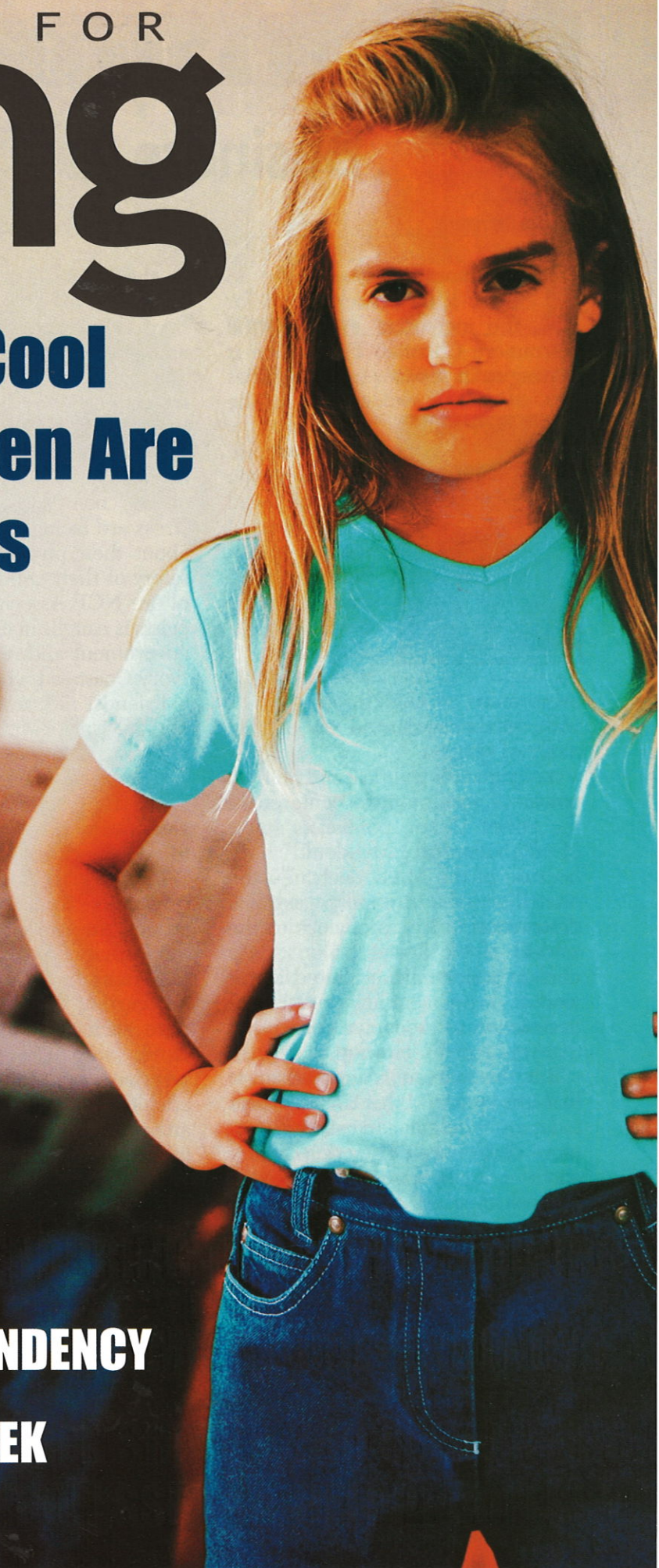


PSYCHOLOGY FOR
LIVING
FALL 2002

**Keeping Your Cool
While Your Children Are
Losing Theirs**

PLUS:

- **ENDURING THE NIGHT**
- **OVERCOMING CODEPENDENCY**
- **WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?**



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It's **Not** Business As Usual

by Bruce Narramore

This month I would like to share a little background for the increasing emphasis the Narramore Christian Foundation is putting on its services to missionaries around the world.



Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

If you are like me, you were relieved and pleased with the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union. But, already, we have an

even more serious threat—world-wide terrorism carried out in the name of religion.

As long as the political and military power of Communism centered in the Soviet Union, politicians spoke of the comfort we could have because of the MAD doctrine—the doctrine of “mutually assured destruction.” It was obvious to the leaders of the Soviet Union that a nuclear attack on the United States would bring equal or greater destruction to their own country, so that was a great deterrent.

But the militant Islamic terrorists that are attacking the United States today are different, and in some ways, more dangerous. They don't worry about mutually assured destruction because they are willing to die for their cause. And they are secretly scattered throughout the world.

Now these extremists are taking direct aim on Christian missionaries. They associate Christianity with the United States and Britain as the great enemies of Islam. The kidnapping of the Burnhams in the Philippines, the bombing of the International Church

in Islamabad during the Sunday worship service, and the recent murders at the Muree Christian School in Pakistan are just the tip of the iceberg. Missionaries around the world are under threat.

Even though more Christians were martyred during the 1900s than during the rest of the entire history of Christianity, things now are even worse. Missionaries who have already been living with incredible stress are facing escalating concerns about their physical safety and the safety of their children. In fact one of our NCF Associate Staff psychologists is caught in cross fire between government and rebel forces in the Ivory Coast as I write this editorial.

Friends, this is no time for business as usual. Missionaries in these stressful situations need our help and they need it now. This is the reason the Narramore Christian Foundation is expanding its services to missionary families.

In order to invest more of our resources to serve missionaries around the world, we are changing the format of *Psychology for Living*. Beginning in 2003 you will receive our current full size issue of *Living* once each year. Your other three issues will come in a compact newsletter format. This change will enable us to save at least \$100,000 annually, and put it into our expanding international ministries. We trust that you will understand this change and continue to stand with us in these days of great challenge but equally great opportunities for Christians to make a difference. These are perilous days, “but where sin abounds grace abounds much more” (Romans 5:20b). Let's not do business as usual. Let's do business that matters and business that makes a difference!

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Keeping Your Cool While Your Children Are Losing Theirs

by Bruce Narramore



Twelve-year-old Chad sassed his mother just as his dad walked into the house from work. In a fit of anger, Chad's dad yelled, "Your attitude stinks! You're grounded for a week. Now go to your room and don't come out until I tell you!"

Chad stormed to his room, slammed the door, and turned on his radio as loud as it would go. Not to be outdone, his dad opened the door and angrily yelled, "Turn that thing down before I throw it out the window!"

"Go ahead," Chad yelled, "See if I care!"

If this explosion sounds familiar, you are not alone. All parents occasionally get angry with their children. But for the sake of our children, we need to learn to handle our anger so that we don't frighten, depress, or alienate them in the process. We need to learn to resolve our anger so that we can discipline in thoughtfulness instead of punishing them in anger.

