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## Consider This... Reliability?

By Steven Zhou

In the last edition of Consider This in Teen Scene, we talked about how teenagers are often faced with difficult decisions on what they do with their free time. The emphasis was on trying new activities and taking the time to pursue your passions. But what happens when you simply put too much on your already full plate?

Our Express Yourself! Teen Radio Show survives by the reliability of our guests and team members to be prepared, on time, and on topic. Without each reporter being responsible and accountable for a specific segment, the program could not be broadcast every week. It takes a substantial amount of coordinating, writing, editing, recording, and promoting to produce a successful show. Production takes time, and as overscheduled Lamorinda teens, our time is precious.

You may think that this leaves a lot of holes where items may "fall through the cracks" and you'd be right. We've had several last minute cancellations, many of them in this past month alone, that forced us to scramble to reorganize the show, find a backup guest, or fill in.

Unreliable and unpredictable people are the bane of a school system, society, or a radio program whose success is based on interdependency. Being an organized person, when presented with such situations, I've found myself frustrated at the complications that cancellations, delays, or postponements produce. But now, I'm starting to see these scenarios from the other side of the tunnel.

I write this as I fight off a fever, recover from a school weekend trip to Santa Cruz in which I had no sleep, and respond to the fifty plus emails and calls I received while my phone was powered down. There are times when we put too much on our plates, and now seems to be that time for me. I could very easily have not written a Consider This article, and become one of the people I despise-the unreliable "flake."

While speaking with friends from our local schools, being over-extended seems to be part of the Lamorinda culture. We all have too many things to juggle-college applications, tournaments, sporting events, volunteer activities, homework, church, family obligations, not to mention social interactions and fun times. Christy H. from Acalanes commented that she prefers working on personal projects over team assignments as then she knows that she is 100% responsible to only herself. Many times one or more participants drop the ball when working on a group assignment. Either everyone suffers the consequences or one person steps up to rescue the rest.

I'm not sure what the solution is to a balanced schedule. But consider this: while it is wise not to overwhelm oneself, it is also essential to be reliable, responsible, and accountable for the obligations undertaken. It's simply wrong to drop duties without a second thought. The activities in which we engage in our teen years prepare us for the real world. We need to ask ourselves an important question. How much can I offer or do and still be dependable? If we can't be reliable, it's best to clean our plates.

A senior at Miramonte, Steven Zhou is the administrator and co-host of the international teen radio show Express Yourself heard on the Voice America Kids Network, Tuesdays at noon.

The opinions expressed in Teen Scene are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the Lamorinda Weekly.

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