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THE TEEN

TRIBUNE



Players practice soccer on the field. This may or may not be a different school's superior team.
PHOTO BY EDWARD OU / TEEN HIGH

DEALING WITH CRITICISM

BY ANTHONY BURCH, DADDY MASTER

I don't do it well.

I think a lot about an interview with M. Night Shyamalan after the terrible Avatar movie came out. The interviewer was like, "Why are your movies so bad?" and he was like, "I don't listen to criticism like that. If I did, I'd never make movies again."

But like... his movies ARE bad. He thinks his movies are good, but he's wrong, so he keeps making bad movies.

Surely, then, there's some value in listening to negative feedback. Right?

But then, if you DO listen to negative feedback (i.e., check social media) then it gives you panic attacks and shit.

So: what do? I'm not sure.

When I think an episode is good and I want to fill my brain with praise, I'll check out the subreddit and the Discord and Tumblr to allow myself the mental fellatio that comes with people enjoying something you helped create.

When I think an episode is bad, I do the exact same thing, except halfway through reading I get really upset at myself and consider drinking bleach.

The other daddies tell me, not incorrectly, that you can't make art based solely on what your fans want. But you do, to some extent, have to understand if what you're making is actually good. And if you can't trust yourself (I can't) and if you can't trust your friends (they're all very nice, and thus everything they say is meaningless), then what CAN you do?

So, yeah. season two has been rough on my mental health. But my life is really easy and it's goofy as hell to complain about criticism, so I'm trying to figure out ways of handling it better.

“**SURELY, THEN, THERE'S SOME VALUE IN LISTENING TO NEGATIVE FEEDBACK. RIGHT?**”

Some options I'm mulling over:

1. Read feedback until you see one negative criticism, then stop reading
2. Stop reading feedback altogether and accept the fact that you might turn into post-Signs M Night Shyamalan
3. Walk directly into the sea and never look back

I'm angling for option one at the moment. The weird thing about having a podcast that people actually listen to is that most people— or at least this person— don't have a lot of experience with people actively giving a shit about what they do. Maybe it's a muscle you have to develop. Maybe it's something you have to ignore, to keep your work entirely pure of outside contamination. I dunno.

I DO know that some of the better ideas in Season One came from listener feedback. Elements of Paeden's backstory; folks' desire to see more of Scam Likely; headcanons about the moms. So I'm not sure if I'll ever break my addiction to trawling Reddit and Tumblr anytime soon.

Even the criticism is part of the deal. Your audience is a hundred different voices all yelling different things, but they all care, and even when that care manifests as someone saying that this season sucks, well... it's too bad they think that, but it's better than them shrugging to themselves and deleting the app from their feed without ever leaving a comment.

I acknowledge this is a rambling, incoherent mess with no clear theme. But so are some comments! So, I dunno.

I'm gonna try not to walk into the sea. And I want to thank you for listening to and commenting on our crap, even if you only did so to point out how much season two sucks or how much I sound like John Mulaney.





LINCOLN LI-WILSON'S SOCCER STOP

ISSUE 1: SOCCER DON'T STOP! DON'T EVER STOP!

Hey Teens. Welcome to the first ever Soccer Stop. A monthly column where myself, Lincoln Li-Wilson, will be giving you some tips about upping your game. Your soccer game. Or your football game if you are from the rest of the world. Which, if you are reading this, you won't be. San Dimas High doesn't have any foreign exchange students. I always thought that was weird, but now that I know this world is actually the forgotten realms— and I don't even know if the rest of the world exists— it makes sense.

Lets talk about practice. It's easy enough to better yourself while at soccer practice, but that is only a couple hours of the day at most. And you gotta pump those numbers up if you wanna be the next Messi. It can be hard to carve out more of the day for longer practice, but don't worry. I'm here to help. The secret is to combine some sort of soccer drill with every other aspect of your life. This is what occupational therapists call "pairing". Here are some examples of how I never stop playing soccer.

SHOWER? HOW ABOUT KICK TRAINING!

Get a handle bar installed in your shower. You know, like old folks and clumsy kids have. And then grab that bad boy like a ballerina does and practice those kicks. Swing your legs while you soap up. Plus, if you got a luffa, you can hacky sack that thing and practice some juggling.

GOTTA POOP OR PEE? STRENGTHEN THOSE LEGS.