"But," you might reply, "if I don't lose my temper, my children will conclude I've gone soft and try to get by with murder." Not at all. Being thoughtful doesn't mean being permissive. As a matter of fact, it is only after you mellow out that you can firmly but lovingly discipline your children for their growth instead of punishing them to vent your anger and get even.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, ►

lest they be discouraged” (Colossians 3:21 KJV). And Proverbs 15:1 says, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.” These verses tell why mishandled parental anger can be so devastating. It plants seeds of depression and anger in our children’s hearts. And if we keep fertilizing those seeds with angry punishment year after year, they may grow into lasting emotional wounds.

Think about how you would feel if someone two or three times your size lost his temper and hit or threatened you. No matter how justified his anger, wouldn’t you feel angry, frightened, or depressed? Few things chop at a child’s feelings about himself more sharply than being angrily accused, threatened, or punished. Demeaning words like “clumsy,” “lazy,” or “irresponsible” are emo-

tional hand-grenades, destroying a child’s self-esteem. And it should go without saying that striking children in anger or giving them a verbal lashing is even more painful. That’s why the Bible encourages us to control our anger. Proverbs 29:11 says, “A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.”

Don’t Wait Until You Lose It

One of the best ways to avoid losing your temper is to pay attention to your emotional thermometer. When your temperature is rising, don’t let your children get by with one thing after another, causing you to gradually become more frustrated. If you discipline your children before things get out of hand, you will have fewer problems with your temper. The minute your children start pushing you near your breaking point, tell them your expectations and the discipline they will receive if they don’t settle down. Then if they disobey, implement the

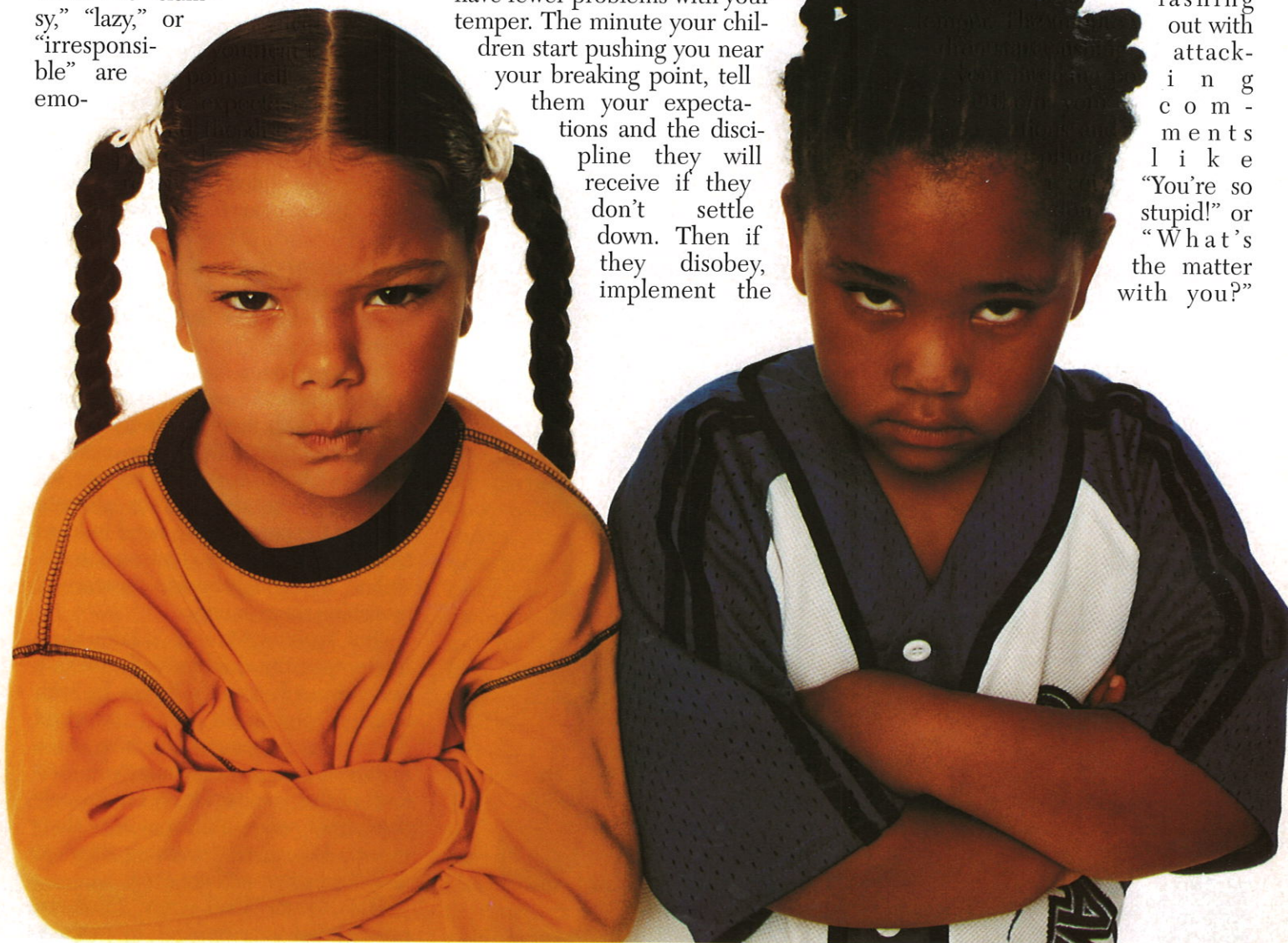
consequence. You won’t be upset because you haven’t let things get out of control, and your children won’t feel mistreated, because they knew what was coming.

Bite Your Lip

Once you have started to lose your temper, take the next step. Restrain your first impulse. The minute you feel your anger welling up inside, count to ten (or ten thousand). Take a walk, call a friend, or go shopping. Whatever your method, find a way to restrain your first angry impulse. Most of the hurt to children done in

anger comes from failing to restrain our first impulse.

Instead of lashing out with attacking comments like “You’re so stupid!” or “What’s the matter with you?”



restrain yourself. Pray and ask the Lord to help you.

Talk It Over

Once when my wife Kathy was furious with our son, she called her best friend Alice to tell her how she felt. When Alice asked Kathy, "Why is Richard making you so mad?" Kathy answered, "He's acting just like his father!" Once Kathy understood this, she could start working on the real problem — me!

Letting off steam to a friend is a great way to handle angry feelings. It can also help you understand why you are so angry, so you can address the real problem, rather than take it out on your children.

Take a Time Out

If you are still too upset to discipline, let your mate handle the discipline or simply tell your children, "I'm too upset right now. After I settle down we'll have to talk this over." With that, you set an example of self-restraint for your children without ignoring the problem. This builds security and trust, because your children know you won't abuse them with your anger even though you must correct them.

