

Viewpoints

Separated, but not divorced

This letter was written by me about a year ago as I tried to make sense of some of the choices made by me in troubled times and the pressures felt from my peers. I was very disturbed by a comment made to me by a friend the other day. She said, "I stayed sober all weekend." My hope is that if people are feeling as though they are at a turning point in their lives, they can reach out for answers and ask for help from others as I did.

Dear God,

It has been a little over a year since I have separated from my wife. She has decided not to grant a divorce at this time. Although we are no longer together, I can still feel her presence in my life, even after moving to another state. She had such a powerful effect on my daily routine for so long, and now that she is gone, I have had to reach out for help from others and I have gained strength from their support and guidance.

I don't know what the attraction was in the beginning of our relationship, but there were promises made by her to accompany me out of some of my depressions and feelings of inadequacy. In our beginning, we enjoyed a loving relationship. I soon became very dependent on her. I had tried to gain the strength to let her go many times after I became aware that she was guiding me on a one way trip to false promises and the deterioration of my moral fiber. The more that I let this

happen, the more dependent I became. I think she was enjoying my pain and she shared that joy by becoming more available to me in my times of need. Even though I could see that she was helping to isolate me from my family, friends, and work, I wanted to believe that things would get better in time. I tried so many times, and in many ways, to stand up to her and say, "No more!" I found it impossible to obtain the necessary strength to make the separation on my own.

My family and friends could see the destruction she was causing, but I did not listen, not did I want to look, and I found myself standing up to them and justifying her actions. I did not want to accept that she was causing so much pain to my family and sending me into spiritual, financial, and physical ruin. I could always count on her to help me avoid my daily responsibilities by convincing me that all would be better in the morning. There were always tomorrows to take care of anything that needed attention today; besides, she could ease any amount of tension or frustration that would build within me because of promises or commitments lost. I felt that I could not live without her in my life. She was always just a want or need away.

We tried a separation once before. That lasted for about eight years. I found strength through support groups and found my life changing for the better. Knowing she was still out there helped me to ask many times for help from others. I started to feel like a new man that could face any problem and

could deal with day to day life. After a while I became satisfied that I could handle anything on my own and no longer needed to ask for help. It seems that once that happened, I became lonely and needed a change. So I looked up my wife and at her request we became an item once again. Somehow I forgot the pain that we shared together and in no time we were up to our codependent relationship, exactly where we left off some eight years ago. I started to isolate myself from friends and family and started to miss work. We were truly on a roll from the start. Then when I started to feel regret and guilt in rekindling the relationship, she promised to take away those feelings. Her lies became mine, and she was able to have me lie for her as well.

To this day, I can't believe how fast our marriage had destroyed much of what I had worked so hard to obtain in life. I'm so glad that my family was able to help me separate from her one more time, and through the help of support groups, I can remember the pain in a positive way. I know now that I can never get a full divorce, but today there are hopes and dreams that help me to have days in my life that can be rewarding. I know that she is still out there, just waiting for another relationship that she can help to become codependent and destructive like ours was. She can be very deceptive with the promise of good feelings and a false serenity. I can only pray that if one sees her reach out her hand, beware of the true pain she can cause anyone she touches. I know that it is hard to say

"No" to one such as her, but one only needs to look around and see the destruction she can cause in all cities across the world, to know the power she controls. She is so devious that she goes by many names. She has never been too proud to have only one. She can also change sexes at will and has no problem with the age of any persons she touches and decides to have a relationship with. She can have the appeal of a knight in shining armor or a beautiful woman to many who feel lost and in need of comfort. She prides herself on how cunning and baffling she can be, and although most are aware of her deceptive allure, she still makes her way into the lives of many. My wife's first and last name is Heroin. She is also known as Alcohol, Cocaine, Barbiturates, etc....So beware, she is out there, just looking for a new mate.

My life has been far from empty since our separations. I am thankful of the help you have given me at a time that I felt lost and full of despair. I truly say that my strength today comes from letting go and not being too proud to ask for help. I can meet the challenge of one day at a time, and I don't dwell on things to come. I work on the day I'm in to make my yesterdays happy ones to reflect on. Thank you and all who helped me help myself.

Very truly yours,

FMC (The author wishes to remain anonymous.)

(Name will be given upon written request to anyone who is interested in discussing the subject.)

Student Body President gives thanks

Manabu Okawa

Guest Commentary

"Complaining 102" was one of my classes which made me satisfied last year. I recall that Ross Perot, my teacher, gave me an "A." I used to begin the conversation by saying "I don't like....," or "Why does (doesn't) Brevard College do this thing?" Without emphasizing a lot of actual improvement of our campus life, a year passed.

It is always easier to find conspicuous shortcomings than search for improvements, even now....Those of you who were at Brevard College last fall remember what the Underground used to be. It was a grave. Now it is a beloved bar without alcoholic beverages. I would like to thank President Bertrand, Dean Martin, Mr. Curt Crowhurst, ARAMARK, and other people who

were involved, for everything they have done for us.

Coltrane Commons, however, is likely to go back to chaos if further progress is not realized.

As I have been telling you, anything is possible in the process of developing into a four-year institution. Even a change in visitation hours is likely. A lot of opinions from the Suggestion Box in the first two weeks of this semester were about the limited visitation hours. Despite the tough situation we are in, SGA still needs to be optimistic about the possibility of extended visitation hours.

More than 2 months have passed since the beginning of the semester. What have we done so far? Placing coin changers in all the dorms, which I proposed in the last SGA Presidential election, could not be realized because of the unwillingness of Brevard College

due to a major security problem. I need to apologize to you again. All drink vending machines now accept a dollar bill instead. Thanks go to Don Strickland (V.P. for Business and Finance). Supposedly, we will have a Snack Bar (Convenience Store) in Coltrane Commons next semester. The security window in West Beam security door will be set very soon. Thanks go to Stephanie Taylor, a Hall Council member, brought up this important security problem. The result of the Weight Room Survey which was carried out by Justin Cole, another Hall-Council member, as well as the Cafeteria Survey, will probably make a positive difference. Public phones and sanitary containers will be placed soon. Thanks go to Heidi Rodenbaugh (V.P.) and Mandy Parris who threw the public phones idea to me; but nothing is visible yet. This fact shows our tendency of

favoring complaining but having a hard time taking action.

Do we not have enough time to improve our campus life? Are we such busy people? Do we really know what "busy" means? Can writing a proposal be a substitution for the time we spend complaining? Yes, hopefully, it can.

I would like to encourage those of you who are not satisfied with your campus life to come and talk to me or the SGA members since "Complaining 102" is not offered anymore. Please believe that we can realize whatever we need.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation not only to the SGA members, but to all the students who have been concerned about Brevard College. Your voice is extremely valuable. Thank you.