

"PEOPLE OFTEN SAY THAT THIS OR THAT PERSON HAS NOT YET FOUND HIMSELF. BUT THE SELF IS NOT SOMETHING ONE FINDS, IT IS SOMETHING ONE CREATES."

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# The Chatter

ISSUE 5

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Mirror, Mirror..**
- **Tips for Improving Self-Confidence**
- **Mary's Story**
- **What's Eating You?**
- **Miss Independent**
- **"Stand"**

*"Skin is beautiful, don't ruin it with scars because your life isn't beautiful. Once life becomes beautiful to you again, your skin won't be so beautiful."*  
-Unknown



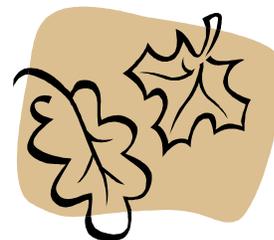
## Why So Serious?

BY: MRS. REED

As a newspaper staff, we collectively decide what to put in each addition of our paper. To us, a large majority of the newspaper content should be text; otherwise it would resemble a magazine. Since we are not photographers—but rather journalists—we want our newspaper to be based in writing. We want our articles and stories to be relevant and entertaining but also well-written.

Up to this point, our newspapers have been lighthearted, with a few serious articles mixed in. This time, we decided to tackle some serious issues that teens are facing today. In this issue, you will find articles about self-mutilation, eating disorders, drug use, and self-confidence. We are not doctors or experts in any of these fields. We are simply a newspaper staff that feels that everyday teenage problems are

not brought to the surface enough. As journalists, we feel that it is our responsibility to shed light on such serious subjects. We are not in the business of satisfying every reader, but we do hope that some of what is included in this issue is enlightening for at least a few.



## No Harm to Self-Harm?

BY: KAILA RUDD

When most high school kids joke about "cutting themselves" they usually don't think twice about it. I have heard kids say things like "Yeah, I'm just going to go cut myself now," and roll their eyes like it's no big deal; after all, they were just pretending, right? The truth is that one in every two hundred girls and guys have actually dealt with their pain in that manner; in other words, at least one or two of the people you go to school with has more than likely cut themselves or used some other kind of self-harm to cope with pain.

There are many different types of self-harm—cutting, burning, pulling out hair, even the prevention of the healing of wounds, are all considered self-harm. Cutting, however, is the most common form in

the United States. People think that anyone who causes harm to themselves may as well be considered crazy. They don't take time to understand what's really going on or why the person does what they do. The people who suffer from self-harm usually don't want to die, as many people assume, but want to find a way to cope with whatever is going on with their life just so they can live. It's usually not done for attention, either; in fact, the person usually tries to hide what they've done from others because they feel embarrassed or ashamed. Many people who use self-injury as a way to cope actually seem "normal" on the outside.

Although it isn't the way anyone should have to cope with pain, it's the only outlet some people know how to deal. It shouldn't be thrown around as a way to get laughs from your

friends, like I know many of us do on a daily basis. Last year, I used cutting as a way to deal with depression. Looking at me on the outside, you probably never would have guessed it. Hearing people joke about it like it's nothing actually makes me mad, and I always end up walking away or staying silent instead of saying anything; but it's time everyone speaks up. Self-harm is a real problem and we need to address it. If you hear someone use it in a rude or "playful" way—say something. If you think you know someone who's suffering from it, visit [http://helpguide.org/mental/self\\_injury.htm](http://helpguide.org/mental/self_injury.htm) to learn what they're dealing with and how to help them. Use your voice and speak up, because someone may be depending on you to help them.



*“We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be.”*  
-Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

## Mirror, Mirror, On the Wall...

BY: HALEY STRATTON

Self image, self confidence, and self esteem: all three of these words are connected to our self-reflections.

It seems like in our high school everyone worries about their self image. Actually, teens in general are notorious for fixating on self-image. What does it mean exactly? Is self image how you see yourself? What you think you look like? How you see your personality? What kind of person you think you are? What you believe others think of you? These are some questions I think every person has asked themselves at one point in time. It's a shame that students at this high school are so judgmental. Is it really fair for us to treat others this way? Why are we always so quick to give our opinion about someone else's clothes, friends, or even personality? Often people judge others

without consideration for the feelings of others and not really even know the person they are ridiculing. Some people target others because they are insecure with themselves. They are attempting to take the spotlight off of themselves and shine it on someone else, even if it brings cruelty. Being bullied, made fun of, or talked about happens every single day even in our school.

Self esteem is a positive attitude towards living. Low self esteem comes from poor self image. Do you think all students have a positive attitude on living? My answer to that is “no.” Although I wish it could be different, I fear it never will be because we have so many students that want to put others down. Being aware of people's feelings and being careful what you say are very important things that we need to remember. Every person in this world has feel-

ings and they can be hurt. No one is perfect. Acting yourself, recognizing and accepting people for who they are, and not letting others bring you down are good rules to follow. Live your life to the fullest no matter what; don't regret how you treated others.

