

Bearing It All

Dear Tim:

My friend had a birthday last week and invited me and some other girls to Build-A-Bear for a party. It's a place where you get to create your very own stuffed animal from scratch with all your favorite colors and accessories. The people there help you through each step of the building process and make the whole thing really fun. They even sing and stuff. It was great, and I love my new bear. I wish everybody could do it.

—Cheerful on Charing

Dear Cheerful:

I know what you mean. I've been collecting teddy bears and other stuffed animals for 30 years and, needless to say, I've acquired quite a collection. It would be great if everyone could be as lucky as you and me and have lots of stuffed animals, but, as you know, not everyone gets to enjoy new toys all the time. That's why I've decided to give mine away to kids who are looking for a furry new friend. In fact, I'm giving away one of my stuffed animals every week until the entire collection is



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gone. So if you know someone – maybe a friend or classmate – who would enjoy a new toy, have them and their parents stop by the store and register to win one. There will be a new drawing every week, so be sure to tell them to keep entering. Hopefully we'll find good homes for all my stuffed animals, and a few more kids will enjoy the feeling you and I know comes from a furry new friend.

Dear Tim:

Is it just me, or are MTV and reality television giving kids unrealistic expectations

of the real world? The fact is, no one's handing out recording contracts and endorsement deals on street corners. Only hard work will get them where they want to go. Someone needs to tell them there's no free lunch.

—Realist on Regency

Dear Realist:

There may be no such thing as a free lunch, but at Huffman's there is free coffee, Chai tea, hot chocolate, and cappuccino. Grab a cup on your way in and enjoy it while you shop. And be sure to note all the hard work the young people who work here are doing to ensure you have an enjoyable shopping experience. I hear some of them watch MTV, too.

Dear Mr. Huffman:

I loved you in *Meet The Fockers*.

—Movie Fan on Malvern

Dear Movie Fan:

I hate to break it to you, but I'm Mr. Huffman, not Mr. Hoffman. Don't sweat it, though. People confuse the two of us all the time. It's the curse of my charm and good looks.

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