

MY VOICE

Meet Mr. Procrastination

I would like to take this time to introduce you to my friend, who I know well. His name is Mr. Procrastination.

Wait, you mean you know him, too? Let me ask him. Ah, yes. You two are the best of pals. Who isn't the best of pals with Mr. Procrastination?

You met him the day before your test. You met him a few hours before your project. In my case, I met him at midnight the day before my article was due.

He knew I had classes all of Wednesday, so the article had to get done Tuesday night. He didn't care. He provided me with a few games on my XBOX 360, a few web sites and a rough draft that had to get finished, which, of course, he helped me put off. Some friend he is.

We need to face a harsh reality. You and I both know that we need to boot him out of our

lives, or at least ease up on how often he sees us.

Step one: Admit that there's a problem. Hey, we procrastinators are like alcoholics. We're not addicted, right? Bull. We love to wait until the last moment each and every time and scramble to get things done. Admitting that there is too much procrastinating is a step towards breaking the habit.

Step two: Make a list. For a college student, a list of things that don't include eating pizza or calling Mom can be imposing, but seeing things slowly get accomplished is a satisfying feeling. Starting early on the list is also key. Eventually, each time a list is made, it gets done faster and faster.

Step three: Don't be lazy. It's the hardest part of the process. It's practically in our DNA. In fact, there are now five bases to DNA: adenine, cytosine, guanine, thymine, and lazy. There's no getting around it: if you want to stop being



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lazy, a heaping help of will power and self-discipline is needed. While it can't be found at the nearest Wal-Mart, it can be found inside of yourself. If you're really dedicated, step up to the plate and take responsibility.

Step four: Accomplish everything. On your list, list everything from hardest to easiest. Do the hard stuff first, and make your way down to the easiest of assignments. Don't skip something on the

list, because it's too difficult or too easy. That's the key mistake of procrastinators! There's only so much time in the day, and getting everything done, no matter the challenge, will help to end procrastination.

Step five: Celebrate! Congratulations, you have successfully been cured of procrastination. Mr. Procrastination will no longer harass you at all hours of the night, forcing you to stay up until one or two (or three or four) in the morning to study for your test, complete your project, and finish your article. It will take a lot of sweat, tears and eraser marks to get to this point, but when you do, it's certainly a great accomplishment.

Of course, no one has ever reached Step Five before. Ever.

See you tomorrow, Mr. Procrastination.

MY VOICE

Housing choices

After making the decision after the fall of my sophomore year to transfer home to Behrend, the next big decision I had to make was where I wanted to live. I remember friends and family telling me that it would be much smarter to save the money and just live at home. I wouldn't be missing anything, and, of course, I could always visit my friends that already had their own places.

So, taking their advice, I spent the next year living at home. I saved money, still visited friends that lived on their own and probably got more my work done since I had considerably less distractions at home.

However, my friends and family were wrong. I was missing something. I was missing out on an essential college experience: one that I didn't realize I would miss so much until it was over.

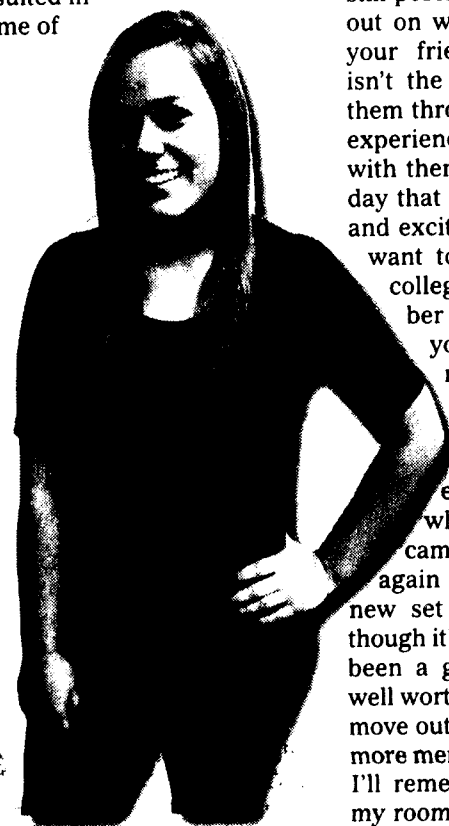
Moving away from home and living with roommates, although I've had my share of crazy ones, has resulted in some of

the greatest experiences and best friendships I've ever made. My roommates and I certainly had our issues, especially my freshman year when four of us were crammed into a small, supplemental dorm room that was the size of my current bedroom. However, when I look back on those times, I know that those are memories I will never forget.

Although I see the benefits in living at home, specifically the financial ones, I wish that students would take this opportunity to learn more about themselves and about what the real world is like. Although dorm life, and even U-Gates life, doesn't exactly mimic the real world, it can help ease us into it. Living on my own with other people has taught me a lot about responsibility and compromise, and it has prepared me for getting my own place once I leave school.

