



reCAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services
University of California, Santa Cruz

OMG—You're Single on Valentine's Day?!

By Saba Javakhishvili

Valentine's Day is coming soon. Does that make you happy or depressed? Excited or anxious? This article is not meant to overlook those couples who are in happy, healthy relationships who might find Valentine's Day enjoyable. It's meant to acknowledge that not everyone is in that situation, and that it's not a bad thing.

Sure, some people have a special someone with whom to spend V-Day, and being in love can be a wonderful feeling. But let's face the reality—even happy couples may

not be looking forward to Valentine's Day. Why? Because it is overvalued and commercialized in our society, creating a superficial hype that one has to do something extra to assure their partner that they are loved.

Additionally, Valentine's Day puts pressure on single people to meet someone or makes them feel left out. However, just because others happened to match up doesn't mean you have to go out of your way to look for someone. Bear in mind that forced relationships often lack genuine feeling

and result in quick breakups. So why create unnecessary drama? What if instead, you focused all that seeking energy on yourself?

To Those Who Are Anxious About Being Single on February 14th:

- First off, recognize that you are not alone in feeling this way. Instead of worrying about it, go out to a concert or a bar and meet other singles who are there to cherish their singleness, or hang out with your friends.
- If friends point out your singleness, acknowledge with confidence the things that you enjoy about being single; for example, you don't have any obligations, and you have more freedom in the choices you get to make without having to compromise for someone else.

In This Issue

Single on Valentine's Day	1
Upcoming Events	3
Dear CAPS: Alternatives to "Talk Therapy"	3
What Is Life Coaching?	4

All About CAPS

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) offers confidential mental health services to registered UCSC students all year 'round:

- Helpful workshops and trainings around campus
- A variety of therapy and support groups
- Brief individual and couples counseling
- Referrals to on- and off-campus resources
- Crisis services (in person Mon-Fri 8 am-5 pm; by phone 24/7 at 831-459-2628)

To make an appointment, call 831-459-2628 or stop by (Student Health Center, East Wing, 2nd floor) weekdays between 8 am and 5 pm. To learn more, visit our [website](#), check out the [CAPS blog](#), and like us on [Facebook](#)!

☐ SINGLE
☐ TAKEN
☒ WHO CARES?
I'M AWESOME.



Continued on p. 2

Continued from p. 1

- You don't need someone else to pamper you—you can treat yourself. Got a sweet tooth? Plan on going to a store on the 15th to get half-priced heart-shaped chocolates! ;)
- *After all, how can you be in love with someone if you are not in love with yourself?*

V-Day Guide to Cultivating Self-Love and Sharing the Love

- First off, embrace a sense of freedom that you do not have to do anything extra to feel loved—recognize yourself as a source of love.
- Know that you are beautiful, without others' affirmations. Celebrate your wholeness and health, which does not depend on anyone but you.
- Devote a whole day to yourself. Get yourself something special that you've been wanting (maybe that savory burger from a fancy restaurant that you thought was out of your price range, or a relaxing massage).
- Share your love with others—with anyone! In fact it could be with the first person you see after you finish reading this—give them a compliment and high five for being awesome!
- Remember your love is limitless, so why not use this day as a reminder to appreciate all the beings that have value in your life?
- Don't let yourself get caught up in superficial hype; there is nothing really "special" about Valentine's Day if every day is a love-fest!

Cultivating self-love will help you in the long run—this approach allows you to stop associating happiness with certain people and things and become more in tune with how you yourself are enough to have a content, loving life.

Saba Javakhishvili is a 4th-year student majoring in Psychology. He serves on the CAPS Student Advisory Board.



Upcoming Events

LIGHT TO REMEMBER: CAPS is hosting a candle-light vigil to remember all those affected by mental health issues and suicide. Supplies to make luminarias will be provided. Come to the Porter Squiggle Thursday, February 25th, 6 to 8 pm.

STRESS LESS WORKSHOPS: These 90-minute workshops, led by CAPS' peer educators, provide valuable tips on stress management and include an interactive and fun relaxation exercise. No sign-up required. Check our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page or call CAPS at 831-459-2628 for the latest info on when and where workshops will be held.

LET'S TALK: Drop in to have a brief, confidential chat with a CAPS counselor. Let's Talk is held 2:00 to 4:00 pm on Tuesdays at the Cantu Center and 12:30 to 2:30 pm on Wednesdays at the Graduate Student Commons, Room 208. A new Let's Talk is also being

added starting February 9th at the Cove recovery space at Kresge (Building 393, Suite 153), Tuesdays from 3 to 4 pm. All registered UCSC students are welcome at all locations of Let's Talk. Let's Talk is not set up to handle crises—if you are experiencing a mental health crisis, go to the CAPS main office during business hours or call CAPS at 831-45-2628 any time. Read more about Let's Talk on the CAPS [website](#).

