

The only way for a woman, as for a man, to find herself, to know herself as a person, is by creative work of her own. There is no other way.

—Betty Friedan

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## In Memoriam: Fallen Soldiers

Since the publishing of our last issue of *Attune*, the world has lost three well-known and influential women activists—Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King, and Betty Friedan.

**Rosa Parks** who is known by some today as “the mother of the Civil Rights Movement” passed away on October 24, 2005, at the age of 92. Parks’ refusal to comply with a Montgomery, Alabama, ordinance which forced African American passengers to give up their bus seats should white passengers request it has been credited with sparking the Montgomery bus boycotts. The boycott brought Parks into association with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and brought the reality of segregation in the southern United States to the attention of the world. The boycott, lasting 382 days, also resulted in the Supreme Court’s banning of legal segregation in public transportation.

Aside from her well-known act of defiance, Mrs. Parks founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development to teach adolescents the history of the Civil Rights Movement. In 1996, President Clinton honored Mrs. Parks with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. After her death, her casket was placed in our nation’s capital making Rosa Parks the first woman to lie in state in Washington, D.C.—a privilege normally reserved for presidents.

**Coretta Scott King**, wife of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and activist in her own right, died on January 30th of this year. As an undergraduate student at Antioch College in Ohio, prior to her association with Dr. King, the young Coretta Scott joined the NAACP as well as the university’s Race Relations and Civil Liberties committees. It was after being awarded a scholarship to the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston that Coretta Scott met Dr. King, who was then a theology student.

Mrs. King staged a series of Freedom Concerts to tell the story of the Civil Rights Movement and to raise funds for Dr. King’s organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. After her husband’s untimely death in Memphis, Mrs. King continued her involvement in civil rights issues, and in 1974 she served as co-chair of the Full Employment Action Council. The Council brought together over a hundred religious, labor, civil and women’s rights organizations devoted to national policies of fully equal economic opportunity. Furthermore, Mrs. King and her children protested the South African embassy in Washington, D.C. for the system of apartheid.

**Betty Friedan**, author of *The Feminine Mystique*, died on February 4th of this year at the age of 85. *The Feminine Mystique*, published in 1963, was very significant in the second wave of feminism. Friedan’s book analyzed “the problem that has no name,” or women’s

lack of fulfillment from marriage and motherhood alone. Friedan said, “A woman has got to be able to say, and not feel guilty, ‘Who am I, and what do I want out of life?’ She mustn’t feel selfish and neurotic if she wants goals of her own, outside of husband and children.”

Friedan was the first president of the National Organization for Women (NOW), which advocates for women’s equality throughout society. Mrs. Friedan also campaigned actively for the Equal Rights Amendment, which sadly, was not ratified. Friedan was also a founder of the National Conference for Repeal of Abortion Laws as well as the National Women’s Political Caucus.

The stories briefly related above outline some key advances in the areas of civil and women’s rights. These three remarkable women may have departed from this world, but they and their accomplishments shall not be forgotten. The struggles of Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King, and Betty Friedan were not in vain. While some work towards total equality under the law remains, what these women endured resulted in significant changes enjoyed by women and men today.

—Tara Bates

## Journey to Yourself— Becoming Empowered

Becoming an empowered person does not just happen unsuspectingly one morning when getting ready for work, or while driving to the dentist one day. For most of us, becoming a power-filled person requires a balanced blend of self-evaluation, accountability and investment. But, you might ask, how in the world can we be occupied with doing “all that” when, most times, just making it through each day weighs-in like a full time job without benefits?

Here’s the thing; self-empowerment is slowly cultivated over time like carefully tended grapes in preparation for a fine wine. Sometimes the season’s environmental conditions are such that prevent the grapes from ripening to their fullest potential, while other seasons might offer just the right mixes of nourishment, sunlight, and moisture to encourage a fully flourishing crop of goodness.

So what does it take for us to become a “flourishing crop of goodness” rather than the “one bad grape that spoiled the bunch”?