Get a resistance band to put next to your toilet. Just cause you gotta relieve yourself doesn't mean you gotta stop getting better at soccer. Sit down, do your thing, but also do some leg exercises. Put those resistance bands around your ankles like handcuffs, and power through.

DON'T WALK. DRIBBLE.

Have a soccer ball and dribble with it at all times. Gotta walk your dog?

Dribble. Gotta walk to the store? Dribble. Gotta walk your daughter down the aisle? You know the answer. Dribble. Your soccer ball should be like an extension of your body. And you don't leave home without your body, do you?

DREAM OF SOCCER

Sleep is no excuse for not practicing. Find your favorite matches, and get them on your iPad, or computer or phone or whatever. Let that be the white noise you fall asleep to. Your subconscious will keep working while your body rests.

NO HANDBALLS!

You can't use your hands on the field, so why you using them off the field? Try to do anything you can with your feet. Also, practice your hand positioning. You don't want to give the other team a penalty kick 'cause your arms are always flailing around, ready to accidentally touch the ball. You gotta train yourself to tuck your hands into your sides anytime something is flying towards you. Someone tosses you their keys? Tuck your hands behind your back and bounce those keys off your chest. Can't be giving away penalties.

And those are just some ideas. Hey. If you have some ways to keep practicing at all times of the day, send them to Teen Tribune, and maybe I'll post them here. I hope this helps you soccer-heads out there to get better at the sport we all love.

This was Lincoln. I hope you enjoyed my article. Thank you.



Rating: Teen & Up Audiences
 Archive Warning: **No Archives Warnings Apply** (pewh!)
 Categories: M/M (mascot/mascot)
 Fandom: BUSDSTM – Bonita Unified School District Sports Team Mascots
 Characters: Teeny the Teen, Pomona Panther, Chaparral Bulldog, Bonita Bearcat, House MD
 Additional Tags: Marching Band Injury, Hospital Romance, Platonic School Mascot Friends, Friends to Enemies, Enemies to Lovers, Lovers to Enemies, Enemies to Friends, Election Interference, Body Swap, Astral Projection, Time Loop, Marriage Contracts, Trolley Problem, Body Horror, Electrocutation, Cozy Mystery, House (TV Series), House/Wilson, House/Cuddy, Patient of the Week, Propolene Glycol Toxicity
 Language: English
 Stats: Words: 2,781 Chapters: 2/? Comments: 1 Kudos: 2 Bookmarks: 0 Hits: 7

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UPDATE 2: Sorry I couldn't update yesterday, fellow mascotheads!!! An astral projection of my dad showed up at our school dance and he told me he's not proud of me in front of the boy I like :(Plus our principal turned into a monster and attacked the school. Anyway lots going on but new chapter coming out soon!

UPDATE 3: Sorry for the radio silence, fellow mascotheads!! I have been enslaved in a pizza restaurant in a parallel universe and the wifi is pretty spotty. Hoping to escape tonight by baking myself into a calzone with my dad though (he's here too! but he is losing his memories pretty fast) so if that works out I'll post a new chapter soon!

UPDATE 4: Might be my last update for a while fellow mascotheads. Just merged consciousnesses with a chaos god and discovered it is a sad lonely teen like me. No new chapter this week.

UPDATE 5: GOOD NEWS, MASCOTHEADS!! I MADE IT BACK TO SAN DIMAS ALIVE! Part of the chaos god is anchored in the lonley heart of our school principal (the one who turned into a monster at the dance) so we are making him watch anime until he gets less depressed and the anchor comes out. So I've finally got time to finish this thing.

UPDATE 6: In honor of Vice Principal Tony Pepperoni, I am postponing this week's chapter release, fellow mascotheads.

UPDATE 7: CHAPTER TWO IS FINALLY HERE!! Thank you SO much for your patience, fellow mascotheads. A quick note: someone blasted a fireball in my house last night which knocked out our power and my usual beta reader betrayed me and leapt into a goof dimension, so I had to self-beta this chapter by candlelight. Pls let me know if you see any typos and don't forget to leave a comment + kudos if you enjoyed!! <3 JustANormalTeen123!!!

Heartbreak is the Best Medicine

by **JustANormalKid123Abc!!!**

Summary:

After Teeny the Teen breaks his leg in his Marching Band Dance Off against Chaparral Bulldog, his best friends Pomona Panther and Bonita Bearcat try to cheer him up at Mascot Hospital... but his new doctor, House MD, tells him he has Propolene Glycol Toxicity!!