Look for a Pattern

If you are like most of us, one or more of your children has certain traits or habits that trigger your temper like someone tossing a lighted match into a pile of dry leaves. There are also certain days or times in a day when your temper is more likely to flare. Aren't you more likely to lose your temper with your children when you have already had a hard day? Do you get angry when you feel helpless? Do you lose it with your children when you are angry at your spouse? Or perhaps you are especially tired or need sleep.

If you haven't already noticed a pattern to your anger, start keeping track. Once you have determined what triggers your temper, you can start working on your part of the problem. If, for example, you take your anger out on your children when you are really angry at your spouse, start working on the

problem with your mate.

Don't Sweat the Small Stuff

Several years ago Harmon Killebrew, the second leading home run slugger in American League history, was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. During the ceremony Mr. Killebrew described his indebtedness to his parents. He recalled a day he and his brother were playing in the yard and his mother complained, "You're tearing up the grass." Killebrew's dad quickly spoke up and told his wife, "We're not raising grass, we're raising boys!"

Harmon Killebrew's dad had the right perspective. Grass can be replaced, but the brief years of childhood can't. It's a big help to put your children's actions into lifelong — even eternal — perspective. When your children break your favorite vase or stain the new carpet, ask yourself, What is more important in the long run, a vase, the carpet, or my relationship with my children?

Ask What You Can Learn

Let's say your son spills milk on your clean tablecloth. Your first impulse is to angrily leap to your feet and say, "What's the matter with you? I've told you to be careful!" But wait a minute. How important is spilled milk in the light of eternity and your child's 70-plus years on this planet? How about using the unfortunate incident as an opportunity to become more patient and sensitive with your children? Simply say, "Whoops. Those things happen. Let's clean it up." Or you might even learn to defuse the situation with a little humor, as long as it isn't at your child's expense. You could say, "Uh-oh. It looks like some cow is going to have to work overtime!" Comments like this relax children and help them feel like you are on their side. They don't want to make a clumsy mistake any more than you want them to. At a time like that, what they need is encouragement and support. When you are calm instead of angry, you help them do better next time.

If you think the way you react to

spilled milk is an insignificant problem, think again. Just this week in a university class, my students were discussing experiences that helped them feel good or bad about themselves while they were growing up. A twenty-year-old student's eyes became tearful as she shared how her parents had angrily shamed her for spilling things at the dinner table 15 years earlier. The incident was burned into her memory.


"I" Messages

Even when we are angry, we can manage our angry feelings in nondestructive ways. The best way to do that is to give our children an "I" message instead of a "you" message. Don't exclaim, "You make me so mad." That is an accusatory statement that blames your anger on your children.

Simply tell them "When you do that, I feel angry." "I" messages communicate clearly without blaming or attacking. After all, how would you feel if a giant got angry at you and yelled, "You make me so mad?" I suspect you would feel a little intimidated and fearful! But if the giant says, "I feel angry," you sense that he realizes that he is taking responsibility for his anger and isn't going to attack you.

Don't expect to get a handle on your anger overnight. It has taken you 25 or 30 years to get the way you are, and if you are like most parents you will change an inch at a time, not by leaps and bounds. Decide that you are going to become more kind and patient and start moving in that direction. In time, you can learn to discipline your children from love rather than punish them in anger.

Devotions

One of the best ways to bond with your children is to have private and family devotions. As you pray, sing, give testimonies, and read the Bible, God will cause you to feel close to one another. And this time at the throne of grace will have a positive influence on both you and your children when things are going smoothly, and when they're not. After all, you're prayer partners! 

Enduring the Night



“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning..”

— Psalm 30:5bKJV

by Linda Hoenigsberg

I disliked Tupperware parties. Oh, I loved all the little squares and rounds with the matching color-coordinated lids. I just hated driving home, thinking about what a disaster my kitchen cupboards were and how if I just had a spare \$327 I could reorganize my entire food supply.

But here I was on my way to another Tupperware party. I tried to think soothing thoughts, calming myself as I arrived at the driveway of the home of the hostess. With excuses to leave as soon as possible, I walked up the path, but the urge to run back to the car and leave were getting stronger the closer I got to the front porch.

The evening wore on with the Tupperware salesperson giving her presentation and the women all chatting happily. I decided to use one of my excuses and leave. But as I sat there I felt glued to the chair, sure that anything I said would sound forced and


that the other women would stare at me, knowing I was not telling the truth. Finally I gathered my courage. Glancing over to the hostess I tried to be as nonchalant as possible. “I’ve got to run, I’m afraid I’ve left a sick kid at home with the husbands. Oh, I mean a sick husband at home with the kids!”

As I climbed back into my car, panic continued to build. I felt overwhelmed by some foreboding unknown fear. The panic increased until I was sure I was going to die or lose my mind. I had the strongest urge to put the car into park, jump out and run down the street screaming for help.

That night launched me into a downward spiral into six years of severe mental illness. What began that night as an anxiety attack grew to years of extreme anxiety and depression that clothed my every waking moment. The anxiety turned into Agoraphobia (fear of open places), a condition that, left untreated, can turn a person into a prisoner in his/her own home.

I became afraid to drive a car. I stopped going into grocery stores. As the checker began ringing up my groceries, I felt trapped. I began to avoid gas stations, elevators, freeways — any situation in which I believed I could not quickly leave. I lost my ability to daydream as all my conscious thoughts were focused on making it through the next moments without screaming. After a few months I felt comfortable only when I was home. Soon even my house ceased to be my safe place. My days were filled with terror. Hyperventilating, I would lie on the floor, simply trying to get my breath.

I spent the next six years battling constant anxiety attacks, obsessive thoughts, and eventually psychotic depression. I saw a non-Christian psychiatrist several times a week. He put me on Valium. We talked about my past, my upbringing in a neglectful home, my incarceration at fourteen in juvenile hall. We talked about how, at eighteen, I ended up in the state men-



Salvation Army to do free counseling. I had asked him to do the funeral for my brother, and now I hoped he could lead me to his God. He contacted a pastor he knew close to my home.

I entered the sanctuary of the small church in Los Angeles, California, on a sunny Sunday morning in October of 1975. I had brought my brother's widow along for moral support. Even so, I felt alone and afraid. I was sure that the pastor was going to ask me to leave the building. Everyone looked so nice in his or her Sunday best. I knew I stuck out like a sore thumb. At five feet, five inches tall, my eighty-two pounds barely covered my skeleton. My hair was long and stringy and my clothes were patched. The Jesus movement was going strong in this area of the country, but this church was obviously not used to those like me, with our "hippy" garb and vacant stares. As the pastor gave his message my mind raced ahead. I wondered if I would be able to sneak out unnoticed, before being asked to leave.

