CHILL PILL

NOT EVERYTHING NEEDS CLOSURE

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We were taught to believe that every ending should come with clarity. The final conversation. A clean explanation. Something that we can look back on and say, "this is where it ended, and this is why." I mean, we see it all the time in movies where the girl leaves the guy because she realizes her true value. Closure has been sold to us as emotional responsibility, proof that we have processed things correctly and that we have handled loss the "right" way.

But real life is not at all that considerate.

Welcome to Chill Pill, a biweekly column every Wednesday about slowing down in a world that rarely lets us do as college students. Here, we will talk about balance, burnout and the small things that can make college life feel a little less overwhelming.

Sometimes people leave without any explanation. Some relationships fizzle out slowly, without the dramatic final moment. Sometimes friendships dissolve slowly — you forget that the last message was sent months ago, and neither of you notices that it has become your last. Some versions of yourself vanish without any warning, and you never get a chance to say goodbye to the person you used to be.

And what we are left with are questions that we do not have the answer to.

Closure has a strange pressure to be chased, as if healing cannot begin without it. We over-analyze conversations in our heads, draft messages in our notes that we will never send and imagine alternative endings where everything that is thought about is said out loud. We spend time convincing ourselves that if we learned why, it would be so much easier to move on. But when the understanding does not arrive, we are left longing for it until it shows up.

Still closure is not always a door that opens — sometimes it's a door that has never existed.

Not every loss comes with meaning attached. Not every lesson comes neatly underlined. Sometimes things end because they do what they do. Sometimes people change in ways that no longer align with us. Sometimes the timing is not quite right, and it doesn't matter how much emotional intelligence you have; it won't be enough to fix it. And there is a lot of grief that comes with accepting that. Because closure promises peace. Letting go without it feels as if we failed at something that was out of our control. It's like walking away mid-sentence, like leaving a slice of pizza half eaten or a song unfinished. It can feel irresponsible, unresolved or even wrong. We worry that once we have stopped searching for answers, we've given up too easily.

But maybe moving forward is not the answer at all. Maybe it is all about how to live with open ends.

Many of the most formative moments in our lives do not come with explanations. We do not always know why we were chosen, why vomiting stopped working or why someone couldn't meet us where we were. Yet life keeps moving. We continue to become. If we were to wait for closure, it could turn into a way of halting our own growth. Like holding our breath for a signal that may never come. There is a quiet strength when deciding to stop asking questions that sometimes hurt more than they help.

Now this does not mean to start pretending like you do not care, or to rush the healing phase and invalidate your own feelings. But what it does mean is to acknowledge that some clarity comes from distance, and some may not come at all. It means allowing yourself to say, "I do not fully understand what happened, but I know how it made me feel and that is enough".

Closure, when it happens, is a gift. But it is not a necessity.

We can honor what something meant to us without fully understanding why it ended. We can miss people and still accept that they are no longer part of our lives.

We can hold gratitude and disappointment at the same time.

Not everything needs closure to be real. Endings don't need to make sense to matter. Sometimes chapters exist simply because they shaped us, and that is enough to turn the page. And maybe that is the kind of acceptance that doesn't arrive at all at once, but comes in slowly, like learning to live with unanswered questions without letting them define you.

That, too, is a form of peace.



Two UConn students conversing on the Student Union Mall. Despite the heavy snow, spring solstice, March 20, is just around the corner.

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