Notes:

UPDATE 1: Sorry the new chapter took so long, fellow mascotheads! TLDR; my dad and his friends kinda vanished so me and his friends' kids had to take over their underground military organization for a bit.

SCHOOL BUCKS

BY
SCARY
MARLOWE

Hey losers. Well, it's that time of year again. Science fair season. So I like, did an experiment or whatever. Interesting that it's called the science "fair" when my grade was anything but (C minus)! It's not like my ideas were bad; I actually had four really, really good ideas for experiments that my teacher deemed "inappropriate," so I ended up having to do my project on the process of photosynthesis, literally the most boring process since Driver's Ed.

Anyways, here are my notes for the experiments I actually wanted to do, since that's way more brilliant and insightful than my actual project.

These are well-known scientific hypotheses, by the way.

HYPOTHESIS #1 ***ONCE SYMPTOMATIC, RABIES HAS A 100% FATALITY RATE.***

EXPERIMENT: Ok so there's this kid Chuck, in my math class that nobody really likes. And in the senior parking lot somebody told me they once saw a bat. Since bats are frequently carriers of rabies, I propose we make Chuck stand in the senior parking lot day and night until he gets bit by a bat. This may take some time... which is all part of the plan. We use that time to draw up possible cures to rabies, ranging from light electric shock to ritual sacrifice of small (non-rabid) animals. Whenever we've had time to narrow down the options, hopefully Chuck will get bit, and we'll be able to start the experiment for real. There is a high potential for error in this experiment, which I think will really appeal to the science fair judges and maybe earn me an A this year. Stay tuned!

HYPOTHESIS #2 ***MOSQUITOS ARE THE MOST DANGEROUS ANIMAL.***

EXPERIMENT: A lot of people think that mosquitos are so dangerous because of malaria, but one thing I brilliantly considered that many people don't is that mosquitos— and most importantly, their personal belongings— are hard to see. It really could be that mosquitos are carrying around tiny knives that make them so deadly, because they're stabbing people. But even then, for the sake of the experiment, I would have to prove that a mosquito with a knife truly is dangerous. Here's how you do that: first, get a tiny container about the size of a shoebox, but clear. So probably don't use an actual shoebox. Then, catch one mosquito and one house fly. These animals notoriously are enemies. Each animal will then receive one tiny knife, and from there it's a competition of wits and knife-wielding until only one animal remains. Then I will repeat this experiment with all other animals until only the mosquito remains, proving that these little bloodsuckers truly are the most dangerous animal.

HYPOTHESIS #3 ***WHEN YOU GET KILLED BY ARMY ANTS, IT'S NOT THE BITES THAT KILL YOU. IT'S THE INVASION OF THE LUNGS.***

EXPERIMENT: We're gonna need Chuck again for this one. Presumably he will have survived

Experiment #1 because we will have cured rabies by then, but if not, there's another student in my math class I don't like, I just can't remember her name right now. We'll use her if Chuck isn't available or if he dies. Unfortunately this experiment does involve fatality, but it's all in the name of science. We will be sure to take a moment of silence for that person after the experiment. Anyways, for this, we cover Chuck with army ants and monitor his condition leading up to his death, asking him questions like, "Are the ants in your lungs yet?" And recording his responses. If he answers in the affirmative before he dies, then we can safely conclude that army ants kill by entering the lungs rather than biting you. Truly a scientific breakthrough!

HYPOTHESIS #4 ***YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO DIE IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN BUYING A LOTTO TICKET AND THE DRAW THAN YOU ARE LIKELY TO ACTUALLY WIN THE LOTTO.***

EXPERIMENT: This one's simple. We get a whole bunch of kids to get fake IDs, dress up like really old people, and play the lotto, and spread the rumor that they're all from like an old folks' home or some shit, like say they're all on a field trip together because they're old and don't have much time left. While the news organizations are distracted by this charming story (because everyone thinks old people are all cute and shit even though they literally ruined the world) I'll find out (somehow) what the winning numbers are and then just like, buy that ticket. I'm still working out the specifics but it should be pretty easy once the news people are distracted. Then I'll win the lotto and use that money (if I feel like it) to do research into how many people die between buying a lotto ticket and hearing the winner.

