

OP-ED

Support Groups help students deal with college

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SUPPORT GROUPS: THEY'RE HERE, THEY HELP, THEY'RE FREE

Let's face it...coming to college isn't the easiest task you've ever undertaken. Many of us bring a lot of emotional and psychological baggage related to experiences that have been hard on us and make us feel alone, isolated, ashamed, guilty, insecure and worthless. When these feelings emerge, especially in response to the very real stresses of academic life, we tend to feel like somehow or another we may be "going crazy" or "losing it!" Our lives appear out of control

and we become easily distracted and upset with unpleasant thoughts and memories causing a wide variety of feelings that don't feel right. It feels like "something's wrong."

Well, there is "something wrong" and the good news is that support groups can play an important role in helping students overcome the feelings of powerlessness, isolation, guilt, hurt and anger. Realizing that we all need support with our feelings at one time or another, the Student Assistance Center's "Directions 90: The Spring Collection" offers seven support groups for students who may be in need. All of these groups are free and confidentiality is maintained.

This Spring's line-up of on (or nearby) campus support groups include: Gay and Lesbian Issues, Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Mothers Without Custody, Separating/Divorcing Students, Adult Children of Alcoholics, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA). For all but the NA and AA groups you need only call 948-6025 to get information on when and where the groups are meeting. Information on AA groups can be secured by calling 234-5390 or 652-4400. Information on the Narcotics Anonymous group may be secured by calling 233-3733 or 652-4400.

There are many support groups in the community. Frequently, there are

multiple meetings at multiple sites to accommodate very busy schedules and needs. A current list of support groups in the greater Harrisburg area is posted periodically on the Counseling Services Bulletin Board outside the Student Assistance Center, Olmsted W-117. You may also call CONTACT at 652-4400 to find out where there may be a support group to meet your particular needs. Central Pennsylvania is blessed with many agencies and counseling services offering a comprehensive variety of support groups. Professional Counselors in the SAC, the Blue Pages in the phone book and Contact, are just a few places you can find a helpful support group. Good Luck.

Democracy is not always an Endorsement for Capitalism.

ELMER N. LEAR

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THE CELEBRATED British statesman Edmund Burke-gifted orator, Sage conservative, an friend of the American colonists-introduced the expression, "the dissidence of dissent." The present writer finds it most fitting to apply this term in analyzing the current upheaval in Central Europe. Those leading the struggle to shake free from the Communist grip obviously are one with the camp of dissent. They reflect the outworn slogans of orthodox Marxism, do battle with determination and valor to overthrow the oppressive tyrants, and insist on nothing short of freedom. We in the United States have been their inspiration and we rejoice in their successes. Our readiness to assist them in their drive toward liberation takes the form not only of words but of pledges to provide financial support in their Herculean task of reconstruction.

Why then dissidence? The disagreement arises from an all too pat assumption that the battle for democracy carries with it an uncritical endorsement of capitalism. While it is true that free enterprise and the market do

not guarantee it and sometimes work against it. Let us not forget that on the eve of World War I, both the Kaiser's Germany and the Tsar's Russia - despite vestiges of feudalism- were essentially capitalistic. So, also, have been South Africa and the dictatorial regimes of Panama, Paraguay, and some other Latin America countries. It is the automatic linkage of the political and economic spheres that demands closer examination

At the very outset, we must recognize that the actuality of pure free enterprise is a rarity, if not unadulterated myth. When the United States undertakes to bail out either the Chrysler Corp. or subsidize agriculture - all at taxpayers expense- we encounter a radical departure from capitalist doctrine. These charitable and tender-hearted actions may very well serve the general welfare, but they are also clearly in the service of special interest. Whenever the public cushions private risk-taking, it converts venture capitalism into collective security.

What about government regulation of commerce, finance, and industry? Do patriotic Americans wish to stand by idly, while unskworthy military

aircraft and unbattleworthy tanks constitute our first lines of defense? To denounce regulation as "socialistic" may be the tactics of scoundrels, obsessed only with amassing unlimited gains. These are the malefactors of great wealth, evading paying their tax obligations by devising ingenious tax shelters.

How shall we regard the inside trading on Wall Street, the scandalous manipulations on the Chicago Commodities Market, the string of hostile corporate take-overs that enhance national productivity not a whit? Free enterprise - or the voracious piranha devouring the trusting public? What of our national resources, God's gift to America? In the idolatry of capitalism, do we passively tolerate pollution of our air, water, and land - be it from dumping industrial contaminants, spilling oil on our beaches, deforesting our precious timber lands? Indeed, in our shining country, we witness the spectacle of the homeless, the medically uninsured turned away from hospitals, youth of the lower middle class unable to afford higher education.

Dare we mention the bureaucratic corruption of an unsupervised Housing and Urban Development, dare we

allure to the daunting nightmare of drugs or the purgatory of our over crowded prisons? Can we tolerate the vanity and smugness of confusing big business hype with honest enterprise?

While proud of our achievements, let us assist those dissidents who prefer "socialism with a human face" while deploring the hard line Stalinism of the Romanian model. Let us learn from the welfare experiences of those nations who revere democracy but exhibit a social compassion. Genuine competition is admirable, but so is cooperative enterprise. Do not forget that the free trade-union movement of Poland marched in the vanguard of those consumed by an unquenchable thirst for democracy. If the students of China and Burma - along with those of East Germany and Yugoslavia - favor a mixed economy and social security, let us cheer them on. The American federal system encourages experimentation. Why not a free world, united in fellowship if not in ideology? Down with the Berlin Wall of close-minded slogans and un-American arrogance!