



# The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the August 2024 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by members of The Florida Youth Council! For this special issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC wrote about characters they identify with. This allowed members to ponder, share, express, and explore their personal insights, experiences, and memories. We hope you enjoy learning about our experiences and our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

### Current Members:

*Jakel Baker*  
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*Shevie Barnes*  
*Derek Carraway*  
*Alexander Gonzalez*  
*Leah Gorman*  
*Morgan Griffin*  
*JJ Humphrey*  
*Tamara Koren*  
*James Kuhlman*  
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*Michelle Sandiford*  
*Josue Tapia*  
*Lilibeth Vega*  
*Christina Waldron*  
*Serena Wetmore*



### From The Advisors' Desk

If you know anything about who I am as person you would know that I am “weird.” That’s right! Weird! And I am embracing being a little bit strange in all it’s glory!

This month, we chose to talk about the characters we identify with the most. If you have watched TV any time in the last 10 years you have seen them.

My characters are Stitch and the Minions, who in my opinion are just the weirdest most likable characters on TV. However, they are portrayed to be evil. Stitch learned how to go against his mind and changed to be part of an “ohana.” The minions, although “evil,” just want to follow someone they love. In turn, they both got the family they desired! I am like both because I am a little strange, scary, and maybe in looks unlovable, but get to know me. You will fall in love. It’s just like with people with disabilities: to know us is to love us!



## *Tigger*

by Morgan Griffin



I am like Tigger from *Winnie the Pooh* because he is the silliest and yet knows when to be serious all at the same time, which best describes my personality. In so many ways, that is how someone who has multiple different disabilities can show that they are there when people think that some people have an invisible disability. When it comes to having different disabilities, it does affect that person's day-to-day life, which is very sad to see and hear how people feel about friends who are not familiar with their disability. I want to get to know people because that shows that I want to connect with anyone. People need to stop judging others and get to know people before jumping to conclusions because you never know what someone is going through or what they have been through on their disability journey and what they may have experienced. This is why it is so important to get to know them, just like people judge Tigger and how people went up to Tigger and got to know him and see how they can help him have a better relationship with people who don't understand his invisible disability that you can't see until you get to know him. So follow in the footsteps of his friends and get to know the Tigger in life. It might just change the world and make their life even better knowing that you are Tigger's friends that won't judge you because of you're different.

## *Naruto Uzumaki*

by Kel Baker

When I think about a character I can identify with, Naruto Uzumaki from the anime *Naruto Shippuden* comes to mind. From a young age, Naruto struggled to fit in with others, much like I have. Watching his journey as he grew up, tried to get along with others, and fit in really got to me. Naruto's determination and refusal to let others' opinions define him is what truly connects me to his character. Despite the constant negativity and rejection he faced, Naruto never let it change his belief in himself or his potential. He kept pushing forward, driven by a strong sense of worth and the dream of becoming Hokage, the strongest ninja and leader of his village. This drive is something I strive to put into my own life. Like Naruto, I've faced challenges and moments where I felt out of place, but his story reminds me that staying true to yourself is key to overcoming obstacles. Naruto's ability to turn his weaknesses into strength and his journey from an outcast to a hero inspired me to keep moving forward.



