

Guest Blogger Jenny: Local Panaceas For Admissions Anxiety

Description

Sweet Escape

So you're in the middle of applying to schools, dealing with the research, the various dates and testing, and all the crazy command performances that go hand in hand with the application process. It really is inhuman. It'll fill you, a normally mildly neurotic but ultimately normal parent, with massive amounts of self-doubt and anxiety. There's no sugar coating it: applying to private schools in Los Angeles pretty much sucks.

I wish I had some truly wise words of comfort, a magic wand I could wave that would give you peace and perspective. Sorry, but no dice. What I can offer you are some relatively cheap (albeit sometimes irreverent) ideas for relieving stress during this difficult time. And since money is definitely a factor (if you're applying to private school, you're already committed to forking over a ton of cash), these ideas are pretty cheap. No, you might want (and indeed deserve) a Tahitian vacation, but that's not the sort of solace I'm offering you here.

Suggestions to Soothe the Tense Body

Get a Foot Massage: the best place in L.A. for a foot massage is Man Han Tang Foot Therapy in Koreatown. This Chinese establishment is pretty no-frills, but you get a one hour massage for \$20. You're fully clothed, but somehow they manage to ease knots from your neck, shoulders and back before lying you face up and massaging your feet for what feels like decades. Yes, the place smells funny and is dimly lit, the staff speaks little to no English, and it's on super noisy Western. But the massage itself feels ten times better than massages I've had for ten times the price. 1120 S. Western Ave. 323-731-2218

Get a Regular Massage: You know who does a great job for not a lot of money? Healing Hands. With two locations (one on Larchmont, the other on 3rd St.), these calming bodywork shops offer a variety of massage styles, and thereâ€™s practitioners aplenty, so you can definitely get that appointment when you need it most. Ranging from \$55-\$80, they offer a great massage at a very reasonable price. Larchmont 323-461-7876; 3rd St. 323-782-3988

Get a Good Cheap Mani/Pedi: Thereâ€™s lots of places in L.A. to choose from here, but I personally like Lanny Nails on Beverly Blvd. A mani/pedi runs about \$22, not including tip. They do a very professional job. Itâ€™s very clean. And itâ€™s pretty easy to pass out in the chair for a half hour nap. Plus, itâ€™s easy to walk in without an appointment, which makes immediate de-stressing simple. Want something slightly more Westside? Try The Golden Nail in Beverly Hills on Little Santa Monica, 310-788-9027. Lanny, 8317 Beverly Blvd., 323-653-3370

Get a Blow Out: Ok, I know that having any more hot air blown at you than youâ€™re already experiencing at these private school events might be more than you can take. But, a good, dedicated blow dry saves you time (they can last three days) and keeps you looking effortlessly glam. With command performances for private school admissions and the holidays coming up, who wouldnâ€™t want easy perfection? Try Drybar, with locations in Brentwood, Studio City, and West Hollywood, 310-442-6084.

Get an Incredible Facial: I have the best facialist in L.A., and Iâ€™m going to share her with you. Arielle, at Club Prive in Westwood, works her magic over a 90 minute span in her very comfortable chair. Her hands massage the tension and fluid right out of your face, her products (mostly European), leave your skin glowing and perfect. Iâ€™ve fallen asleep under her capable hands. She isnâ€™t inexpensive, but the results really last. Arielle at Club Prive: 310-470-4708

Wake Up or Calm Down Already!

Great Coffee: Sometimes, stress manifests as exhaustion. But parents in the throes of application chaos have no time for rest. A good stimulant is whatâ€™s needed, to paint the world in brighter, shinier colors. While Starbucks is at least readily available and the ubiquitous Coffee Bean offers yummy ice blends, thereâ€™s nothing like a truly superior cup of coffee. May I recommend two places: Kingâ€™s Road in West Hollywood and LaMill in Silverlake. Very different coffees are on offer. A cup of Kingâ€™s is a turbo blast of caffeine that almost has texture (milk is necessary). LaMill is for the purist, with specific coffees brewed using a Clover machine. You know those â€œtop notes of chocolate followed by a velvety floral finishâ€• coffee places promise? LaMill delivers this very experience. Kingâ€™s Road CafÃ©, 8361 Beverly Blvd; LaMill, 1636 Silverlake Blvd.

Have a Calming Cup of Tea: Alright, Iâ€™ll admit that herbal tea technically isnâ€™t really tea, itâ€™s actually a tisane. But itâ€™ll calm you down and set you right. Try the chamomile mint tea at Le Pain Quotidien. Itâ€™s truly excellent. Locations abound: Melrose, Larchmont, South Robertson.

Eatâ€™

A Cupcake: I personally like the Magnolia Bakery on 3rd St. The cupcakes arenâ€™t huge and arenâ€™t overdone and heavily frosted. Joanâ€™s on 3rd, just down the street, makes a mean assortment as well. And Frosted, on Highland, is serviceable, although they frost with a heavy hand. Magnolia, 8389 West 3rd St. Joanâ€™s, 8350 West 3rd St. Frosted Cupcakery, 1200 North Highland.

Pudding: Want something thatâ€™ll bliss you out and is worth the calories? Butterscotch Budin, found at Mozza To Go on Melrose, is the ultimate butterscotch pudding. It manages to combine both the sweet muskiness of burnt sugar with the tang of sea salt, for possibly the best dessert in L.A. A runner up? Milk on Beverly Blvd. makes excellent old fashioned chocolate and butterscotch pudding. And, although I personally hate bananas, Iâ€™ve heard Magnolia Bakeryâ€™s cookie festooned banana pudding is yummm

Run Away

Walk Around Lake Hollywood or Silverlake Reservoir or Walk the Infamous Stairs in Santa Monica: One of the best reasons to live in L.A. is to be outside, and walking is a true stress buster. Any of these locales offer easy walks that wonâ€™t stress your joints but might soothe your soul. Well, except for the stairs, which will just kick your butt.

Hike: L.A. boasts a ton of hiking trails. Hit one on a stressful morning and blast the stress to kingdom come. Take the dog.

Take a Class: I heartily recommend Bar Method, Pilates Plus, Pure Barre, or, for the acrobatically inclined, classes at Cirque School L.A. Itâ€™s hard to remember your silly private school stress when youâ€™re hanging upside down from a trapeze. Except for Cirque School (located in the depths of Hollywood), the other options have west and east locations, making it simple to pick up a class wherever you are

Laugh

For completely politically incorrect hilarity, try watching **The Increasingly Poor Decisions of Todd Margaret** on IFC. Itâ€™ll make your problems seem like nothing. And, â€œModern Familyâ€•had a hilarious episode about the stress involved with applying to private school in L.A. Somebody who works on that show is going through the admission process!! If you missed it, find a friend who recorded it and watch it!

Lose yourself in the beautiful, dreamy quality of LA writer Tina Dauntâ€™s blog, The English Muse. A blog about photos and media. Mostly.

Do you have a great idea or tip for reducing admissions anxiety youâ€™d like to share with other parents? Leave a comment (can be anonymous)!!!

Category

1. Beyond The Brochure

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Author

admin