

attention!!

Recently I discovered I am the victim of a common, but little publicized, illness. At least some people might call it an illness. I call it an addiction. The condition in question is something I have termed "compulsive playground regression."

I first discovered I had this "disorder" about a year ago. At the time I was a college junior and as fully developed intellectually as any college junior should be. But I had one fatal flaw. I found myself at times wanting to grab a few friends and go to a park to play, much the same way one plays with his schoolmates at recess.

This was fun. And it became a regular practice. My friends and I would go to the park where we would proceed to play so hard and so long that even the children who were the age that society considers to be of

acceptable park playing age would soon tire of our antics and find somewhere else to spend their spare time.

In our case, however, it was not necessarily just our spare time that we spent in the park. We would go play at lunch time, after classes or during study time (of course we always took our books and promised ourselves we would just sit on the jungle gym and read.) I'm sure most of you know; it is a physical impossibility to "just sit" on a jungle gym, that's like saying you're going to just sit on a roller coaster.

I realized the situation was getting serious when the idea to go to the playground began to surface at strange times like midnight and other early morning hours. We even went during the dead of winter when we could not even feel our hands and feet, but we

could remember what it felt like in the summertime so we knew we were having fun.

Not only were the hours and seasons of our excursions becoming more radical, our behavior in the park also intensified. I found myself inventing games to play on the playground equipment, just like everyone did when they were children. And then I found myself actually getting angry when everyone wasn't playing the game right.

We discovered every possible way to slide down a slide. The boring ordinary way of simply sitting down was by no means enough of a challenge for these playground pioneers. We went down backwards, on our backs, on our stomachs (much in the same way that Frosty the Snowman sped down the snow covered hills) and

on occasion we even slid down on our heads. The trips on our head were usually not planned, but turned out to be some of our most rewarding excursions.

Even though the play was fast and furious we remained free from injury. Even injuries we suffer off of the playground haven't affected our playground parties. I, in all of my graceful glory, managed to break my tailbone (yes broken, x-rays and all). This accident did not happen on the playground, but I was soon faced with the question of to what extent was I going to allow this injury to affect my recesses.

This question brought me to the realization that I am, in fact, a compulsive playground regressive. When faced with the question of to play or not to play, guess what I chose. I went to the park with my friends and my broken tailbone during the early morning hours. I played with a little less vigor than usual and the thought of sliding down the slide in anything other than "Frosty fashion" never crossed my mind. But I was still there and I was still playing.

I'm sure at this point you have convinced yourself that I must have had the help of some alcohol anesthetic to get through this play period. But as frightening as this may seem my group of "grown" college classmates attend these parties quite under their own influence.

I have found, however, through conversations with other supposedly "grown" college students that my friends and I are not alone. Many people have stories much like mine to tell about their deep love for that land of sand and mangled metal. I was relieved to find that my friends and I had not missed out on some vital part of the maturing process, thus becoming victims of this addiction.

I don't suppose my addiction has run its full course yet. Unlike a true addict I have not yet felt the need to get high by myself. I still want friends to go play and in my eyes, the more the merrier. So all of you compulsive playground regressives come out of the closets and play with us. The bell has finally rung and recess has begun.

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This week's attention!! photo was taken by Marie McLeod, a senior journalism major.

Editor's Note: This attention!! page will be used each week as a forum for you, our readers. We encourage you to submit any original work that would be suitable for publication in At Ease.

Pictures should be black-and-white shots that are unique either in content, angle or technique. Columns, essays or poems should be no longer than 500 words, and should relate to an unusual experience, a new perspective on a common experience, or just about anything else you want to share with our readers. Please don't send us your gripes, complaints, or sermons on heavy-duty issues—send those to the Battalion's Opinion Page.

Don't forget to put your name and phone number on anything you send us. Then just drop it off at the Battalion, Room 216 of the Reed McDonald Building. Be sure to specify that it is for At Ease.