Let’s start with self-evaluation. Ask yourself if you are happy with the direction you’re headed, and if you feel good about how you serve in the world. In other words, have you created a “win-win” situation by feeling positive about yourself while fostering an encouraging and supportive environment for others? This can be as simple as feeling passionate about your work, whether it involves being a stay-at-home mom, a student, or an advertising executive. Simply put, you feel passionate because it’s important to you and you believe in it.

Next, do you “walk your talk,” or are you walking someone else’s by behaving in a way that is incongruent with what you value? For example, I made that mistake years ago when I obtained my real estate license

at the urging of my dad. I hated almost every aspect of selling real estate, which of course sabotaged my success as well as an opportunity for me to feel good about myself. Every morning I would awaken with the dreaded reality that I hated my job, and I’m not earning any money! However, all is never lost if we recognize the lesson available within the experience. In retrospect, I saw that it was my father who was motivated by the possibility of my earning big bucks, not me. This one experience taught me a great deal about expending my energy toward another person’s ambition and not my own.

It could be that you’ve been taught what *you* value doesn’t really matter because it won’t change anything about your situation anyway. I have found that pessimistic advice flows freely and is free for anyone who chooses to jump aboard the “SS Negative” sinking ship. It’s OK if knowing what you

*don’t* deem worthy is all you know for now, because this is a solid place to begin your self-evaluation. Remember, knowing what you don’t accept as true for you leaves breathing room for what you do discover about your personal principles.

And finally, when contemplating self-investment, are you overcome with fear about making the wrong decision and therefore don’t make any decision at all? It has taken me years to choose to see fear as an opportunity to prevail over things that terrify me! Since I adopted this philosophy, I am able to recognize my fears and make the choice to push ahead anyway. Believing in my abilities feeds my self-confidence, *not* my self-induced fears. After all, anyone will tell you a healthy dose of self-reliance combined with a pinch of optimism produces one huge flourishing crop of goodness.

— Leslie Burk

## From the Women’s Center

Announcing two *new* Certified Professional Secretary examination review books:  
*Office Systems and Technology* and *Office Administration*, Fifth Editions  
 Each book is available for checkout to all TTU staff and administrative employees.  
 Also available is *The Finance and Business Law*, Fourth Edition.

The **Spring** CPS exam will be administered on May 5 and 6, 2006 (registration deadline was February 15, 2006)  
 The **Fall** CPS exam will be administered on November 3 and 4, 2006 (registration deadline is August 15, 2006)

Administrative Professionals Week began in 1952 as an effort to honor administrative staff for their day-to-day work efforts and to attract more people to consider office and administrative careers. Administrative Professionals Week began with Mary Barrett, president of the National Secretaries Association (NSA) and C. King Woodbridge, president of Dictaphone Corporation. They were serving on a council addressing a national shortage of skilled office workers. Together with Harry Klemfuss, public relations account executive, and Young & Rubicam, they originated the idea for a National Secretaries Week. The association successfully convinced U.S. Secretary of Commerce Charles Sawyer to proclaim the first National Secretaries Week in June 1952. For more information, visit [www.iaap-hq.org](http://www.iaap-hq.org).

— Leslie Burk

## Teen Pregnancy: Finding a Solution

Teen pregnancy is an issue in Tennessee and the United States as a whole that needs to be recognized and treated as the severe problem that it is. Even though I went through a teen pregnancy, I was determined to prove to myself and others that I could keep my goals and dreams for my future alive. So far, I have proved this by graduating high school with honors and currently being enrolled for my third year at Tech.

Approximately one million teenage girls become pregnant every year in the United States. Since the United States has a population of approximately 299 million, this is a substantial number. It is imperative that girls get the education they need both mentally and emotionally to prevent unwanted pregnan-

cies from occurring.

According to Barbara Huberman, director of education and outreach for Advocates for Youth in Washington, D.C., there are four ways to address the problem of teen pregnancy. She believes that health care facilities and educational institutions can help by doing the following:

1. Promote after-school programs in the community that help young people develop a positive image and self-esteem.

2. Train and support peer-educators, who are positive role models in the community, to provide information and access to services for at-risk youth.

3. Provide workshops for parents and other adults on how to teach human sexuality and decision-making

skills to youth.

