

DEAR ABBY

Semester abroad offers couple chance to grow



JEANNE PHILLIPS

DEAR ABBY: I am a college sophomore and have been dating my boyfriend, "Evan," for nearly a year. I am planning to take a semester abroad at the beginning of my junior year.

Recently, Evan confessed that if I leave, our relationship would have to end. He asserts that being away from me for more than three months would be too painful and scary, not knowing if I was all right. (He has some anxiety issues, for which I have urged him to consider therapy.)

Should I end this relationship now, or continue to see if Evan changes his mind? There's a possibility, depending on program availability and class requirements, that I may not even be able to go. I don't want to break any hearts or inflict any pain. Evan is my best friend, and I'm scared of losing him. — AMBITIOUS STUDENT IN MARYLAND

DEAR STUDENT: Gather your courage and tell Evan that you love him and want him to be your best friend forever, but that the semester abroad is an opportunity to grow. By the way, your absence will provide Evan with one, too, if he chooses to avail himself of it.

You are right that he needs to work on his anxiety issues. It would be a huge mistake to let them stand in the way of your having the experience of a lifetime if you are lucky enough to get it. There are worse things than being alone, and one of them is being attached to a partner who would hold you back.

DEAR ABBY: I am 50, own my home and am debt-free. I have friends but have never dated anyone. This doesn't bother me, although many of my close friends joke with me about being a "50-year-old virgin."

My problem is, four years ago I lost my job. I have a few investments and a small inheritance that, when combined, give me an income of \$60,000 a year. So I don't need more money.

Although I did look for another job for two years, I haven't tried for the past two. I tell my friends I've decided to retire. They keep telling me I need to find a job because I need something to keep me busy. I remind them that I have enough money for everything I need.

Friends have started telling me I may have a "problem" and should think about counseling. I see no need for it, but have decided to get an outside opinion. So, Abby, should I see a counselor about my lack of interest in finding a new job? — OUT OF WORK IN TEXAS

DEAR OUT OF WORK: There are reasons people work besides the financial one. Social stimulation is important, too. I am glad you have the money to support yourself now, but what if something unplanned or catastrophic happens in the future that jeopardizes your nest egg? Fifty is young to "retire." The counseling you're considering should be used to determine why you lack the motivation to continue being a contributing member of society. (This may be the "problem" your friends are hinting at.)

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SUDOKU, THE SUMO OF PUZZLES, Level: 3, 2, 1, Solution time: 21 mins.

CROSSWORD | EUGENE SHEFFER

ACROSS: 1 NYPD rank, 5 Rotating part, 8 On in years, 12 U.S., 13 Hearty brew, 14 Unaccompanied, 15 Indian wrap, 16 Money movement, 18 Civil War battle site in Tennessee, 20 Almost not, 21 Brice a, 23 Apiece, 24 Boxing play, 28 Unimpaired, 31 Blackbird, 32 Soft drink, 34 Vast expense, 35 Immaculate, 37 Late-night TV fare, 39 Allow, 41 Thin aperture, 42 Bird with a fanlike crest, 45 Removed the lid, 49 Strong current, 51 Ashen, 52 "Eleni" author, 53 Rd., 54 Tablet, 55 Individualism, 56 Despondent, 57 Other-wise, DOWN: 1 Mama Elliot, 17 Chance, poetically, 19 Spheres, 22 Musical endings, 24 "Humbug", 25 Lemons, 26 Yolk, 26 Loosen, 27 Rolled around in mud, 29 Zodiac cat, 30 Legislation, 33 Omit, 36 Reservation, 38 Treeless tract, 40 Anderson's "High —", 42 Quasi-modern creator, 43 — even keel, 44 Greek vowels, 46 Hammer's target, 47 Right angles, 48 Remove from the text, 50 Eggs

Saturday's answer grid, 10-12

DILBERT | Scott Adams, I MAY I ASK SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS? I DON'T LIKE THE WAY YOU ANSWER THIS. I AM TRYING TO ASCERTAIN WHAT PERCENTAGE OF A PERSON'S SUCCESS IS PURE LUCK. FOR EXAMPLE, WHO HIRED YOU FOR YOUR FIRST REAL JOB? MY DAD. BUT IN MY DEFENSE, I INTERVIEWED WELL.

ZITS | Jerry Scott and Jim Borgman, MCM! I CAN'T FIND MY PHONE! CALM DOWN, JEREMY. JUST TAKE A MINUTE TO PANIC. REALLY? HEY, THERE'S A DOLLAR ON THE BENCH-SAWER? DON'T WORRY. I'LL GET IT FOR YOU. DON'T WORRY. I'LL GET IT FOR YOU. DON'T WORRY. I'LL GET IT FOR YOU.

POUCH CAFE | PAUL GILBERT, THE POUCH MAN! WE TO BELIEVE YOU'RE THE POUCH MAN! WE TO BELIEVE YOU'RE THE POUCH MAN! WE TO BELIEVE YOU'RE THE POUCH MAN! WE TO BELIEVE YOU'RE THE POUCH MAN!

HOROSCOPES

Happy Birthday: Don't dwell on the past. Live in the moment and make the most efficient moves to guide you into the future. Use your skills, intellect and experience to make the changes that will bring you the greatest happiness. ... ARIES (March 21-April 19): Listen to someone you respect and you will gain the momentum to do your own thing. ... TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Professional connections will be able to help you advance. ... GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Being too opinionated will lead to an unfortunate misunderstanding. ... CANCER (June 21-July 22): Stop pontificating and start practicing. ... VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Back away politely if someone is demanding. ... AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Make your money work for you. ... PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Find out what's expected of you before you accept help.

Fall Furniture Sale, Emile's Furniture & Appliances, 609 St. Mary Street, Thibodaux - 446-7555, Up To 12 Months Interest Free Financing!

PUBLIC MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT, Proposed BP Settlement Consent Decree and Dispositive Horizon Oil Spill Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan for the Gulf of Mexico