



Great Vision

Great Coverage

The Gazette '22-'23

Vol. 86

February 2023

Issue 3

Accept Yourself First

By **Tori Wesley**

It's that time of the year again! Boxes of chocolates fill almost every store. Couples are hugging and kissing more than usual. For others, this is a lonely time. However, the more popular types of love overshadow the most important one: love for oneself.

No, self-love is not referring to being narcissistic. It means someone is accepting of themselves, flaws and all. While doing so may be difficult, it is possible. Several methods can be used to reach this point.

To start, a list of accomplishments should be made. Focusing on flaws and mistakes is too easy, especially since many of us view self-criticism as "being realistic." As helpful as mistakes can be, dwelling on them too much results in feeling miserable. Take, for example, Farnoosh Brock, creator of the website, Prolific Living.

"Even at the height of praise and approval, I would find a hundred faults with myself," recounts Brock.

Keeping track of successes is a reminder of how much has been done well. In return, one will feel like a more accomplished person.

Speaking of mistakes, forgiveness of self for past errors is also crucial. Listing positives can be helpful (as said before). On the other hand, a person cannot truly move forward without re-evaluating and learning to accept the moments where they did something wrong. The sooner this is done, the easier it is to move forward in life.

Another vital part of achieving self-acceptance is the people in one's life. Friends are an influence on not only the actions of a person, but the way someone feels about themselves. Being with a social group that encourages personal growth provides a safe environment. This way, someone feels free to find and learn to accept themselves without being pressured to do things a certain way.

There are a variety of different ways to become comfortable with oneself. Each one works differ-

ently and takes a differing amount of time for everyone. We're all our own people, after all. Despite that, anyone can learn to love themselves. It just takes patience and perseverance.

"Self-acceptance is something we can nurture."



Inspirational Twitter post

Why It's Okay to Be Single on Valentine's Day

By **Lili Stokes and Luq Ssengo**

Valentine's day is customarily a day of the year when people celebrate love and each other. Sophomore Malik Benson says, "it's the only day out of the year for caring and love".

This is a time when people in relationships buy presents and publicize their love for one another. But for the people who are single, what's special about Valentine's day? Why is okay to not be in a relationship on Valentine's day? With the special day approaching many people have different feelings about being single.

Benson feels relieved when seeing friends on social media with their significant other.

"Considering there's lots of other lonely guys", in other words Benson isn't alone in his loneliness. On the other hand, the feeling of obligation to romance with someone on that specific day, is perfectly normal.

Though, there are so many other activities to do on the holiday! You can hang out with friends and go out. Junior Deshaya Bonner says, "Go with friends and I will buy myself some candy."

Happy
Valentine's
Day to
myself.
I love you.

WWW.LIVELIFENAPP.COM

You can hang out with your parents or your grandparents, really anyone who you care for or "vibe" with. If you still feel inadequate for not receiving a gift, you can do a gift exchange. Sophomore Brianna Speaks says, "You can have multiple valentines".

And you are certainly no worse off by being single this Valentines than you are any other day of the year. Celebrate what the holiday is really about, love! That doesn't have to be with a significant other. Have fun, don't think too hard into. Enjoy your Valentine's Day!

Articles originally published February 2019

The Gazette

Instagram: @fhsgazette_

Teen Relationships

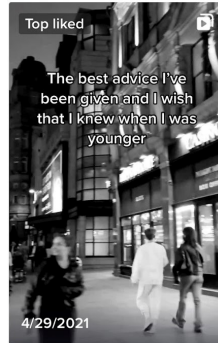
By Dannah Tinio

Secret admirers, prom dates, homecoming dates, sneaking out to see your lover, and high school sweethearts are all parts of a teenager's idealization of romance. Movies tend to incline a teen's want for a relationship but nowadays social media has the ability to do this, too. Especially the infamous social media app, Tiktok.

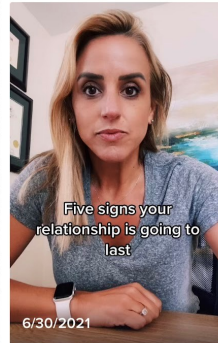
Relationship videos are considerably popular on Tiktok, meaning they reach a good amount of viewers and could possibly affect them in a certain way.

"Sometimes, I wonder how people can find someone that fits them." Not only did freshman Bea Montances explain how she was curious about people finding the perfect match, but she also wondered when it would be her turn.

Similar to Bea, junior Fiona Durante talked about how she could feel a sense of hope that love will come to her eventually, but in a way, the relationship-based Tiktoks make her feel lonely.