The pastor closed his sermon and asked us to bow our heads. I wanted to be a part of this group, this belief, and this faith. I didn't know how to begin and I really didn't think I would be allowed to belong. As the last hymn was sung, the pastor walked down the center aisle and opened the front doors of the small sanctuary. Turning, he waited to greet each parishioner, hugging each one. I made it to the door looking for an escape route through the crowd. Pastor Don wasn't about to let that happen. He grabbed me by the shoulders, gave me a big hug and said, "We are so happy to have you here with us."

The people of that little congregation became the family I never had, and they became part of the larger picture of God's healing in my life. Their love was a tremendous instrument in the healing that God began to bring about.

The road back to health was not an easy one. The Lord needed to strip down all my walls and rebuild my personality with the Word of God. He became the Master Project

Coordinator as He brought together the group of people He wanted to use to bring healing and stability into my life. He used the pastor who loved me unconditionally and taught me the Word of God. He used the precious people of that church and their constant patience and soft guidance. The Lord helped me find a good Christian psychologist who helped me learn about my faulty thinking and reacting and taught me about the power that is in forgiveness, praying with me and for me all the while.

There were times when I didn't think I could go on for another day. During those dark moments something always happened to restore my hope. Just the right person called or came by with just the right word. A scripture in the Bible suddenly made sense and gave me hope. In some instances in my deepest hurts, the Lord performed what I think of as "spiritual soul surgery," healing me through the power of the Holy Spirit.

It has been years since I have had my last anxiety attack. When anxious thoughts begin to come, the Holy Spirit recalls to my mind the lessons I learned in times past. The fears begin to recede and I am enjoying life again. Depression is a thing of the past. I have left the world of mental illness far behind.

I have become one of the happiest people I know. Like a person who has been on the brink of death, I see life in a whole new way. The Lord uses what I've been through to bring hope and healing to those who are hurting, giving purpose to the hurt and pain of the past.

My experience has taught me that there is no pit so deep that the Lord cannot reach down and pull us up. With the support and counsel of wise men and women of God, thorough study of the Word (it's the Manufacturer's Handbook), hard work, and a change of lifestyle, there is healing out there for anyone who wants it. Weeping may endure for a night, but oh, what joy comes in the morning.

Linda Hoenigsberg is a free-lance writer who lives in Helena, Montana, with her husband. ☺

tal hospital in Norwalk, California, after three suicide attempts, and the gang rape that happened shortly after leaving the hospital. We discussed the subsequent year I lived on the streets, peddling myself for drugs in a vain attempt to forget the nightmare my life had become.

Eventually I opened up about my ten years of drug abuse. Next came confessions of the abusive relationships I had let myself become involved in. But the therapy alone wasn't enough. I believed hell could not be much worse, and thoughts of suicide became a constant companion.

Two years after that first anxiety attack, my beloved brother took his own life. The devastation of my state of mind seemed complete. I knew that unless there was a God in this world, I would either become insane or kill myself, too.

There was one man I knew who might have the answer. I had been seeing a minister who gave his time to the

Overcoming Codependency

by Jason T. Li, Ph.D.

When is he coming home tonight? Will he wind up at the bar again? Why can't he be at least a little responsible? Doesn't he know what he's doing to our family!

Martha anxiously obsesses over her alcoholic husband, Mark. She spends most of her waking moments worrying about him and how to "fix" him or to pick up the pieces in the wake of his irresponsible behavior. She also devotes herself to taking care of her children, but she is out of touch with her own needs and feelings. Inwardly she feels resentful that no one seems concerned about her. At the same time she feels guilty and believes if she were a "good Christian," she would be able to love Mark in a more unconditional way and help him change.

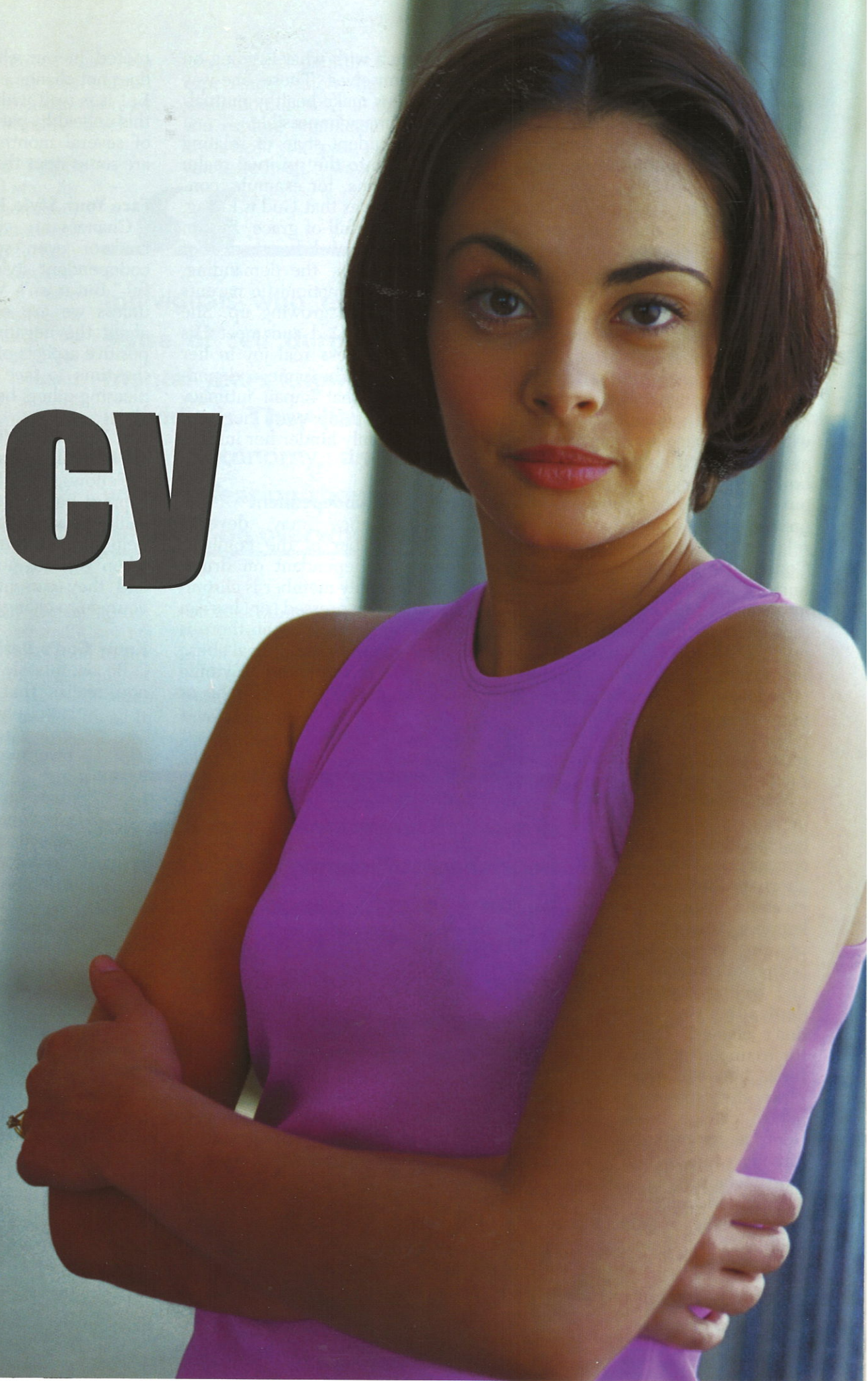
In another scenario, Don spends most of his vacations with his in-laws even though he doesn't want