Having self confidence and being confident doesn't necessarily mean being cocky—it means to feel secure in what you're doing and who you are. When you look at yourself in the mirror, take pride in who you are; after all, you are the only YOU that has ever existed in the history of the world. Be proud of yourself but remember to treat others as you would like to be treated as well.

## Ten Ways to Boost Your Self-Confidence

10. **Dress sharp** (it makes you feel better about yourself)
9. **Walk faster** (it gets your circulation moving)
8. **Consciously think about your posture** (sit up straight)
7. **Work out** (a toned body and healthy heart boosts confidence)
6. **Sit in the front row in class** (it shows that you are not afraid to have others see how you behave in class.)
5. **Create personal commercials in your head** (tell yourself what you like about yourself—it's the power of positive thinking)
4. **Show gratitude** (when a friend, parent or teacher does something for you, say thanks)
3. **Compliment other people** (take the focus off of yourself for a change)
2. **Speak up** (do not be ashamed about your opinions; let your voice be heard)
1. **Focus on contribution** (nothing makes us feel better about ourselves than when we give to others. A quick way to escape self-loathing is to look around and see all of those who are much worse off than we are.)

## Mary's Story

Found BY: KRISTIN SALMONS

Mary had anorexia for thirteen years and it took her eight years to recover. After her recovery she went to school and is now a graduate student in Speech Communication at the University of Illinois.

Here is Mary's story:

"My anorexia became full blown at thirteen. I battled food issues for years before that, however. Mom was always on one diet or another, and I often was hooked into becoming her dieting partner--and often times, competitor. Both of our food struggles, I see now, only diverted our--and the entire family's--attention from the emotional turmoil permeating our household. Being the oldest of two girls (both my sister and I were adopted as infants) I became the convenient whipping post for my parents' outbursts of anger, insecurities, and God knows what else. I was hit a lot and verbally abused--maybe even more than (I have been told by therapist that sexual abuse is a strong possibility). Although I remember very little of my childhood, I do recall--in

general terms--always being yelled at, blamed, hit, disciplined or criticized. An easy alliance to form with my mom, however, came from the dieting.

At puberty, at "lucky 13", my parents cracked down and tried to totally control my life--my friends, my boyfriend, my schedule, everything. That control pushed me over the edge. Dieting and over-exercising became an obsession for me. I dropped twenty-five lbs. in about a month...my parents thought it resulted from an operation I underwent to have my wisdom teeth removed, after which I couldn't eat much (talk about denial!). Another important part of my drive to starve was revenge. I delighted in seeing my parents' reactions to my starving. It was a mixture of anger (because they couldn't control it) and fear/hurt/pain (a fine exchange, IMO, for all the pain they caused me). I no longer felt fully in touch with my emotions...but a part of me, I know, not only wanted to starve (for control reasons), but felt I deserved to (for self-hate reasons). I spent the most of my adolescence (and beyond) suppressing my feelings or journaling them.

To speed things up a bit here, I was forced into an inpatient treatment program at fifteen, I gained ten pounds, and was out

in a month. Virtually no changes had occurred. I simply kept my anorexia in check, as to not be hospitalized again. Two additional years of high school and two more years of college passed before I was ready to face reality--that I had merely managed to maintain my low weight and hadn't faced any core issues related to the AN. I started counseling my third year of college, and after my fourth/final year decided to admit myself to another in-patient program. After a month there, I made several major breakthroughs, and considered myself on the road to recovery. I continued to follow that road upon coming to graduate school by finding a private therapist and support group. After three years of that support, my therapist moved away and my support group dissolved. With their help, I had managed to arrive at a healthy weight, dramatically curb my over-exercising, get on a balanced meal plan, forever forgo diet pills, and, most importantly, Start loving myself."

Mary has lost some of the ground that she has gained over the years and now counts on her closest friends to help her out. She believes that the easiest way to recover is to be able to relate to someone with the same sickness.

<http://www.caringonline.com/feelings/byvictims/mary.ntm>

## You Are What You Eat

BY: AMANDA KREAL

Eating disorders are so common in America that one or two out of every 100 students will struggle with one. Look around: that means at least ten students at Peebles High School have either suffered from this disease or may suffer from this in their future. Eating disorders are more than just going on a diet to lose weight or trying to make sure you exercise everyday. They are extremes in eating behavior—the diet that never ends and gradually gets more restrictive, for example. The most common types of eating disorder are anorexia and bulimia. But other food-related disorders, like binge eating, body image, and food phobias, are showing up more frequently than they used to.

People with anorexia have an extreme fear of weight gain and distorted view of their body size and shape. As a result, they can't maintain a normal body weight. Some people with anorexia restrict their food intake by dieting, fasting, or excessive exercise. They hardly eat at all—and the small amount of food they do eat becomes an obsession.

Bulimia is similar to anorexia. With bulimia, a person eats a lot of food and then tries to make up for it in extreme ways, such as forced vomiting or excessive exercise, to prevent the weight gained—and as many times as they purge their food it also becomes an obsession.