4. Develop adolescent health clinics in community locations to provide specialized health education and services.

All of these are useful ideas that would be beneficial to at-risk teens. But, the steps recommended by Huberman are not followed in every state. In my opinion, it seems that most teenage girls do not receive the information they need in order to protect themselves, nor information about who they can talk with if they become pregnant until *after* pregnancy has already occurred.

According to the Alan Guttmacher Institution, the national government requires that each state develop a sex/STD education policy, although the specific details are determined by state-level law-

makers. According to this source, Tennessee has created a state-wide policy to teach both sex and STD education, in compliance with the national government's requirement. Yet, in this law, Tennessee calls for abstinence to be taught in sex education classes but does not stress education surrounding the proper use of contraception. (Parental consent is not required for students to participate in sex education classes in Tennessee.)

And it is apparent that Tennessee's stance towards sex education is reflected in the statistics for teen pregnancies in Tennessee. According to [teenpregnancy.org](http://teenpregnancy.org), 17,070 teenage girls age 15-19 became pregnant in Tennessee in 2000. *Continued on page 5*

## Not Your Father's Politics—Discovering Political Identity

Everyone has a political identity. This is no simple definition of ideologically "right" or "left" but something complex determined by one's political socialization. Political socialization is the process whereby one forms his/her political beliefs, attitudes, and opinions. Primary agents of socialization include family, school, religious/spiritual institutions, and the media.

The family is in most cases the first institution a person belongs to, and as such, the family is the first institution to shape one's political identity. School is also important in forming a person's opinions concerning American politics. In fact, the school environment is often the first place that children encounter some sort of election activity which makes the scholastic institu-

tion that much more influential in shaping the attitudes of kids concerning politics. Also, kids are a part of the education system for at least twelve years, so the information presented to them is built upon (and should be challenged) throughout the duration.

Spirituality is a tricky socialization agent to discuss, but since the 1980s, religious institutions seem to have become more vocal with their political beliefs, further influencing the opinions of children. The media is becoming an increasingly important agent of socialization as the rise in technology has created a generation of children who average an adult's work week in television viewing.

Your political identity, like any other facet of personality, is the culmination of ideas

absorbed from the people around you. However, everyone must begin to think for him/herself at some point, to draw his/her own conclusions. This might mean re-considering things that you previously believed to be irrefutable fact. College is an excellent time to expand the concept of thinking for yourself. In fact, is that not the principle goal of higher education—to promote open-mindedness and free thinking?

Why, then, are there so many college-aged students simply accepting the views of their families and churches as absolute? It is as though the thought of re-evaluating one's established belief system is not even considered. The purpose of this article is not to teach readers about socialization, but rather to entreat them to take an active role in

socialization. Yes, we must all begin with the general ideas presented to us by family, school, church, and TV, but we must never hold these ideas to be the only ones out there. We must accept that alternatives might exist and question our own beliefs. If everyone stopped the socialization process at stage one, there would be no new ideas.

So the next time you are asked about your political beliefs (or any beliefs, really—my advice stands) think about it before answering. Do not simply regurgitate what you have taken in from around you. Put your own spin on the information. Maybe if enough people begin to think independently, some progress will be made.

— Anonymous

## To Thine Own Self Be True...

Relationships. Whether they involve family, friends, or a significant other, interpersonal relationships are a fascinating, complex, and often difficult part of the human experience. A successful relationship enhances the parties involved by fulfilling, uplifting, and enriching each person's life. There is, however, a fine line between finding a person who adds to one's life as it already exists and becoming dependent on the other person for one's own happiness. Maintaining healthy boundaries and a clear perception of self-identity is the key to any well-balanced stable connection between two people.

While teenagers, self-identity is something that most people do not have a grip on yet. The teenage years are a time of major emotional and psychological growth, which can end in either stability or trauma. Some teens bloom into young adulthood with a working foundation on which to build the rest of their lives. Not to say that beliefs we hold as teens and young adults never change—they often do. Rather, the foundation we acquire through self-reflection and contemplation during our teen years/early adulthood allows us to feel comfortable making changes to our lives, beliefs, and selves without losing our own identity. This is the “happy-ending” to childhood. Unfortunately, it just doesn't always work that way.