...#relationshipadvice
#quote #fyp #quotes...
xgilham 3.1M



...#relationshipadvice
#relationshipexpert...
racheldealto 129.1K



8/31/2021



8/18/2021

The specific types of videos posted under #relationshipadvice & #relationshiptips

Because of how these Tiktoks made them feel, I also questioned if it made them want to be in a relationship now, whether or not it was something they've never majorly thought about before. "There are times where I have wanted a relationship, but at the same time I feel like I'm not ready for it. It never hurts to always reach out and try," Bea disclosed.

Despite this, we should still be reminded that we are students in high school who shouldn't be too focused on our love life. "It's like a sense of them growing up and experimenting for themselves, so they know what they want in the future," Fiona said when describing her thoughts about high school relationships. Bea showed an identical response explaining how she believes high school relationships can show you what you look for in a person later on in life.

It's good to know that it's okay to want or to admire being in a relationship, but it shouldn't be a top priority or worry that it causes you to feel sad all the time simply because you aren't in one.

Hashtags

relationshipadvice

4.4B views

relationshiptips

4.6B views

relationshipcoach

223.9M views

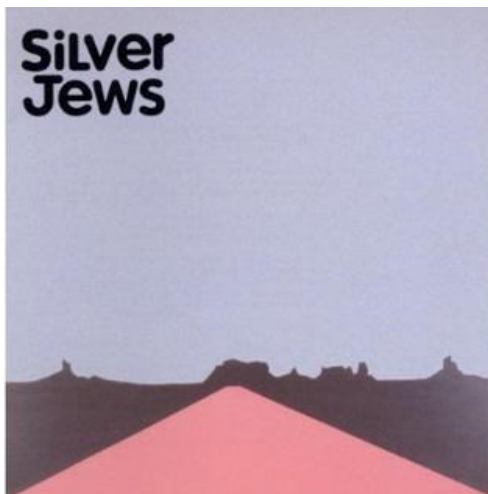
With 4 billion views under relationship advice and relationship tip videos, we can assume just how much people enjoy and find this content useful.



The high school relationship we all idealized when we were younger! (Troy and Gabriella from Highschool Musical)

Breaking Down Life One Guitar Twang at a Time

By William Taylor



American Water album art

Image from wikipedia

"I'm gonna shine out in the wild kindness / And hold the world to its word" (from "The Wild Kindness")

The first time I listened to *American Water* I was out in DC helping my grandma clean her house out. I was busy moving trash into a dumpster on the other side of the road in full hazmat suit, so I wasn't giving my full attention to the album. It was mainly background noise for the day. Once it was over and I had a chance for a break, I sat down and wrote a comically short review of the album, summarizing it as "A nice slice of Americana" and awarding a low 8. Now that I've had a year to gestate my thoughts on this record, I consider my first impressions to be a gross injustice on what David Berman was able to create on *American Water*.

American Water is David Berman's heart and soul. It's one of the richest, tenderest, and most unique albums ever recorded. 48 minutes of one oddball breaking down life one guitar twang at a time.

With their first two albums, Silver Jews set itself apart from not only *Pavement*'s shadow, but from indie rock as a whole. "Starlite Walker" is just as raw and uncooked as "Slanted and Enchanted," but more willing to take itself apart in reflec-

tive, static songwriting. Following, "The Natural Bridge" divorced that vagrancy all together for dreamy, crepuscular tracks even more depressing than before, reflecting Berman's drug-fueled depression. *American Water* was the break in the tradition. In the words of Berman, he "wanted to make a record that wasn't some terrible, big, painful experience. I wanted to make records like other people make records, where you're having fun when you're doing it."

And you can hear them having fun. Like the pale blue sky engulfing the album art, *American Water* shines with the day, unlike any of SJ's other works til then. The immortal starting track "Random Rules" can always bubble untapped happiness out of me with its quaint trumpet horns. Really, the entire album is quaint. No instrument feels like it's going too far from home. It makes it feel so cozy, like a copy of your childhood house you can take anywhere and retreat to whenever you need it.

The way *American Water* can so easily muster any emotion out of me is insane. You got your fun songs, then your fun ones that are actually mega-depressing, then the straight depressing ones, and then you got your weird ones that can never seem to be deciphered. A lot of Berman's work falls into the weird category. It's one of the many things I love about this record. It feels like songs are some strange bizarro-version of standard rock/country tunes; still recognizable, but with plenty of bends and turns that leaves you wondering what it is you listened to and how they formed it. I think "People" is the best example of this; a demented funky parody/satire/whatever of country. Songs are so easy to lose yourself in. All it takes is one weird hook to get stuck in your brain, and pretty soon you'll be swearing it's the greatest song on earth. Some of my favorites from this record, "Buckingham Rabbit," "Smith & Jones Forever," "Federal Dust," were originally songs I considered alright but weird or strange, until I kept getting them stuck in my head again and again and learned to love all the

bends they take me through. I feel like, despite being fairly simple, there's so much of this album you can look through and learn, and I'm only scratching the surface of it. There's a perfect blend of familiarity and idiosyncrasy I've never seen pulled off as perfectly imperfect as on *American Water*.