WELLNESS SERIES: These weekly hour-long workshops are designed to give you helpful info and tools for being mentally healthier. Topics include self-compassion, mindfulness, healthy thought patterns, and time management/avoiding procrastination. Workshops are held at CAPS on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 4:30 pm. They are free, and you don't need an appointment—just walk in! Check our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page or call CAPS at 831-459-2628 to find out which workshop is being offered each week.

Dear CAPS,

I want help with some issues, but I'm not sure if "talk therapy" is what I need. What else can I try?

—All Talked Out

There are many forms of healing. Two common types of healing modalities are "talk therapy" and "experiential" approaches. Traditional psychotherapy (individual or group therapy to address emotional and mental health issues), is "talk therapy," where clients talk about their issues, feelings, and thoughts. Talk therapy is helpful in providing support and feedback, building insight, teaching coping and communication skills, and helping clients take action and make decisions.

Experiential types of healing focus on the *experience* of activities, feelings, and sensations. They are helpful in building awareness, reducing stress, increasing the mind-body connection, and when thoughts and feelings are hard to verbalize.

Experiential healing modalities include some forms of individual or group psychotherapy (such as somatic therapy, art therapy, and dance therapy) but include many practices that are outside of psychotherapy as well. Examples are meditation, prayer, massage, acupuncture, and yoga therapy. These modalities can increase focus and calm, relieve stress and tension, reduce symptoms of some physical and mental health problems, and provide connection (e.g., in a meditation or prayer group).

Exercise can be another experiential approach to healing and wellness. Many studies show its therapeutic benefits on mood, stress, and general well-being. Some forms of exercise (e.g., yoga, dance, martial arts) that combine physical movement with breathing and focus can provide additional benefits. Plus, joining an exercise class or having a workout buddy can provide the opportunity to be more social.

Although CAPS takes a talk therapy approach to most of our groups and individual counseling, we do offer some experiential services as well, such as a meditation group and a new three-workshop series ("Embrace Your Life") with an experiential focus. We can also help connect you with resources on and off campus, including talk therapy, experiential resources, and other services. Call CAPS at 831-459-2628 or stop by our office (Health Center, East Wing, 2nd floor) to set up a phone appointment to talk to a counselor about your concerns and get advice about what might help.



What Is Life Coaching?

Have you heard of life coaching? Many are unsure of what it is or how it differs from therapy. There are similarities between coaching and therapy. For starters, most people who seek out a coach or a therapist have some sort of issue, problem, or area in which they are not satisfied. With both coaching and therapy, the client hopes to make changes to their life that will be beneficial.

Coaching and therapy differ in several ways. First, therapy is typically conducted by a trained and licensed mental health professional, such as a psychologist, MFT (Masters in Family Therapy), social worker, or psychiatrist (a medical doctor with specialized training in mental health). Coaching is conducted by a person trained in coaching skills, not mental health (although trained therapists sometimes choose to offer coaching instead of or in addition to therapy.)

Coaching focuses on helping people

identify and explore issues, weigh pros and cons, make decisions, create goals for change, and take steps toward reaching these goals. While emotional issues may come up in coaching, they are not the focus, and coaches are not trained to diagnose and treat mental health issues. Coaching typically is more structured, goal oriented, and present focused than therapy, although there are many types of therapy, and some are also goal oriented and present focused.

It's a little confusing, right? It may help to know some of the issues that are better served by coaching and those better served by therapy. Generally, a coach can help with school or career issues, changing a behavior (such as increasing exercise, improving self-care, or getting over a creative block), or making an important decision. Therapy is best for people who need help addressing depression, anxiety, and other psychological issues. Therapy can

Contact CAPS:

Student Health Center
East Wing, 2nd Floor
Phone: 831-459-2628
(24/7 crisis help)
<http://caps.ucsc.edu>

also help in dealing with emotional issues related to a death, a breakup, and other difficult life events. For anyone seeking a psychological diagnosis or testing for ADHD and learning disabilities, a psychologist would be the person to seek out. And for those interested in medications for psychological reasons, such as depression or bipolar disorder, a psychiatrist would be the clinician to choose.

At CAPS, we are always looking for new ways to improve and expand our services. We are considering partnering with a company that offers coaching services. Stay tuned for updates!

