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Standard Edition

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When I wrote “[The Right Term](#)” 3 months ago, I had no idea it would be the beginning of a whole new chapter of self discovery in my life; and when I wrote “[Couples Councelling](#)” the month before that, I did not know that I was about to embark on a journey of emotional discovery like I never had before...

In the months following those articles, several things happened that I was just too caught up in to talk about. I graduated from [Drexel University](#), my girlfriend broke up with me, and I finished all those books my father recommended. There was a lot to do, a lot to get used to, and a lot to get over; and in the end, this meant, there was a lot to learn.

That coupled with a shortage of inspiration and excess of self-absorption, is what eventually lead to the sudden 3 month hiatus that I took from writing these editions. But now I'm back, and as you can imagine, there is plenty to tell you.

The 3 Month Lapse

Starting with the stuff that happened back in May, I participated in the **REACH program** like I usually do, and had some interesting take backs from that. I wrote an article about it then, but 1 article wasn't enough to justify an edition so I kept it aside.

Then in June, I participated in the **Drexel Senior Experience** by attending a business etiquette dinner in Center City, Philadelphia. Interestingly enough, my greatest take back from that event was not etiquette, but a keen take on something I call "**The Class Divide.**"

Finally in July, the break up happened and I was too depressed to write anything for a while. Now we're in September, and I'm finally feeling like writing again. But in the spirit of "waste nothing, want nothing" I am including all my previous articles for you to read. Forgive me, if they sound a little out of place, but keep in mind that they were written in prior months.

Enabling The Disabled

For the 2nd time this year, I participated in the REACH for college program run by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. During the program, there were a number of recurring topics that came up in discussion. One in particular, the idea that disabled people *need* help, caught my attention when one of the mentees coined the phrase "Disabled, does not mean unable."

“Disabled, does not mean unable!”

Whether it's the dwarf at the grocery store who prefers to jump rather than ask for a lift, or the solitary paraplegic who considers rolling himself down the stairs, handicapped people everywhere seem to have a resistance to help that surpasses all understanding. All understanding of the "able," that is.

But it wasn't until I spoke to one of the REACH parents, that I realised that not everyone knows why this exists.

Enabling The Disabled

The reason is simple: **self-respect**. No self-respecting person likes to feel pitied. Now what does pity have to do with help? A lot more than you might think. Because pity, is the price disabled people pay for help. As every request for assistance, is followed by pity and sympathy.

See naturally, human beings sympathise with those they consider less fortunate than themselves. But to the distress of the disabled, this comes off as pity; and those who deliberately try not to seem pitying, end up making clumsy attempts at being considerate. Overall making any request for assistance, a painful one. As a result, over time, disabled people learn to avoid asking for help and reject it even when offered.

To be fair however, most people's hearts are in the right place, they genuinely want to help - and their reactions while unappreciated, are not entirely unwarranted. Because truth be told, disabled people do need help. The question is, how *can* you help?

Enabling The Disabled

Again, the answer is simple: help by enabling us to help ourselves. As the saying goes, give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.

“Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime

Disabled people may not always appreciate a helping hand, but that is not to say we do not appreciate help at all. The dwarf who cannot reach the top shelf would likely be much more grateful if you brought him a step-ladder, than if you tried to pick him up. The paraplegic on the other hand, may prefer directions to the nearest elevator.

While it is also possible to learn the art of tactfully offering your direct assistance, it can be difficult to get it right. Instead, I suggest this approach. Because this way, your help will be appreciated and you minimise the risk of creating an awkward situation.

The Class Divide

I have never felt as discriminated against as I did today. Today, under the guise of the [Drexel Senior Experience](#), I was invited to a business etiquette dinner. This dinner took place at one of the most exclusive and prestigious city clubs in the Philadelphia area and while I will not name names, it should suffice to say that my experience at this club was an eye-opener.

The club was very lovely: wooden floors, classy furniture, an extensive library on the 2nd floor..., and the dinner served later that evening was lovely as well - with impeccable service to boot. In fact, my feeling of discrimination cannot be justified by any of the actions or attitudes of the club's staff and if not for the strong impression it left on me, I would not be writing this article right now.

As I said, the service was impeccable. The servers were well mannered, and the maitre-d' maintained a visible presence on the floor while directing his subordinates like a master conductor at the orchestra.

The Class Divide

He was a white man; perhaps in his mid-late 30's; dressed smartly in a black tux with twin-tails. His servers came out one by one, they were equally well dressed, and other than the occasional "you're welcome," they did their jobs and kept their mouths shut. The only sign of their presence, the coming and going of the dishes on the table.

All was as it should be, and the dinner progressed smoothly. But upon the appearance of the 4th server on the floor, I began to feel a little uncomfortable. The first server had been black. As was the second, and the third. Now for the fourth time, here was another smartly dressed black waiter on his way to serve. Did no other races work the tables in this joint? No Mexicans or Asians? No *other* white men!?

It didn't help matters that every one of these servers reminded me of Morgan Freeman in *Driving Ms. Daisy*. The picture of a happy black slave.

The Class Divide

But just as Morgan Freeman was not actually a slave in that movie, neither was this monochrome display the result of discrimination. This is what my reasoning told me, yet my feelings shouted something different.

