

## Negativity can impact relationships, overall mental health

ABBY ETTINGER  
Contributing Writer

“I hate this school.”  
After a few weeks at college, one can expect to hear this phrase echoing through the halls.

If not, they’ve certainly heard something along the lines of, “this assignment is stupid” or “I can’t stand my professor.”

Feel free to fill in the expletives.

Negativity on campus is unnecessary and concerning.

In fact, negativity has become an avenue for connection.

Want to make a new friend, flirt, or break an awkward silence? Complain.

In journalism they say, “if it bleeds, it leads.” College isn’t all that different.

Truthfully, students do have good reason to be negative.

When it comes to mental health, college students have been on steady decline for the past eight years.

This decline includes an overall 135% increase in depression.

Students aren’t necessarily choosing to be negative. It seems pessimism is following them.

Why would they not use negativity to connect with

one another when they can be almost certain that every student around them is already in a negative mindset?

However, this tragic decline in mental health is no excuse for the constant complaints.

Everyone is struggling and when students resort to endless criticism all that can happen is a wildly unhealthy complaint contest.

Students begin searching for the worst of the worst in their day-to-day lives in order to have a unique tragedy that sets their story apart from the other grumbles.

The negativity can only build from there.

This is why it is important that students make an intentional choice to start pursuing optimism.

Although it is not an

COURTESY PHOTO/ THE BISON

Taken from: <https://parsi-times.com/2020/09/stop-being-a-negative-nancy/>



improved mental health, greater resistance to illness, and good coping skills. Optimism impacts students mentally and physically.

Not to mention, continued optimism creates an environment in which students feel inclined to compare hopeful happenings rather than their so-called “war” stories.

The more students that invest in the power of positivity, the stronger the shift in university culture.

What if the halls were filled with phrases like, “my professor always remembers my name when I see her in the cafeteria,” or “I have a lot of work to do tonight, but I’m excited to study with my friends”?

Even the most negative, unhappy students on campus would be at least somewhat swayed to look at the good rather than the bad.

Of course it’s easy to see the negatives in life. No one is denying that it exists and needs to be dealt with.

However, using such negativity as a means to connect with other students only creates an unhealthy university culture.

If we all said, “I love this school,” we’d be happier, healthier, and maybe even live longer.

easy avenue to take, optimism is certainly worth the effort.

According to a study published in 2019, individuals who claimed to have high optimism had a greater chance of living to 85 or older when compared to their more pessimistic counterparts.

According to the Mayo clinic, one other possible outcomes of optimism include

## Residential assistants help with the college transition



COURTESY PHOTO/ THE BISON

Above, RA’s help with a community service project this year. Photo provided by Emily Brock.

EMILY BROCK  
Contributing Writer

When a problem arises on Oklahoma Baptist University it is very easy to feel overwhelmed and conflicted on where to turn.

Residential Life is introduced in mandatory housing meetings and seen at the desk from noon to midnight. But some still might wonder: what is the purpose of RAs and why are they here?

The RAs are in a unique position

between administration and the student body as a resource to answer questions, enforce rules and care for the social, mental and physical health of the residents.

Each RA is trained and equipped to live side by side with students for whom they care, so if a problem should arise, they can be first on the scene. This includes lockouts, roommate conflict, room checks, emergencies and more.

But what some don’t always realize is that ResLife wants to celebrate too.

When a resident gets a good grade on a Civ test, we want to scream with you. When that boy finally asks you out, we want you to tell us all about the first date.

ResLife is also very strategic in the way buildings operate. Freshman are required to live in a community style building. It’s their first year out of the house and a time to learn how to manage their schedules and take care of themselves.

As sophomores they get the option to live in suit style dorms or an apartment. This adds cleaning a bathroom and maintaining their own kitchen to the list of responsibilities.

Finally, upperclassman are able to move off campus or remain in an apartment with the skills and practice of managing a home.

The gradual increase of maintenance is created to ease students into the real world by walking alongside them as they grow.

For some, this is an easy process for others, it takes time to adjust.

Each staff of RAs in these different types of buildings are aware of the changes that the residents are facing.

In a freshman dorm the RA might expect to teach someone how to do laundry in contrast to an apartment setting where the RA might host a meal prepping party.

We are happy to assist in both because its part of becoming an adult and OBU wants to be a part of your

growth.

Why do we do this job? That’s easy. In Mathew 28:18-20 Jesus tells his disciples, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

For a short amount of time, we are all here in the same place.

The Lord has given us all different passions and talents. It is so beautiful. The RAs on this campus have been carefully chosen through many prayers.

Each accepted the job because they felt the Lord calling them into this position.

Our desire is to get to know each resident so that we can walk through the hard times, handle the disciplinary circumstances, celebrate the little things and most importantly share the Gospel.

This being said, RAs aren’t perfect. We are students and are trying to learn too. We require grace and want to feel loved as much as the next guy so please, give your RA a chance. Let them in, don’t be embarrassed to ask for help and for the love of everything good in this world, when they text in the GroupMe that they made cookies, go eat one.

## “TEXAS GIRL” LEARNS TO LOVE BOTH STATES ACROSS THE RED RIVER

LILY JORNOD  
Contributing Writer

Between me and my friends, I go as "The girl from Texas."

As much as I love it, I hate it. Can I sing "Deep in the Heart of Texas" in my sleep?... Yes. But besides just loving the Lone Star State, I've realized this has gotten out of hand.

Many of my friends have addressed this concern, too.

Crossing the Red River does not determine anything about someone, how they live, grow up or act towards others.

Since moving here, I have noticed many things, like how these Oklahomans don't wear seat belts.

I remind my friends to buckle before they drive.

Is this a thing? While I was doing some searching on the Internet, I found some crazy evidence: "Oklahoma is the ninth worst state at buckling up."

I love to make Texas seem impressive but prefer to avoid comparing because I love Oklahoma. But where can you buy Brisket Sliders from Bucc'e's in Oklahoma?...Exactly.

As a Texan, Oklahoma has a lot of good things, too, that Texas does not.

When I moved to Oklahoma, I noticed the absurd number of casinos and dispensaries. In Texas, that is a banned territory.

If you want to go to the casino, you must drive to Oklahoma.

However, when you look at the roads, you might just crash your car trying to get from stateto state.

No hate for Oklahoman roads, but they sure are unique.

Moving to Oklahoma has shown me multiple things.

Realizing there is life outside of Texas, including nightlife, community and wonderful people. There are parks, scenic routes and fantastic food.

While I still take pride in the beautiful state of Texas, it has shown me moving here that com-

munity and fellowship can flourish even over the Red River.

While I am still calling myself a Texan, there are things in Oklahoma that I wish were there, like better drivers. Texas is ranked number one for worst drivers in America, which is very accurate.

While Oklahomans are driving without seat belts on bumpy highways: Struggling without Bucc'e's brisket sandwiches. Passing by multiple casinos and dispensaries. Not being named as the worst drivers in America.

I am still called "The Girl From Texas" because that is what I am.

I am proud of where I'm from, and even though it is two hours away from the border, I love what Oklahoma has shown me: experiences, friendships and even the tiny little towns that I can now call home.

While Texas and Oklahoma have their differences and rivalries, they have one thing in common: the love of obnoxious western wear.

But now we can say "The Girl From Texas" is not only from the Lone Star State but also has a home in Oklahoma, the one place that is the home away from Texas.