There is more to moving away from home than the practicality, though. Living among your peers is an essential college experience. Although it is still possible to have fun going out on weekends and visiting your friends' apartments, it isn't the same as living with them throughout the semester, experiencing the little things with them that happen day to day that make college life fun and exciting. Besides, do you want to look back on your college years and remember spending them with your friends and your roommates, or mom and dad?

This semester, I knew I needed that experience again. So when an opportunity came around, I moved out again and moved in with a new set of roommates. Although it's still new, it's already been a great experience and well worth the money it took to move out. I'm excited to make more memories, some of which I'll remember, and some that my roommates will have to fill me in on later.



Daniel Smith / The Behrend Beacon

MARISSA LANICH
staff writer

MY VOICE

Parallel tragedies

KAMILLE WATSON
staff writer

Before I write this, I'd like to mention that I do not have a problem with the United States helping Haiti in their time of need. Nor do I believe that Haiti should be left to fix their own country without the support of a nation that is capable of helping anyone. Bashing Haiti is not my intent in writing this. Rather, I would like to get others to maybe think about the question that has been on my mind since Haiti has endured this traumatic event, "Why hasn't New Orleans received the same treatment after Hurricane Katrina?"

Every day on the news we see our American soldiers helping Haiti and its people by establishing order and protecting its streets. We see our president on television making promises to the people of Haiti. Let's not forget about the abundance of charities that have been set up to help Haiti and its people in their time of need. But where were all of these people during Hurricane Katrina?

Where was the help? Where was the worry? Where was the money that they needed to rebuild their city and start over? And where were the people that are so willing to get the women and children out of Haiti during Hurricane Katrina? Instead, these people were left to sleep on the streets, in stadiums that were run down, because they were not equipped to hold that

many people. The people of New Orleans needed the support from a country that they were apart of, but instead we turned the other cheek. But now we are so willing to help Haiti. Is it the difference in our country? Because, let's be honest, our country does have a new face since President Obama is in office.

Who's to blame? Do we blame George Bush for not helping the people of New Orleans when he had the power to do so? Or do we blame ourselves and our entire country for not taking the initiative to help in our own backyard?

We are so quick to run to another country hundreds of miles away to help them in their time of need. We, as a country, are so eager to help other people so we can uphold the image of being a powerful nation, but when we do not acknowledge our mishaps and misfortunes in our own country, how can we possibly help another country?

As I stated in the beginning, I am not against the help that the people of Haiti are getting, nor do I believe that the help should be stopped. I just feel that we, as a country, should help our own with the same eagerness and ability to help another country in their times of need. While Haiti and other countries like it will flourish, ours will diminish and collapse if we do not recognize our own troubles at home.

MY VOICE

Facebook friends vs. real friends

ERIC PEIRCE
staff writer

The other day, as I was sitting in my dorm room doing, ahem, research, I happened to log onto Facebook. I looked at the updated profiles of my friends and then looked at my profile to make up some witty status update. As I started to look at my whole profile, including my friends list, I started to wonder who my "friends" were.

Nothing in today's college life is as official as Facebook. This is true for relationships, clubs, groups and, most important, friends. It seems odd to be

friends with someone just because you met them once in your high school or encountered them by accident, and you hit it off. But are they still your friend?

As I looked further into my friends list, completely ignoring my homework by this point, I was astonished to find early childhood friends, a girl I had met only for a few brief moments in Florida and even a few people I grew to resent over the years. Yet, I also found other "friends" that I just lost touch with once I ran through my high school doors with a diploma in hand and on toward

Behrend. Who wouldn't?

With my spare time, I sent messages to a few of my old buds from the past. Most of them gave no reply, but the few who did respond gave me great stories and updates since meeting them from neighborhood football games or being introduced by other friends. One of them is engaged, another is working as a full-time car mechanic, while yet another has moved out of state to study to become a doctor (a career that I would never have pictured them studying for).

However, during these exchanges, I realized one thing:

You're only friends with someone if you actually try to be a friend. I could call anyone my friend, but there's a huge difference between meeting someone and getting to know them as a person.

So if you have the time to get on Facebook (which I know you do) maybe look up a couple of long-lost friends from your past and give them a quick message. Say "Hi" and ask them what's new. You might find a small spark of friendship, and from there, who knows what could happen?

YOUR VOICE

A Successful MLK Day

I would like to thank you and congratulate you on your outstanding coverage of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Commemoration. Your edition featuring his picture on the front page and the events taking place on campus was captivating and inviting. Your post-events coverage was interesting and well-written. In the many years that I have been at this institution, never have I seen such first-rate coverage of this occasion by the Beacon.

I truly admire and appreciate your conscious effort in promoting and covering these events. I have always found that MLK week provides a great opportunity to not only learn about an important time in our nation's history (the civil rights movement), but also a time to pause and ponder on Dr. King's ideals of equality, love, and community. How far has our society come in terms of equal opportunity for all? Have we reached the "promised land" or is there still a long way to go? This is an argument that can perhaps help each individual on this campus to focus on the important role they play in making our campus community (and beyond) a great place to be. Your outreach and diligence supporting these events facil-



itated that opportunity. Thank you, once again, from the bottom of my heart.

Best wishes for the remainder of the semester and keep up the good work!

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