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- Mile Marker
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Leaving a Relationship The Direction of Happiness

Leaving a long-term relationship is hard but a necessary step to achieving what you want in your life.

One of the hardest decisions we ever make in life is leaving a long-term relationship that just isn't working. When attempts at repairing and working out issues aren't working, it may be time to examine moving on. We are emotional creatures, and when our heartstrings are tied to those of another, separating from that person can feel like an act of courage.

Relationships that are vital and healing. Ultimately, most of us will follow this call, because deep within ourselves we know that we deserve to be happy. We all deserve to be happy, no matter where we find ourselves in this moment, and we are all justified in moving, like plants toward the light, in the direction that leads to our greatest fulfillment. First, though, we may need to summon the courage to move on from the relationship that appears to be holding us back.

It is not something most of us will take lightly, and many of us will struggle with our desire to stay in a relationship that is unfulfilling simply in order to avoid that pain. We may question whether the happiness we seek even exists, and we may wonder if we might be wiser to simply settle where we are, making the best of what we have.

Taking the first steps will be hard, but the happiness we find when we have freed ourselves from a situation that is draining our energy will outshine any hardship we undergo to get there. Keeping our eyes trained on the horizon, we begin the work of disentangling ourselves from the relationship that no longer fits. Every step brings us closer to a relationship that will work, and the freedom we need to find the happiness we deserve.

On the one hand, we almost relish the idea that true happiness is not out there so that we can avoid the pain of change. On the other hand, we feel within ourselves a yearning to fulfill our desire for rela-

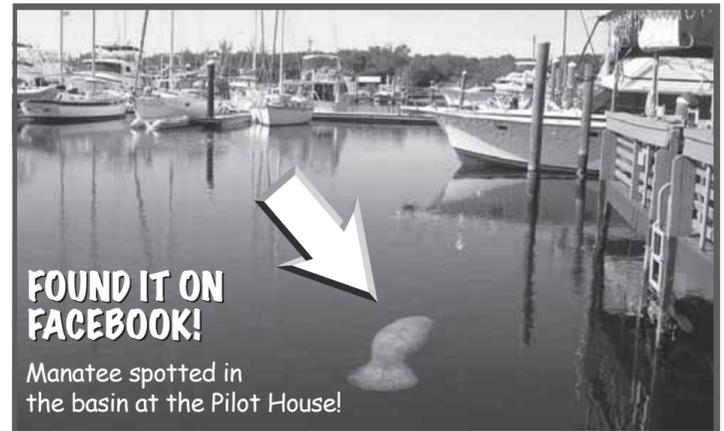
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FOUND IT ON FACEBOOK!

Manatee spotted in the basin at the Pilot House!

Letter to the Editor: Learn from the Robert Ornelas Tragedy

Hi Denise,
 I read your paper every month and enjoy the fact that you speak your mind and tell the truth.

I'm sure you have heard about Robert Ornelas, the Coral Shores student who passed away recently. I have read the stories and it makes me sad that this kid isn't being portrayed properly. I had the privilege of working with him, and he was a good kid. He would hug you and tell you he loved you, before you left work. He came from a good, hard working, and loving family. Unfortunately he made a mistake and lost his life. I'm sure most people who live here, including me, could have had a misfortune like this.

I feel like this story should go a different way. I have heard, and this is not fact, that Robert was the 5th kid to have the same symptoms of rage and being out of control from drugs in our community, but he was the first to die. We can not keep letting this happen. I think we need to speak out about how we are not going to stand back and watch our kids go down. Maybe we locals need to band together and make a statement. This can be a

learning experience for everyone, especially Robert's classmates.

I may just be too close to the whole situation and taking everything to heart, but I have a child and am raising him here because of what a great place we live in. I know drugs are everywhere but maybe we can all make a stand and help our kids be smarter and avoid them.

Thank you for listening/reading.
 —Sarah Scheer

Dear Sarah,
 You are absolutely right. Robert Ornelas death was a terrible tragedy. It could easily have been your child or mine. With your permission I am printing your letter in hopes that it will raise awareness of the problem. Perhaps our schools and police officers could step up more to educate our children about the dangerous drugs in our community. A few seminars a year doesn't cut it, they need it drilled into their heads every day. The police are working hard to rid our streets of these drugs and the dealers but they need our help too. Call Crime Stoppers 1-800-346-TIPS.
 —Denise