  
To live by these life lessons that make  
up who you are  
Because you are your very own su-  
perstar

By ktothet1997



# READ THE STARS



by Chess (Sidhe./x.Psychic Crisis.x) and Lyndsee (Amoroso)

## TAURUS

APRIL 20 - MAY 21

**Happy birthday, Taurus!** During the first part of the month, you'll tend to keep to yourself, focusing on your inner self, past experiences, and spiritual growth. The last part of May is extremely satisfying for you, and you'll find yourself surrounded by plenty of attractive and intelligent people. Let their influence rub off on you, and find your own inner beauty. You also feel empowered, and in control. Use these feelings to better yourself, or the world – or both!

**Taurus in love:** With all the people you'll be interacting this month, sparks are sure to fly. Just be careful not to get carried away with emotions, and remember to think carefully before rushing into anything.

**Taurus on the job:** Use the skills and methods you're learning this month to make the most of your job (or, if you don't have one, apply the same principles to your schoolwork!).

**Taurus, the individual:** Socialising is something that comes easily for you, and, this month, you'll get to do plenty of it. Just be sure to balance it with 'you' time.

## AQUARIUS

JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 18

This month is going to emphasise home and family. You can lighten the tension in your house by simply redecorating, and rearranging the furniture setting. Make your home more pleasant to be in. This is also a really inspiring time for you intellectually, and in the field of communication, so make the most of it. Things may begin to speed up, and you'll find yourself caught in a whirlwind of activity, but just try and keep up with it, because it will be over soon, leaving a feeling of serenity behind.

## PISCES

FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 20

May is going to be the 'go with the flow' month for you. Don't look for all the answers, just simply enjoy being alive. You will experience happiness and serenity. A focus of yours this month is communication and education. Also, a wonderful period of time starts which nourishes you creatively, emotionally, and intellectually. Now is the time to share your newfound enthusiasm and inspiration with others – let your light shine this month, Pisces!

## ARIES

MARCH 20 - APRIL 20

You're going to have a very energetic month! Use all this pent up energy for the greater good. You might look into volunteering somewhere, or joining a club. Also use this energy to get essays and homework done. However, towards the end of the month, you're going to run out of energy and hit a stopping point. Use this down time to focus on your body, and taking care of yourself. This is also the time to discover new things. Try something that is out of the ordinary for you. Broaden your horizons. Live.

# HOROSCOPES

## GEMINI

MAY 21 - JUNE 21

In the month of May, you're going to be driven for change, which is long overdue. Make some positive changes. You may have been busy managing social relationships and creating new ones, so take some time off to treat yourself this month. Do something relaxing, such as going to a spa, or taking a 'you' day. You deserve it! This month is also going to be full of inspiration, which you can use in the pursuit of creativity.

## CANCER

JUNE 21 - JULY 22

May is going to be a calm month for you, and time to focus on your social life. There are going to be times to consolidate and transform some friendships. Also, be sure to enjoy life with others. This is a wonderful time for new friendships, and people to join your social circle. Towards the end of May, there is going to be a mood switch. You're suddenly going to be more aware of your inner thoughts. Don't let this get you down. Utilise this time to reflect and make changes accordingly.

## LEO

JULY 22 - AUGUST 23

For a large part of May, you're focused on self transformation. What does that mean? Make changes to better yourself. Take up a new hobby. Do some personal reflection. You're bound to discover new possibilities that you didn't notice before. You might need the help of others to help keep it all organised. The last few weeks of May are busy times for you, Leo. You're focused on your social life. Initially, you might be faced with loneliness and confusion, but these will give way to more positive emotions.

## VIRGO

AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 21

Everything is going to fall into place this month after some pretty intense events. This is going to be a month of personal growth. You're going to want to expand upon your horizons intellectually. Remember that your own principles are important. As for love, both you and your partner are battling separate things. Work through these things together, and your relationship shall be strengthened.

## LIBRA

SEPTEMBER 21 - OCTOBER 23

You had a pretty rocky month in April with loved ones, but May brings you solutions. You're beginning to enjoy it all, which is bringing you closer together. There are also wonderful opportunities for travel this month, so plan a vacation with the family, or some friends. This is going to be a wonderful month for love. During this month, you're going to be able to create strong emotional foundations that are long lasting.

## SCORPIO

OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 22

This month is going to start out on a strong note as far as career and education goes. Your confidence in this area skyrockets, as you become very resourceful. As the month goes on, there are things to remember about your love life, one being that you don't call all the shots. Let your partner decide on some things. While it may be hard to sit back and let someone decide everything, it's nice to have a break once in a while. You deserve it!

## SAGITTARIUS

NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 22

Life seems like a party lately! You're surrounded by loads of fun people, and fun things to do. There are also wonderful opportunities floating about. This is also a great month for all those who are single, as May is the month to find someone. Party mode is going to come to a halt towards the end of May, but don't worry, because you're going to feel as though you've accomplished a lot this month. It's okay to put the brakes on and relax for a while. On an end note, a positive transformation takes place on the work front, bringing in new opportunities for growth and money.

## CAPRICORN

DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 20

May is going to be the month where your home life calms down, at least a little bit. The energy this month is calm and peaceful, which is exactly what you need. Spend quality time with loved ones during this time period. Enjoy each other's company. There is a feeling of holiday spirit this month. The more time you spend with your loved ones, the better off you're going to feel. Relationship not good with your family? Spend this month bonding with them, and strengthening relationships.



Thanks!

# THE WIND DOWN

## IMAGE SOURCES

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All comments, questions, suggestions or criticisms should be directed towards the editorial team. Email us at **[avatar@teenhelp.org](mailto:avatar@teenhelp.org)**. We look forward to hearing from you, and hope you enjoy the next edition of Avatar!