

Ask Louanne

The Collegian Advice Column
by Dr. Louanne Barton,
Psychologist



Dear Louanne,

For almost six months now, I have been seeing a girl from Behrend. She's really special to me. I feel really comfortable around her, although every time we go out to a nice restaurant, I have trouble eating. I feel sick to my stomach, and it feels like I'll get sick if I eat or look at food. I almost always get through the salad, but after that is when it starts. Is this a psychological problem (nerves) or could there be something wrong with the salad?

Signed,
Hungry

Dear Hungry,

Actually your problem is psychophysiological, anxiety most likely. Anxiety is a common response to stressful situations, both good and bad. The primitive brain responds to perceived stress by sending messages to both the nervous system and the endocrine system. The hormones start flowing. The thyroid gland, among others, pours out thyroxin which causes butterflies in the stomach. In days of old, the caveman could just drag his woman back to the cave by her hair, thereby utilizing the body's physiological response. Unfortunately, in today's society we just have to sit and stew in our juices.

I would suggest you practice relaxation to dampen down the system. This can be done by taking long, slow, deep breaths and letting go of all the muscles in your body. Now as you're sprawled out across the table, start counteracting any negative, anxious thoughts such as, "How am I going to pay the bill?" with a positive affirmation like, "I am calm, cool, and relaxed. I am truly a great guy, and any girl would be lucky to be here with me tonight."

On the other hand, maybe I've gotten too carried away with this psychological analysis. Your nausea could be just a simple conditioned response like Pavlov's dog, only you don't salivate. Maybe you had a bad experience in a nice restaurant when you were a child. Maybe the salad itself is the stimulus. Did you ever get sick on salad? Why not try soup instead?

Anytime,
Louanne.

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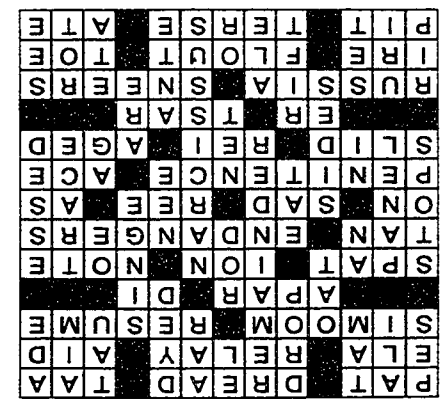
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PUZZLE SOLUTION

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- 50 Swiss canton
- 51 Deposit
- 52 Sudsy brew
- 54 Japanese outcast
- 55 Decay
- 56 Diocese
- 59 Either

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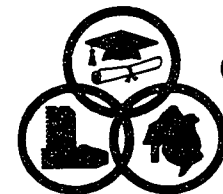
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