The true gem of the record lies in Berman's poetry. And I mean poetry; David Berman's lyrics alone could stand as one of humanity's finest works of art. I speculate his background is part of the reason his words land so perfectly. Coming from a Jewish background, and a secular one at that, it gives his take on the culturally-protestant America he set his sights to a fresh and novel charm. As *Vulture* put it in their 2019 retrospection on Berman's life, he was, by all means, a "Jewish Cowboy".

His use of metaphor and poetic devices is abstractly blunt. He coats everything he says in a layer of confusing imagery and cryptic cipher. It creates so many great lyrical gems. "Birds of Virginia / Flying within' ya' / Like background singers, they all come in threes" is one, "If you ask me my name / It's high-low-jack in the game / I can track a single bee to the hive" is another. Many claim that Berman's lyricism is Dadaist in nature, and I can see why. What does it mean to summon honey from a telephone? Why does a federal woman need a municipal man? Why don't they cream in Kansas City? All questions that may never be answered, but the true beauty of Berman's writing is that while the brain may not understand what's being said, the heart knows exactly. You may not understand what grass growing in the ice-box is supposed to represent, but either way, you can feel the neglect in those words. Most of the time, I find that the supposed "great" singer-songwriters work the other way around. I understand what they're saying, but I don't know how to feel about it. Berman was the first lyricist I found that did the opposite, making lyrics both opaque and obvious at the same time.

Continued on next page

Breaking Down Life One Guitar Twang at a Time

By William Taylor

Continued from previous page

And what is at its core is a deeply troubled record, trying its best to see the light at the end of it. It's a theme brilliantly summarized in those opening lines of "Random Rules," "hospitalized for approaching perfection." Throughout *American Water*, there's a constant struggle between choosing to overcome the pain of human existence and letting it overtake you. There are times where Berman and friends feel happy, but they're always touched with a bit of melancholy, like they're just trying to convince themselves that they're ok. Often, though, Berman is forced to carry the weight of the world on his shoulders, asking all the right questions and pointing out all the flaws in the world.

Which leads me to a more personal reason why I adore this album. Back in the start of 2022, I got hit with one of the worst depressive episodes in my life. It was some long and dark months that didn't break until May. It made it worse that a very close friendship of mine ended during that time, and I had to deal with those feelings too. Each day I'd wake up already defeated and would come home to do nothing but sleep because I felt too tired to do anything. During that time, music became one of the few escapes I had from the sterile greyness of the day. Everyday, I would play albums to keep me distracted from how much I hated being awake, and one of the albums I always came back to was *American Water*. It wasn't one of my favorite albums during that time, but I found comfort and catharsis from listening to David Berman's personal fight with depression.



David Berman of Silver Jews; photo by Gary Wolstenholme/Getty Images

Now, there were a lot of albums that I also found catharsis in their themes of depression, but what separated *American Water* from *Either/Or* was the everlasting faith of hope Berman held on the record. The last track, "The Wild Kindness," is the most heartbreaking track on the entire record. Through dry air and atmosphere, David Berman seems to finally give into the pain of the world and "shine out in the wild silence". That is, until he reaches the very end, where, in a soft and defeated breath, he declares he's going to shine in the wild kindness and "hold the world to its word." It was the most powerful declaration of life I'd heard. It wasn't some dumb sappy realization that the world is actually beautiful and life was worth it, no. It was a man on his knees choosing to believe in that beauty instead of rejecting it, for no other reason than trust. It was what I needed to

carry on each day. Even as I got more and more jaded and depressed, I kept on going, not because I saw life's beauty, but because I trusted that eventually I'd see it.

It's the greatest tragedy that David Berman couldn't hold that trust in the world like he taught me and countless others. With 2023 having finally arrived, this will mark year 5 without him, and the world grows a little more cold. But David Berman will live on, not only through his timeless work as an artist, but also through the lives he touched through his art. Never has music sounded as alive and real than when Berman started singing in his low deadpan voice and never again will it reach such levels of emotion and heartache. Rest easy, Mr. Berman.

The Gazette Editors:

Lindsay Adjei and Kierra Richardson

Ms. Hodskins, Advisor and Editor-in-Chief

Thanks to Gazette Staff Writers and Contributors:

William Taylor and Dannah Tinnio