In that place, at that time, it seemed to me that there was no way this all-black waiting staff was the result of chance. It was an outcome of choice. The club must have a hiring policy that favours black waiters! They must enjoy having black people at their command! After all, this club has a long history dating back to the times of slavery. It would not be strange at all, if their predominantly wealthy white members enjoyed the feeling of superiority given by a black waiting staff.

I didn't blame the club, I blamed their customers. I blamed the wealthy white men who I imagined snubbing the lower black classes.

The Class Divide

But that's it isn't it? Why imagine wealthy white men and not wealthy black ones. If the situation were reversed and it was an all-white waiting staff, would my mental representation change? Would I think of wealthy black men instead? Probably not...

Because the truth of the matter is that nobody would picture wealthy black men, and why should they? There is only one black face in the entire **Forbes 400**, and she doesn't even make the top 100. (Oprah at #139).

Intentional or not, there exists a fine line that separates the whites from the blacks in this country, and that line is class. It is a line of affluence, influence, prominence, and prestige. I saw that line today my friends. I saw it, and I thought, "Today, I have seen the class divide."

Break Up Policies

Some of you may remember my article about “[Becoming Jaded](#)” written around this time last year. In summary, it was about how men go about breaking women's hearts because they are driven by powerful libidos; the emotional damage this causes, and how it may eventually lead the women to becoming jaded about love. I urged the men to be more careful, and the women to be more hopeful, because true love does exist: despite the heart break, the hurt, and the break-ups. So this time, I want to talk a little bit about those break-ups, and how we handle them.

You see in my short life, I have had my own tiny share of rejections and break-ups, and I have noticed that some common approaches exist in the world. Usually, a break-up results in one of 3 things:

1. You never want to see or speak to each other again
2. You remain friends, but an awkwardness forms in your relationship.
3. You truly remain friends; having left the past behind.

Break Up Policies

To my dismay however, I have found that this last option (#3), is rarely ever the case. Most people opt for #1 or #2, and may intend #3, yet end up back at #2. So people like me who actually prefer #3, are either hard to find, or come off like stalkers because we can't understand why a friendship that existed prior to a relationship, should die or be damaged forever because of it.

Certainly, it is not easy to get over someone you've loved, or even forget the pain they've caused, but life goes on, and someday that pain goes away. When it does, that person you loved will still be there, and will still possess the qualities that you loved about them. So why is it, that we feel the need to create an ever-lasting distance? A friend of mine tried to explain it to me, and her explanation was this:

“**I don't talk to them not because I hate them, but because there's no reason to poke the bear.**”

Meaning: Why should I willingly revisit past hurts, or revisit them on people without cause?

Break Up Policies

Which begs the question:



If you are over it, why do you assume the other person isn't?

Still, I understand the hurt and pain that comes from a broken heart; and I even understand that in some cases it can take weeks, months, years, or even an entire lifetime to get over. But as long as you get over it, why would you think that they wouldn't? Think about that for a bit...

Now, as long as the person you dated didn't become a different person during the relationship, chances are that they still possess qualities you like. With the relationship now ended, it is also clear that they possess qualities you don't like (assuming that you initiated the break-up). Qualities that you either were not aware of, or you thought to be inconsequential before the relationship.

Break Up Policies

Even still, the relationship is over now; and as a result you know more about this person than you did before. They also know more about you. Moreover, not only do you now know each other better, you also know yourself better as well. You know more precisely what you can and cannot deal with in a relationship - and you know what you will and will not take when dealing with this person.

So quite frankly, your friendship and all future relationships ought to benefit from, instead of lose out to, the experience. But instead what happens? The friendship goes to the shitter, and future relationships suffer the consequences. All because of baggage that we carry over from the hurt.

Which brings me back to our 3 policies:

Break Up Policies

1. You never want to see or speak to each other again
2. You remain friends, but an awkwardness forms in your relationship.
3. You truly remain friends; having left the past behind.

Clearly with **#1**, no active healing will ever take place. Only time will dull the pain, and whatever baggage came from that relationship will go right on with you to the next one. That is, unless the next one is after enough time that the wounds have healed. In the meantime, that previous friendship ceases to exist forever.

With **#2**, there is as equal a chance to end up as true friends, as there is to end up as nothing; and how you end up may mitigate or exacerbate the baggage you carry. So it's probably the safest bet. But if and until you end up in one state or the other, you are in an awkward kind of limbo where certain topics are off-limits, certain statements may be read into, and every face-to-face interaction is a bit wierd.

Break Up Policies

Finally, the third (and my personal favourite), seems to be the one with the highest risk, and highest rewards. If it does work out, you gain a friend with whom you can talk about anything and everything. A friend who has probably experienced the extremes of your good and bad sides, and a friend who knows what they will and will not take from you - and isn't afraid to give you shit if you cross those lines.

...and if it doesn't, you either end up in an awkward limbo, a dead friendship, or worse. Because you know what they say:

“Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned.

Nor hell a fury, like a woman scorned.

Now I'm no gambler, but it looks like going for #3 not only has the best reward, but also 2 safety nets to save you from hell. So even if I can't appeal to your sense of love and forgiveness, I shall appeal with practicality: Keep those you've loved close. It's better for you, and for the rest of mankind. :)

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So please don't. I don't want to sue anybody.