Similar to anorexia and bulimia is binge eating. A person will binge regularly on food (more than three times a week). But, unlike the other eating disorders, a person with binge eating disorder does not try to "make up for it" by purging the food. They just eat and eat and eat all the time either out of boredom because they have nothing else to do, due to low self esteem, or as a way of relieving their stress.

Eating disorders are serious medical illnesses. They often go along with other problems such as stress, anxiety, depression, and a substance abuse. People with eating disorders also can have serious physical health problems, such as heart conditions or kidney failure. People who weigh at least 15% less than the normal weight for their height may not have enough body fat to keep their organs and other body parts healthy. In severe cases, eating disorders can lead to severe malnutrition and even death.

People without eating disorders wonder "How could anyone do that?" It is like many other conditions in that it is hard to comprehend how a person could have such unhealthy eating habits that it puts their life in danger. It is happening all around us though, whether we recognize it or not. Because of this, students shouldn't joke about it, or accuse others of having the disease. Telling a classmate you're going to go vomit after lunch, jokingly, because of something silly they said towards you doesn't make it right. There are people who really suffer from this disease and maybe they're standing right with you and you don't even know that they are suffering. Just realize that situations like this happen more than you would think, and for us to sit back and just joke about it doesn't help the cause. If we are what we eat, we must all work to develop a healthy relationship with the food we eat. Like other things in our lives, we don't want our food to control the way we think about ourselves.

[http://kidshealth.org/teen/food\\_fitness/problems/eat\\_disorder.html#](http://kidshealth.org/teen/food_fitness/problems/eat_disorder.html#)

# Miss Independent...Miss Self-Sufficient

BY: MRS. REED

My dad says that when I was in junior high, I morphed into a totally different person. While before, I was a quiet submissive red-headed girl, I began to transform into an entirely new person—opinionated, passionate and strong. I can't really explain this transformation, but I do remember it happening. It started in the sixth grade when I had an awesome teacher who made learning relevant to me for the first time. Her class was not about memorization, but rather about using education to take your life to new heights. In her class, we studied current events, talked about the upcoming presidential election, used advanced vocabulary, and connected with our fellow classmates. Later, in junior high, a girl moved to our school from West Union and she quickly became one of my best friends. Her ideas were liberal and her voice was outspoken; she inspired me but I knew I didn't want to just mimic her. That teacher and that particular friend awakened another self in me – a thinking self. Over the course of a few years, those people inspired me to stop going through the motions of life, set some goals for myself, and think about what I really believed rather than what I had been told.

Throughout the years following my middle school experience one characteristic that emerged in my personality was a strong sense of independence. I was the oldest child in the family, but up to that point I had always allowed by parents, friends, and church to do my thinking for me. One day, I realized that I needed to quit depending on others to determine what I thought about people, politics, religion, and life in general. Around me I could see the roles of women changing. By that time, most women were accepted in the work place and were encouraged to go to college, get a degree, and set high ambitions. I wasn't sure what I wanted to be, but I knew that I never wanted to be controlled by another force. I didn't want a boyfriend who told me what to do, I didn't want my parents telling me how to think, and I didn't want a substance –like a drug- to have power over me. This stubbornness for independence sometimes caused turmoil in my life, but it also saved me from some very dangerous situations as well. Needless to say, I was not a perfect teenager, but as I look around at some of our high schoolers today, I do not see the stubborn-

ness that I had (and still have). I see teens changing their dress, habits, and attitudes because of those around them. Whether they are mimicking a celebrity on television or an older high schooler who they believe is cool, they are willing to sacrifice their independence in the name of fitting in. True, it is difficult to not be controlled by outside forces; all of us in some way are a product of our environment. We naturally want to please others, to feel accepted, to have friends, and to feel successful. We need to be careful though that we do not sacrifice integrity for the sake of someone else. A poster in my room reads that "integrity is doing what's right even when no one is looking." At the end of the day, the only person's approval that you should be worried about is your own. I am not advocating selfishness nor am I advocating a carpe diem, forget your responsibilities, state of mind. I am advocating individuality. Think about who you are and who you want to be. As Charles Hughes once said: "When we lose the right to be different, we lose the right to be free."

## Stand

SUBMITTED BY: ELIZABETH POLLEY

If I am not courageous, who will be?

If I am not courteous, who is?

If I do not stand up for my beliefs, who will?

If I am not fair, who will be?

If I am not faithful, who is?

If I do not stand up for my beliefs, who will?

If I am not honest, who will be?

If I am not hopeful, who is?

If I do not stand up for my beliefs, who will?

If I am not loyal, who will be?

If I am not loving, who is?

If I do not stand up for my beliefs, who will?

If I am not strong, who will be?

If I am not smart, who is?

If I do not stand up for my beliefs, who will?

If I am not yielding to His will, who will be?

If I am not yearning for His Grace, who is?

If I do not stand up for my beliefs, who will?

If my God is for me, who can stand against me?



Don't forget the SHL Cheerleading Competition is here at PHS tomorrow, November 6.



Time: 10:00 AM

Come support our junior high and high school cheerleaders.