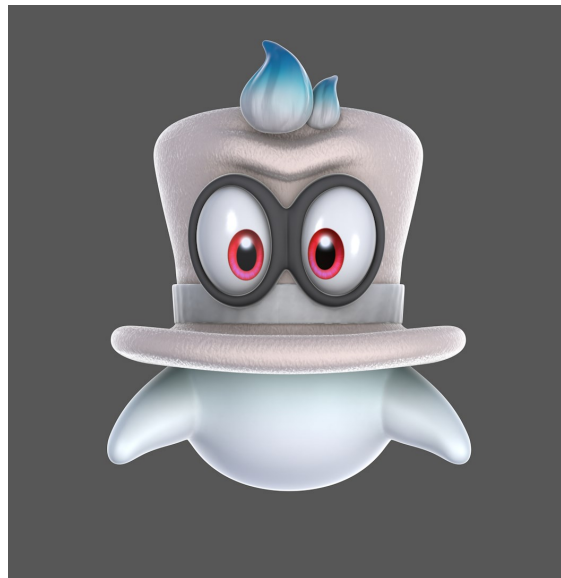


## *Who is Cappy?*

*by Viv Banks*

In 2017, Nintendo released a game on the Switch called *Super Mario Odyssey*. In a nutshell, Princess Peach is taken by Bowser on his ship. This is the typical story for any game in the Super Mario franchise, but there is a surprising twist. Usually, it would be up to Mario to save Peach. However, Mario's new sidekick, Cappy, must rescue his sister, Tiara. In general, Cappy is one of my favorite characters. At first, he presents as a ghost wearing a white top hat. However, he morphs into the shape of Mario's red cap. As a result, Cappy can "capture" any enemies Mario throws his hat on. For example, Mario throws his hat on a frog and controls its body. This allows Mario to use the frog's ability to jump to higher places.

It's important to note that Cappy keeps a collection of various things. He specifically refers to his desire to hunt for "Moons," which are similar to collectible tokens. Comparatively, I like to collect various items that represent memorabilia. Having these possessions reminds me of joyful memories. Additionally, there is one characteristic about Cappy that I like the most. Throughout *Mario Odyssey*, Cappy and Mario travel to various places. During transit, Cappy gives Mario advice on specific aspects of the game. He does this until the end of their mission. In context, Cappy plays the role of being a mentor. I relate to this since I like to give others advice. In the end, Cappy is a character that I identify with. There are several aspects of him that I like.



## *The Anxiety in Riley and Me*

by Serena Wetmore

I recently went to see the movie *Inside Out 2*. The main character, Riley, like all of us, is very complicated. The premise of the movie is that there are all these different emotions inside her brain, and they all have their own names. For example, we meet Anger, Disgust, Sadness, and Joy, all emotions from the first movie. However, there is one part of Riley that I really identify with because I also deal with this emotion regularly. This is a new emotion for her whose name is Anxiety. Now it might seem strange to identify with a character with a negative connotation, but that is not necessarily a bad thing because in the movie we are shown that sometimes these “negative qualities” can be useful. Throughout the movie, Anxiety is shown to have Riley’s best interests at heart no matter how misguided her actions may be. We see this in the way Anxiety makes decisions such as friendships based on achieving her goals. On the surface, this sounds unhealthy, but what Anxiety is attempting to do is help Riley develop her new adult personality and find what she needs to reach goals such as making the hockey team inside herself. Anxiety is always inventing new ideas and thoughts for how Riley can improve her game. Not to say that Anxiety doesn’t overdo it throughout the movie, or for that matter in real life. This is why I relate to Anxiety the most. I often find myself catastrophizing scenarios in my brain, much like Anxiety in the movie. While I know that catastrophizing is not a good thing, it is nice to know that there is a benefit to exploring a wide range of possible actions. One thing to always be aware of is to watch out for the panic attack that can be brought out by anxiety (or Anxiety!) so that you can use these feelings in a productive way!



## *Olaf to the Rescue*

by JJ Humphrey



There are several characters that I can really relate to, and it's a toss up of who to choose. I'm going to go with Olaf from *Frozen*. I was instantly drawn to Olaf when I first saw *Frozen* in 2013 on the big screen. Seeing Olaf on the screen reminded me a lot of myself. The way he was different from everyone else, but it didn't stop him from doing his thing. His personality was similar to my own and I felt a deep connection right away. I liked the humor, his kindness to everything, the bit of innocence relating to the world, and how he was filled with hope and joy. As time went on, my love for Olaf grew, especially when Disney started having Frozen Summer Fun. There was a parade and the Frozen sing-a-long. I started Disney bounding as Olaf and it got the attention of the cast members.