to. He knows it will upset his wife and her parents if he wants to do something different, so he doesn't say anything in order to keep peace in the family. Many of us hide our real thoughts and feelings occasionally, but for Don, this has become a way of life. He often winds up feeling frustrated and resentful towards his wife for not being more sensitive to his needs. At the same time he avoids dealing with his own fears of being more open about his real feelings and wishes.

Characteristics of Codependency

Martha and Don both struggle with codependency. Codependency is a kind of "addiction" or compulsion to an unhealthy and hurtful way of relating to other people. Codependent people have several of these characteristics: accepting responsibility for others' feelings or actions, constantly trying to please others, neglecting their own needs, letting others dominate or abuse them, having difficulty knowing ►

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their feelings and wishes, being excessively dependent on things or people outside themselves, having a weak sense of personal identity and being out of touch with their real self, having difficulty setting realistic personal boundaries, having difficulty admitting that they are in a dysfunctional relationship, spending excessive efforts to control or change their environment or people in it, frequently resentful, fearful of rejection, or being left alone, suffering relationship problems growing out of a weak sense of self, excessive dependency, and efforts to control, change, or please others.

Many of us struggle occasionally with dependence, wanting to please everyone, difficulty in setting boundaries, or being unaware of our needs. But codependents rely on this style as their basic way of relating to themselves and others. Codependents often allow others to hurt or abuse them or talk them into taking on too many responsibilities because they are afraid to say no. This inability is like being in a room where the doorknob is on the outside of the door and the codependent is on the inside, powerless to set any protective limits. Anyone who wants to can come in.

While feeling victimized or controlled by others, codependents can also be controlling. They often alternate between taking excessive responsibility for keeping the peace and pleasing others (thereby trying to control them), and feeling resentful and demanding when others don't change. They may, for example, go back and forth between trying to please their spouse, subtly attempting to change them, and having brief, angry outbursts when they directly express their resentments or expectations.

Since codependents are constantly caretaking or adjusting to the people around them, they are often

out of touch with what is going on inside themselves. These one-way relationships make healthy mutuality and intimacy impossible.

A codependent style of relating can extend into the spiritual realm as well. Martha, for example, consciously believes that God is loving, forgiving, and full of grace. But on an emotional level her image of God is more like the demanding, judgmental, perfectionistic parents she experienced growing up. She tries to please God and meet His approval but lacks real joy in her Christian life. The same codependent barriers that impair intimacy in her relationships with her husband and family hinder her intimacy with God.

Growing Up Codependent

Codependency may develop when a member of the family is alcoholic or dependant on drugs, when one family member is chronically ill or depressed or has an explosive temper, or when there is physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and neglect in the home. Anything that forces a child to give up his or



If a baby's emotional needs are not nourished sufficiently, the baby may become overly dependent and go through life trying to please others in order to gain the love that wasn't received as a child.

her own emotional health in order to keep peace, satisfy or attempt to "cure" or cover for another family member can set up a codependent style.

Recovering from Codependency

Since codependency is deeply

rooted in our childhood years, it does not change easily or overnight. But it is well within reach to undo this unhealthy pattern over a period of several months or more. Here are some steps that can help.

Face Your Style Head-On

Chances are you have rationalized or even spiritualized your codependent style as being "helpful." But it isn't. We cannot change unless we are completely honest about the negative as well as the positive aspects of our lives. Now is the time to face your fear of displeasing others head-on.

Get Together With Other People on a Similar Road of Recovery

Fellow strugglers can provide support because they know what it is like to face these issues. They can help you see your hurtful patterns when you are not aware of them, and they can help you gain the courage to change and heal.

Know God's Desires for You

Be completely honest with God and realize that He accepts you precisely as you are. He expects you to have your own unique thoughts, feelings, and desires rather than shaping yourself to someone else's wishes. The Apostle Paul reminds us to "look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4). And the Psalmist David tells us to "delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). God wants you to be the unique person He created you to be, not the slave of others' wishes or your own childish fears.

Christ perfectly modeled a balance between time for Himself and time for ministry. He spent 30 years before He began His ministry. He had close friends. He crossed the lake to be alone and relax with His

disciples. He knew what He thought and felt, and wasn't afraid to say no! But He was also the most sacrificial person who ever lived.

Exercise Your "No" Muscle

A very practical step for overcoming codependency is starting to set boundaries that you are comfortably able to live with. You simply cannot learn to care and give of yourself in a healthy manner until you have a basic place of safety for yourself. This includes having the ability to set clear boundaries and to say no. At times saying no is more important to our spiritual growth than saying yes to another activity. If you are growing out of codependency, you don't always need to have a clearly articulated or spiritual-sounding reason for saying no. Sure, you may occasionally say no when it may have been good to say yes, but after a lifetime of erring on the yes side, don't be afraid of occasionally missing the perfect ideal! It is far more likely that you will continue to err on the side of compulsive giving or doing. With God's grace, you will learn by trial and error. In the process always remember that God wants your genuine love so much that He is not going to coerce you into serving Him or others out of compulsion. As you soak up God's grace and love, you will in time be able to give and serve from a healthy, genuine caring and love from your heart rather than from fear or duty.

Seek Professional Help

Because codependent people have learned to cope with emotional pain and conflict by disconnecting from their inner feelings, counseling is often necessary to help you explore and come to terms with your childhood feelings and experiences. Ideally, an effective counselor is someone with whom you

can explore painful feelings and experiences safely, has good personal boundaries, is able to help you explore significant unresolved areas from your past, is able to help you learn healthy ways of relating to



Individuals who establish a healthy sense of self during their developmental years know who they are as individuals. They have a good measure of autonomy, and they function without fearing they will lose themselves or be overwhelmed.

self and others, and who can help you develop a biblical understanding of yourself and your situation.

