

Maturity in CollegeMaturity in CollegeMaturity in College Maturity in CollegeMaturity in CollegeMaturity in College

By Elizabeth Simpson

When I was in junior high school, I realized that backstabbing, cruel gossip and making fun of people wasn't very nice or productive. I knew it hurt me, but somehow I never made the connection that I was thus hurting others. After this minor strike of revelation, I figured eventually everyone else would as well. By my calculations, in high school we would all be in a more enlightened, "grownup" state. After all, it was the real world (as opposed to our fake childhood) where you had no choice but to become more serious about what you were doing here, alive. Cracking on people would be old school and we could spend our conversations on a worthwhile topic.

As I'm sure you know, high school was more of the same. The only difference was that now I looked toward college where people were because they chose to work at learning. (Obviously adults didn't deal in these fickle matters.) Upon hitting college I realized that the idea that adults were responsible and mature was totally false. Look at us—we are still in cliques, we still talk about

other people as they walk away, we still have an idea of who is a slut on campus, and most of us still aren't very self-assured.

Of course it is fun to make a joke at another's expense. It is a cheap shot, easily made and enjoyed. It is also easy to step all over people to get what you want and ignore other people's needs to satiate your own. (Check out capitalism and how it works in most areas.) It is easy to slump through classes, pass and get a meaningless degree. It is easy to go get a lame job, pay the bills, and drink on Saturdays. It is no problem to get married to someone who makes you happy generally, grow old and feel like you've never done much with yourself. Everything runs toward the state of highest entropy and lower energy.

To make an effort and do something with your existence is the challenge. Most tasks aren't very hard. It is incorrect to say that writing a paper is difficult. The tasks involved are negligible, it is the effort needed to do the work that causes us distress. If we do get to that, it is rare that we push a bit more and produce our

best effort.

In conversation it is the same. It takes more energy and thought to bring up a topic that will uncover something you can take with you. It is a trial to withstand some people's opinions. It takes effort to see a conversation through to some end. If you *do*, though, it gives that passage of time and reason for being. Is wasting your time with petty gossip and cheap cracks at another's expense of worth to anyone, least of all yourself?

I am not mandating that every word out of your mouth be one of wisdom. It and humor are a sign of great intelligence and creativity. I do think that your actions should merit your rewards, for the increase of your own worth. Think about what you are doing always, and weigh it. It is highly unlikely that you will be pushed to produce a worthwhile life. (What is a worthwhile life? Not a question to be answered by anyone else for you, though you can listen to others and decide.) You need to seek out answers and questions. You need to further yourself. Don't be a waste of your own time.