It was definitely a Disney Magical Moment for little JJ. I was so happy and filled with joy. Fast forward to many years later, 2021, I still had a great love for Olaf and auditioned for Olaf at Lakeland Community theatre and got a callback for both Olaf, Oaken, and Hans. And I got cast as Olaf!! One of the best parts about being cast was the creative freedom the production staff gave me as Olaf. Shortly before the opening night, my Papa (grandfather) passed away. The show was dedicated to him. The director gave me the choice if I wanted to do the show or not. And I chose to do it in his memory. And my Papa always taught me to follow through with commitment. I did the show, I did not tell the entire cast. Through doing that role and being that character, it got me through a very sad time. The kindness of the cast and crew and the emotional support of everyone made it a great experience. Identifying with a character can be a great thing and might even lead you to opportunities you didn't even think about. I always try to be kind and considerate like Olaf. Kindness can change the world and so can you, because some people are worth melting for.



## ***Fred Flintstone***

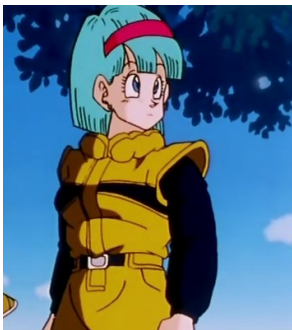
*by Derek Carraway*



I actually had trouble thinking of a specific character so I decided to go with the character I chose for this year's Youth Summit. The character I chose is Fred Flintstone. Ring any bells? He's the title character from an old animated show called *The Flintstones*. I always enjoyed the show growing up and it's honestly still appealing to me today. I think that's because when the show first was created, it was supposed to be for an adult audience. Anyway, a few ways I feel I identify with him are he has a wife and a little baby girl and so do I. He goes to his job and does what he has to do to provide for his family and so do I. He enjoys going bowling and so do I sometimes. He enjoys hanging with his friends and so do I. He enjoys watching the big game on TV and so do I. And lastly, he was old school, so to speak. I relate to that because sometimes I think things should be done like they used to and not some newfangled way someone came up with last week and is way more complicated. These are a few of the reasons I identify with Fred Flintstone.

## ***Bulma***

*by Lilibeth Vega*



A character who resonates with me is Bulma from *Dragon Ball*, a technological genius who can turn her talents to almost any field and understand alien technology to near perfection. She is a prominent female figure in the *Dragon Ball* universe and I find her extremely relatable because of her remarkable intelligence and her innovative thinking when it comes to creating new inventions. She's not just a typical side character: she's an integral part of the team and the single longest-running character in the entire franchise. She often plays a vital role in helping others with her technological expertise. Being a problem solver myself, I admire how Bulma's intelligence and quick thinking often save the day in challenging situations. Her ability to adapt and invent new gadgets on the fly is truly inspiring, and it's one of the reasons why she's one of my favorite characters in the series.





## *Einhander*

*by Alexander Gonzalez*



In 1998, SquareSoft (currently known as SquareEnix) developed a 3D-style arcade game for the original PlayStation. The game is called *Einhander*. *Einhander* was one of the first games I ever played, and it holds a special place in my heart. *Einhander* is German for “one hand” and denotes a type of sword that is wielded with one hand. The game is based on a story of Greek mythology of Selene (goddess of the Moon) and Endymion (the Aeolian Shepard) set in a fictional future during a war between Sodom (the Earth Colony) and Selene (the Moon). You play as a pilot of Selene on a kamikaze mission to destroy the Earth colony armies and the creation of a totalitarian regime. Despite his loyalty to the Selene Federation, the pilot questions the motives of the war itself and its decision from its leaders. Later in the story, the pilot is betrayed by Selene, who communicates that the pilot is committing an act of treason. Still, the pilot fights through the barrage of gunfire. In the end, the actions of the lone Einhander helped end the war. Although you don’t know the pilot’s identity, the player is a part of the story.

The pilot can be anyone. So why did I pick this character, especially one without an identity? Since I’m a Libra, it’s interesting that libras try to find the right balance. I picked this character in particular because of the perspective of the story and its message. It’s so compelling and mysterious because you are a survivor, and your decision will affect your story’s outcome. The decision you make for the greater good leads to questioning morality. One line from the game stood out to me, “*The Earth I saw wasn’t the Utopia my superiors spoke of, but rather a vast wasteland, like the moon. I knew then the war was already purposeless. But perhaps, for the leaders, war itself was the purpose.*”



# How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at [FloridaYouthCouncil.com](http://FloridaYouthCouncil.com). The program is open to application year round.

We hope to hear from you soon!



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