Detach from Unhealthy Involvements

Growing out of codependency will also require that you let go of the energy you are currently expending worrying over others. You will have to emotionally separate yourself from others' problems. This is not hostile withdrawal, indifference or avoiding your responsibility to others. But it is giving up your efforts to take other peoples' responsibilities so that they can learn to take responsibility for themselves. We cannot fix problems that are not ours to fix, and all of our worrying, obsessing, and trying to help only perpetuate the problem. After all, as long as we are trying to fix someone, they don't need to fix themselves and we don't have to fix our self!

Emotionally separating yourself from a codependent relationship may mean staying out of the way as an alcoholic spouse or friend loses his job. It may mean getting a sepa-


rate bank account and letting a mate suffer the consequences of his or her financial irresponsibility. It may mean giving up a role as a people pleaser. And it may mean saying no when asked to take on more responsibility at your church or your children's school! It won't involve becoming selfish and uncaring, but it will mean learning to take responsible care of yourself.

Develop Mutual Peer Relationships

You will also need to become more aware of your own feelings, thoughts, and needs, and learn how to communicate them. And you will need to encourage others to communicate their thoughts and feelings and needs to you directly so that you can have mature, mutual relationships.

You will also need to work at developing mutual peer relationships. You will need to share your thoughts, wishes, feelings, and decisions mutually in a mature relationship where neither party is demanding or controlling and each opens up his inner self to being loved and being truly loving. In time you will be able to give and serve from a healthy, genuine caring and love from your heart, rather than from fear or duty.

The road to freedom from codependency is not easy, but many have gone before you. If you commit yourself to growing, you can become the person God created you to be!

Jason T. Li, Ph.D. is Professor of Psychology at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he teaches in the undergraduate and graduate psychology programs and counsels at the college's counseling center. This article is excerpted from Dr. Li's new NCF booklet, *Overcoming Codependency*. Write or phone NCF if you would like a copy of the booklet. 



The Not-So-Perfect

By Kathryn Coad Narramore

The Limits of Perfection

“So much for the homemade cookies and never crying over spilt milk,” said the perfect mother from her perch in my superego. I had yelled at my two-year-old and he recoiled, more than surprised, afraid. But I wasn’t finished. I spanked him and dumped him in his room. I caught my breath and made a mental list of the parenting rules I had broken, a long list. I don’t remember the small defiance which inspired my outburst, but I have a vivid memory of my son’s panicked face.

Every mother comes to that

moment when she realizes that her fantasies of maternal bliss don’t match her day-to-day reality. Parenthood is unpredictable and rarely follows pre-baby planning. We don’t have identical dreams of motherhood, but most of us eventually face a crumbling image of what we had imagined. It can be a grim moment, since most of us fall for the archetype of the perfect mother.

The (Im)perfect Mother

Who is this internal paragon of motherhood who taunts us? She arrives with our first baby; we would do anything for him — even attempt perfection. If we could say

it out loud, “I’ll be perfect for you!” we might realize how crazy it is. Or maybe we wouldn’t, since postpartum hormones can be a fearsome obstacle to reality. In any case, we don’t say it; we carry on with our extraordinary task by patchworking together maternal images from television, magazine advertisements, movies, novels, and what we wish our own moms could have been.

My idealized mother emerged from the novels I devoured as a child. An amazing woman, she could whip up a delicious picnic lunch in five minutes. She was calm, collected, and unobtrusively beautiful. She never got in the way of her



Mother!!!

What the Bible Says About Perfection

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness,” II Corinthians 12:9. God’s love is entirely unconditional. He doesn’t love us because we are perfect; He loves us because He is perfectly loving. In fact the Greek word for perfection used in the New Testament often has a connotation of maturity and growth, not being entirely without fault. Only when speaking of God and his holiness, is there an expectation of flawlessness. Our perfection will come when we are transformed in eternity. “When he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,” I John 3:2.

children’s adventures, and coming home to her was always a pleasure. As lovely as she sounds, she has been a rather troubling character for me during the last three years. She lurks in my household and psyche, sneering at the dust bunnies under the beds and rolling her eyes when my patience ebbs.

Picture this: two kids crying and climbing my legs. The youngest is teething and bites hard when attention comes too slowly. My response doesn’t jibe with the novels (fictional children are never biters). I am not cool, calm, and collected. I certainly am not serene while trying to disengage sharp teeth from my knee. According to my idealized image, these moments don’t rattle the consummate mother. She laughs and smiles right through them. Meanwhile, I lost my self respect for having those moments at all. I keep striving to accomplish a motherhood that ignores my strengths and my limitations, and the reality that my children aren’t flawless either.

The problem with carrying a perfect mother around as a goal should be obvious: it’s impossible. Every time we fail, we feel terrible for not living up to our ideals. And when we feel like failures, we become depressed or angry at our children or spouses. After all, if they helped out, then we could be the perfect mother! So the cycle goes on. We aspire to perfection. We fall short, blame ourselves, and feel guilty. Then we blame our children for making us look bad. Then the cycle goes around again.

The Good-Enough Mother

A social worker friend of mine told me about a concept sometimes used to determine whether a home is safe for children: the “good enough mother.” She is not perfect, but she is adequate. She is loving but has flaws—some more glaring than we would like. But she feeds her children and gets them to bed; she meets their basic physical and emotional needs. For the social ►

workers, the “good-enough mother” does not harm her children, or not very much. She hasn’t read parenting books like those crammed on my shelves, but she is there for her children.

I initially misinterpreted this concept as negative, opposing it to the mother who does everything right. In the middle of a bad parenting moment, I would caption myself with the label and groan. I didn’t realize that the social workers never found the perfect mother; I just kept hoping they wouldn’t find my house.

But I had misunderstood the idea. The “good-enough mother,” a reassuring term created by British pediatrician, Donald Winnicott, meets her newborn’s every need, but as the baby grows, her parenting changes. She occasionally fails him, not with physical and emotional abuse but by simply being human. She cannot sustain the baby’s idea of Mother because he doesn’t know that she is separate from himself. He only gradually learns that he is a separate person from his mother as she doesn’t do exactly as he wishes. He is on the receiving end of a series of natural “failures,” gradual and never overwhelming. In time, he readjusts his worldview, eventually developing independence (and then he turns two and starts saying “NO” and “MINE” all the time).