RESULTS: I should have the results for this one in like 40 years if I want to spend my money that way, but if I don't want to spend my money on something boring then who knows we might never figure this out. Also I'm not paying taxes because taxes are for losers. Ok.

BREAKING IN

TAYLOR SWIFT'S GUIDE TO UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY

Greetings Swiftorinos, this month I'm gonna be walking you through my... well, let us call it a *mentality*. A perspective on this world that will shatter your illusions and leave you forever changed as the fragile systems that govern the connective tissue of our modern society are laid bare before your very eyes, so taken aback you will be by their threadbare condition.

I am, of course, referring to the system of locks which prevent you access. Long story short, there's a lot of places you want to be and, many times, dastardly mechanical devices that stand in your way. With a bit of knowledge, though, those mechanical devices will be dastardly no longer, yielding to your superior intellect as you bypass them effortlessly like ME, Taylor Swift, master of the subterfugal arts (*and as a note to the FACULTY: just because I POSSESS such powerful gifts does not mean I have ever deployed them. To do so at school would be beneath me, so any missing items from the lost and found or faculty break room cannot, nor should be, attributed to my hand. I emphatically deny any such allegations on the grounds that there is nothing worth accessing on school grounds even though no locks can contain me or prevent me from doing anything*).

So let's say, dear reader, you find yourself on the other side of a barred means of ingress. Thus commences...

LESSON ONE: ALWAYS SEEK AN ALTERNATIVE.

Amateurs, confronting a locked door, often whip out their lockpicks. And while lockpicking is, indeed, a most noble art, it is conspicuous in the act and in the carrying of the tools themselves. A true genius (such as myself) instead doesn't go for the painfully obvious solution. Instead, I look for alternatives. Perhaps there is a open window nearby? Another way in? If the car door is locked, maybe you can get in through the trunk and then snaking your way through the weird middle seat cupholder thing (and ideally not get stuck and almost die when you're 8 years old and waiting in the parking lot for your mom's vocal session to finish and only because you started howling and a passerby thought a dog was trapped inside the vehicle and came to help did you manage to avoid death and to be clear I would never die in such a foolish manner so by that I mean kind of like a figure of speech)

LESSON TWO: SOMETIMES THE WAY IN, IS THROUGH.

Once again, the lock is the obvious thing to attack. What if, instead, you broke a window and got in? A cursory sweep of intrusion sensors and a handful of ninja rocks is all it takes to defeat any building with exterior facing glass! Or perhaps

the answer lies underground or on the roof! Often, doors on roofs are not locked (or rather, less locked than their ground level counterparts). Or

perhaps there is some kind of cool drainage ditch (NOT a poop one) that you can shimmy through to get underneath some kind of grating and gain entry that way (Note: so far my late night urban exploratory excursions around San Dimas have yet to yield such an approach as viable, as most tunnels are just storm drains with raccoons and the last thing you want to face down in a narrow tunnel is a raccoon even if you brought your sharpened steel, so if anybody knows of any particularly good drainage pipes that actually lead into restricted areas, hit ya boi up).

And finally, LESSON THREE: THE WEAKEST LOCK... ISN'T A LOCK AT ALL. IT'S PEOPLE.

That's right. The human component is often overlooked and not nearly as hard to bypass as hardened steel machined devices designed to prevent you from breaking them without a key or loud power tools. Here's an example from my own files— a few months ago, I was trying to get out of some movie theater parking but I had lost my entry ticket (and I never keep movie stubs, only losers keep movie

stubs). Despite the mega soda with ICE in it (what better proof that I was a paying customer, I ask you) the parking attendant refused to let me go through without paying the maximum. That's where I was able to exploit... the HUMAN component. I artfully manipulated the ticket attendant with an eloquently told story of extreme bowel distress, complete with an emotional display that would make even Hermie jealous, and after twenty minutes he finally let me through without paying. Was it worth it? You bet your ass it was.

Later, I found the parking ticket stuck to my pants on the butt, so ladies, let it be known that Taylor is not a man who frivolously forgets things!

That is just the beginning of your journey into a world forever changed with the power of knowledge. Those who wish to continue this course of study under me, a true urban master, may opt to do so by Venmo-ing me a fee for 6-weeks of intense coursework. Just find me at my locker and I'll hook you up. Teen Tribute readers can get an extra 5% discount with code "TEENY." Some exceptions apply.



STUDENT ARTWORK



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