There are many factors that can keep a person from growing into adulthood without a good sense of self. Sometimes parents do not

allow a child the freedom to explore their boundaries. Sometimes oppressive religious beliefs keep a person from discovering his/her attitudes on life. Sometimes the region in which a person lives will affect how that person grows into adulthood. Sometimes fear of failure, sometimes fear of change can keep people from performing healthy self-examinations that are necessary for personal growth. Most of the time, when thrust into the world of adulthood without a stable underpinning on which to build the rest of their lives, young adults go looking for their own identity in other people, which leads to unhealthy relationships.

Unhealthy, harmful relationships involve two parties who cannot function without the other. Sometimes unhealthy relationships manifest as two friends who cannot and will not go anywhere or do anything with consulting each other first. Other times, it is an adult who needs the help of a parent to pick out socks every morning. Most of the time, those without a healthy self-identity will look for themselves in a romantic relationship. Many of these people marry young, often to the first person who says, “I love you.” How can a person possibly know what to look for in a mate when that person doesn't even have a grip on his or her own identity? Romeo and Juliet is fiction. Don't misunderstand me—love at first sight is a romantic idea, but I just don't believe in it.

Most of the people I know personally who married young said, “I know what I'm giving up, but I

don't care. It's my decision to make. Who are you to tell me I'm wrong?” Well, no one can tell the future, but the statistics prove that young marriages often do not work. According to the Center for Law and Social Policy's study entitled *Is Teen Marriage a Solution?*, “while divorce and separation rates are high in the U.S. overall, rates are particularly high for teen marriage...about one-half of teen marriages will end in divorce...”<sup>1</sup> Other sources quote the rate of failure as even higher. Jeanne Warren Lindsay says, “more than 60% of teenage marriages fail within 5 years.”<sup>2</sup> While the reasons for divorce may differ from case to case, the root of these divorces is likely similar: when the partners entered the marriage, they had little sense of their own self-identity. Because they were not emotionally and mentally equipped to handle the very adult situation that marriage is, success was never an option. And as for the couples I mentioned earlier, not one of them is still together. As a matter of fact, the longest of these teenage marriages lasted six months.

Why, you might be asking yourself, am I writing this piece for a college-age audience? Because on this campus, I see many of my peers making the mistake of looking for their happiness in other people. Most of these people do not have a clue about who they are or what they hope to accomplish in life, and they are missing out on the wonderful opportunities for self discovery that college provides.

I haven't always followed

this advice myself. I spent the better part of my high school and early college years looking for myself in my boyfriends. When I finally realized that I was never going to be satisfied with who I was until I looked to myself for my worth, I began to work out the problems that I had. Now, I am a much happier person. No, it didn't happen overnight. Yes, it is hard to face your demons. But, it can be done. And now, I have a healthy relationship with a wonderful man. Not to say that everything is perfect; we still have our ups and downs. But, we are able to maintain our independence, as well as work together as a couple. We are not each other's “end-all, be-all.” Had I not realized the destructive path I was on, I would have missed out on finding myself, and I would never have the healthy relationships I have today.

The bottom line is this: if a person does not have a concept of his or her own self-identity, no relationship of any kind will be healthy. So ask yourself this question: when I look in the mirror, do I see a reflection of myself, or do I see someone else's values, beliefs, and feelings staring back at me? Be honest with yourself; you'll find the answers you need were inside you all along.

— Hannah Holland

1. Seiler, Naomi. *Is Teen Marriage a Solution?* Center for Law and Social Policy, 2002. [www.clasp.org/publications/teenmarriage02-20.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/publications/teenmarriage02-20.pdf)
2. Lindsay, Jeanne W. *Teenage Couples: Caring, Commitment, and Change*. Morning Glory Press, Inc., 1995.

## Self Inventory—the Key to Self-Actualization

Self-actualizing—what does that mean? Simply put, it is having the confidence to reach your potential. How do you really know what you can accomplish unless you try? Overcoming self-doubt takes a lot of work, but the rewards of growth and success are worth it.

Inventory time. Make a list of your strong points and your weak points. If you can't think of any good points, you might be suffering from depression. Good news—it's fixable! Depression is caused by an imbalance in neuron-chemicals. See a physician; you may need an antidepressant or counseling.