This psychological definition of the “good-enough mother” already encourages us merely human mothers, but we can find other benefits as well. This mother accepts her shortcomings and so has deeper gifts for her children than those of us frantically pursuing parental perfection. Hopefully, she doesn’t lose her temper so easily because she is not striving for impossible goals. But if she does, she can forgive herself and ask her children to do the same. She knows she cannot live up to unrealistic expectations, not even for the love of her babies, though this is a powerful love indeed. She is a human mother, warm, true, and with some prickles. After all, God is the only perfect Parent.

The concept of the “good enough” mother encouraged me to take another look at the mothers in my childhood novels. After the first few pages they evaporated, dying of consumption or whisked away by a mean husband (or both, as in David Copperfield). Even in fiction, perfect mothers cannot last the distance. If they don’t disappear, they have servants (these were old novels after all). The cook made those picnic lunches. Mama wasn’t digging in a disorganized attic for a picnic basket. She was lying on the chaise lounge, calm, collected, and unobtrusively beautiful.

When our first son was only a few months old, I had a chance to ask author Madeleine L’Engle for tips on balancing motherhood and writing. Her advice surprised and frustrated me: “Don’t write for two years; just enjoy the babies.” If you’re reading this, you’ll know that I didn’t fully take her advice. But I didn’t ignore it either. I pondered it deeply, and it has defined when I put pen to paper. Though my sons are only toddlers, I already find myself wistful for when they were newborns. I don’t want my memory of their babyhood to be a fog of hurry and mixed-up priorities.

I don’t know if L’Engle took her own advice, or if she learned this lesson in retrospect. Certainly, the characters in her first novel, *A Wrinkle in Time*, contrast strikingly with the ones which *formed* my ideals. In particular, Mrs. Murry, the mother on the scene, is unconventional: a brilliant scientist who is unconcerned with formalities and the neighbors’ gossip. The household isn’t exactly chaotic, but it isn’t clockwork either. What makes it a model, in theory if not in the details, is the love that the children experience from their mother and her obvious confidence in them. She isn’t perfect, but she is present. She cannot shield her children from all pain and anxiety, but she guides them through it.

The Psalmist says “even perfection has its limits” (Psalm 119:96). I still have an ideal mother in mind, but she isn’t perfect. Instead of clinging to an unhealthy standard and squeezing my children into the picture, I can see their needs and a few of my own as well. I have time to write because it helps me be a good-enough mother, happier and calmer. I fight myself to prefer happy toddlers over a clean and efficient household. And when biting begins, I repeat to myself, “I’m the grown-up” many times while the boys disrupt the pretty but unrealistic pictures of mothering in my head.

Kathryn Coad Narramore is a writer and mother who lives in Jersey City, N.J. 



When Should You Seek Professional Help?

By Dr. Clyde Narramore



When is a personality problem sufficiently severe to warrant seeking professional help? My first response to such a serious question might be, "Several years ago!" Most people wait much too long before seeking help from a Christian counselor.

People usually do not grow out of serious problems. They must be helped out. If a maladjustment has taken root in one's life and has become rather serious, it would have been far better to seek help when it was first apparent. Otherwise, the situation usually becomes worse and more involved as time goes on.

We feel comfortable seeing a medical doctor if we have aches, pains, and physical disabilities, but we are less likely to look for help with emotional, personality, and general life problems. Here are several indications that an adult should seek professional counseling:

General unhappiness: Life should be gratifying and rewarding. God has intended that we function well. The Bible says, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). We expect some rough spots in life, because we are imperfect people living among imperfect people in an imperfect world. We cannot expect perfection until Christ comes for us. But when a person is unhappy most of the time, it's a sign that he needs outside help.

Inability to cope daily. A person who is functioning normally is able to take life's bumps in stride. Although he may waver occasionally, he is able to get up and con- ➤

tinue. In other words, he has the ability to cope with the general demands of life. If not, he should seek special help. And remember, God usually uses trained people to help people.

Difficult to live with. Have you ever thought about the fact that you and I should be fun to live with? We should be giving off happy vibes much of the time. We should be thoughtful and kind. We should be interesting, encouraging, and decisive. But this is the opposite of how many people feel. They are not fun to live with. Just recently, a lady told me that her husband (plus his father and grandfather) were alcoholics. Here were three generations of disabled, angry, abusive people who certainly have not been fun to live with. If a person is not a pleasing person to be around, he needs to seek professional help. We need not go through life agitating others.

Inability to trust people. One time when I was pointing out to an audience that an emotionally healthy person is usually able to trust others, a man jumped to his feet and called out, "But you can't! They'll take you to the cleaners every time they get a chance!" Naturally, some people are not very trustworthy, but most are. And the well-adjusted person is able to count on others most of the time. People who are non-trusting, suspicious, and paranoid need professional help.

Uncontrolled compulsive behavior. Many of us are at least a little compulsive in some ways. And this is normal. But when a person is rigidly compulsive, it is an indication there are dynamics at work that need to be corrected. We don't have to be controlled by compulsions.

Exaggerated emotional responses. We laugh, we cry, and we respond in various ways. That is to

be expected. But if a person has persistent, exaggerated emotional responses, it is an indication that he may need help to establish a meaningful balance in his life. Roller coaster emotional responses are indications of poor emotional well-being.

Career complications: Another sign that we may need special help is continued vocational unhappiness. We should look forward to going to work most days, and when we return home in the evening we should look back on the day with



You and I are not without adequate resources to resolve our spiritual, emotional, and relational struggles. As we do get help, we can become more effective, happier servants of God."

satisfaction. But many people can hardly wait until the close of the day, or the end of the week, or retirement! Perhaps they are in the wrong vocation or have personality hang-ups. Perhaps there are people at work who are "keeping the pot boiling." If a person is not happy in his work, he can seek help from specialists who can enable him to turn things around.

Unexplained aches and pains. We all have a few aches and pains from time to time. And some people suffer more than others. But aches and pains usually tell us that something in our bodies or emotions is not functioning properly and needs attention. Excessive stress or anxiety may be the root. They may be telling us to get help!

Spiritual ineffectiveness. Human beings are spiritual beings. We are made in the likeness of God. We

have a capacity for God and we can know Him personally and become fruitful. And He can help us every step of the way. Unfortunately, many people who know Christ as their personal Savior have difficulty experiencing a loving, enjoyable relationship with God. They may perceive God as distant, dissatisfied, or angry with them. A pastor may help. Often these feelings are due to unresolved emotional issues and can be helped by a sensitive Christian psychologist.

Unresolved issues. Most issues in life are resolved in some way before they become too severe. But some problems go on and on. For example, a lady recently talked to me about her son who had left the family 18 years ago. When he left he said, "I never want to see your face again as long as I live!" She is still incredibly burdened by this painful experience. It is normal that she is experiencing heartache over her son's rejection. But her life had come to a screeching halt

when her son left, and she had never moved beyond that point. She has talked to the Lord about it many times, and that's important. But she needs also to talk to a counselor whom God has gifted to help her work through this unresolved issue.