Now back to your list. Pat yourself on the back for your strong qualities. Write in ways that you can make your strong points even stronger. But the negative column is where you should focus. The items in the negative column are your enemy on the quest for a positive self-identity.

If 'not-intelligent' is on your negative list, determine if it really belongs there. Why do you feel this way? Is it because

someone called you stupid? The person who insulted you doesn't know what you are capable of. Maybe you feel inadequate because of your grades. Did you have the same background as the other students in your class? You can enhance your knowledge by taking a lower level or remedial course. You might even seek to better your study habits; the Counseling Center can help with that.

If 'ugly' is on your list, here are some ways to change this outlook. Write down what you don't like about your physical appearance and look at it objectively. Do you feel you are overweight? But are you *really*? Don't buy into the Hollywood image. Look at Queen Latifah. She is a large woman who dresses with style and feels good about herself. Choose clothes that fit your body style. If you are not comfortable with your body size, then work on it gradually. Get rid of junk food and spend 20 minutes, three times a week walking. This is a healthy lifestyle change that

will help improve your self-image. Most importantly, carry yourself with pride. Throw your shoulders back, hold your head high, look people in the eye and smile. A smile is really beautiful and contagious! Remember, how you feel about yourself reflects in your daily life.

If you listed "socially awkward," this can be improved upon. As a teenager and young adult, I was very shy. I used to cross to the other side of the street so I wouldn't have to say "hello" to people. In college, I noticed one of my classmates (who was no better looking than I was) always had guys surrounding her at parties and mixers. What was her secret? She made people feel comfortable with her. She greeted them with a smile, asked where they were from and encouraged them to talk about themselves. Most people feel uncomfortable in social situations. You can put yourself and those around you at ease. Read Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* for some

really practical and useful tips to improve your social skills. But most importantly, look at people, smile and say "hello." You will be surprised at how many smiles you will get in return.

If you are now feeling better about yourself, make a new list. On one side, put down what you would like to accomplish. Then think of the ways that you would accomplish this goal. Write these down. This brings your hopes and goals into reality, and provides you with ways to accomplish them.

You are the person you will spend the rest of your life with. Be the type of person you admire and want to be around. Give yourself a plan for success, but make sure it is *your* plan, not someone else's. Have confidence in yourself, and the speed bumps of life will be less challenging.

— Barbara Jackson, Ph.D.

*Continued from page 3*

Sixty-seven point two percent of the total number of teen pregnancies in Tennessee in 2000 were women aged 18-19. This figure is 2% higher than the national average for 2000. Overall, 89 girls out of every 1000 became pregnant in the year 2000 in Tennessee.

There was no comprehensive (abstinence or contraceptive) sex education when I was in high school. I feel a comprehensive sex education program in all states is one of the many changes that should be made to help lower teen pregnancy rates nationwide. However, in these sex education classes *all* parts of sex should be discussed, not only abstinence or solely birth control methods. I believe that teens not only need the mechanical facts about sex, but they also need to know how to deal with the emotional aspects of a sexual relationship.

—Erica Nation

## Upcoming Events

March 21— Agenia Clark, *Building Strong Girls, Building Strong Communities*. 11:00 a.m. Foster Hall, Room 233.

March 28— Stephanie Coontz, *Diversity in American Families: Myths and Realities*. 7:00 p.m. Derryberry Hall Auditorium, a Center Stage Event.

April 4— Jackson Katz, *More Than a Few Good Men: A Lecture on American Manhood and Violence Against Women*. 7:00 p.m. Derryberry Hall Auditorium, a Center Stage Event.

April 17— *Take Back the Night*, hosted by the Tech Ladies Coalition, the President's Commission on the Status of Women, the Women's Center, and Dr. Lori Maxwell's Gender and Politics class. Roaden University Center Front Steps, 7:30 p.m.

June 19-22— TCADSV annual conference, *Sharing a Common Vision: Ensuring a Brighter Future*. Cool Springs Marriott Hotel, Franklin, TN. For information: [www.tcadsv.org](http://www.tcadsv.org)

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