These then, are some of the signs that a person should seek professional help. Not many years ago, there were hardly any trained Christian counselors anywhere. But today there are many. Organizations such as the Narramore Christian Foundation are able to offer referrals in most parts of America and in some other countries.

In short, you and I are not without adequate resources to resolve our spiritual, emotional, and relational struggles. As we do get help, we can become more effective, happier servants of God!

Are Introverted People Less Well Adjusted?

Q: I have been a shy person all of my life. Do introverted people have some kind of flaw or are they less well adjusted than extroverts?



Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

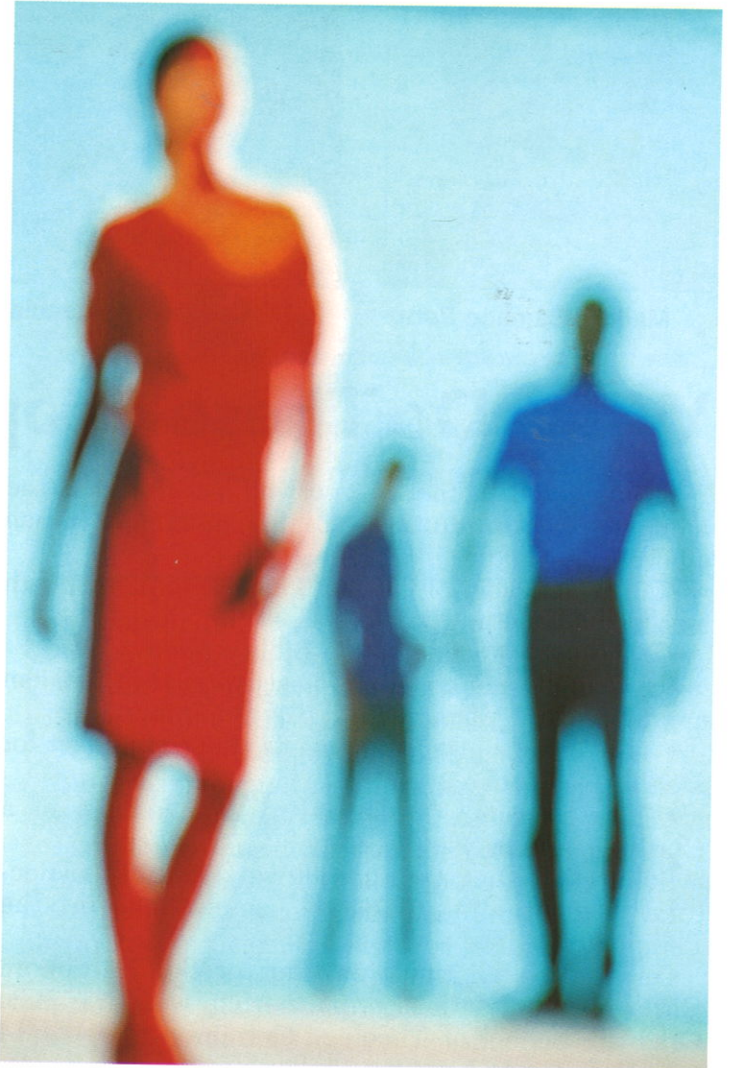
A: Your question is a good one and one that many people ask. I can relate readily to your question since I, too, am more introverted by nature. My work and other activities have forced me to outgrow this basic tendency somewhat, but at heart I am still a rather shy person.

We all range from being highly extroverted to highly introverted. Although most of us fall somewhere along the middle, there are many outstanding, happy, and fulfilled people at both ends of this continuum. As a matter of fact, an introverted personality style can be an asset that leads some people to be outstanding scholars or researchers or people who love to read or who are excellent with math and details. For example, if I am hiring an accountant, give me the introvert any day! On the other hand, if I am hiring a salesman, I will prefer an extrovert. In other words, being introverted is not necessarily a problem unless that style interferes with our work or relationships or personal fulfillment. Also, the Bible does not put any more value on people who are outgoing than those who are rather quiet!

There can also be advantages to being somewhat shy. Shy people do not push people away by being too forward or aggressive. Many people feel more comfortable with rather quiet and shy people.


The research on introversion shows that much of it is inborn. We seem to enter this world with a basic tendency toward either introversion or extroversion. This tendency is then influenced by our early life experiences. An excess of criticism, harsh punishment, or other family conflicts and dynamics can make even the most outgoing person begin to withdraw and become more shy. And if we already have a basically introverted tendency, painful early experiences can solidify those tendencies into a lifelong style.

Sometimes a serious lack of confidence or other negative feelings about ourselves lead us to withdraw and become less outgoing. If we don't see ourselves as competent, worthwhile individuals, we will hesitate to inter-



act more freely. When this happens the problem really isn't introversion but rather a poor self-concept. That can be overcome by getting to the root of our feelings of inferiority and learning to see ourselves as people who are wonderfully created by God with talents like everyone else, and learning to step out of our safety zone and reach out more to others.

Many rather quiet and reserved people are happy just the way they are. They are not longing to be aggressive, life-of-the-party people.

In summary, don't feel bad about your introverted style, but if you are painfully shy because of a poor self-concept, don't hesitate to seek out counseling to work through your negative feelings toward yourself. 



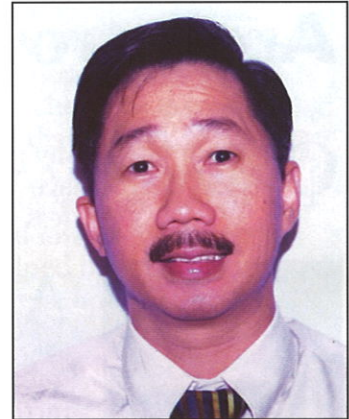
Madora Samaco Perez



Cecilia T. Regencia



Moises Casiple Ardina, Jr.



Elson T. Lao

What Do These People Have In Common?

- A widowed mother of two who has served as the administrator of the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture.
- A staff member of Campus Crusade for Christ with a college degree in Commerce.
- The Dean of Students at a Bible college.
- An accounting clerk who is active in the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of the Philippines.
- The director of a live-in counseling community for men with addictive issues.
- The treasurer of the Board of Directors of a Christian language study center.

Believe it or not, they are all working on their doctoral degrees in Christian counseling in the Philippines!

One of the exciting ministries of the Narramore Christian Foundation is partnering with the Asia Graduate School of Theology to train a group of 14 men and women from the Philippines to become professional Christian counselors. The program, under the direction of Dr. Fred Gingrich of the Alliance Biblical Seminary, is the only one of its kind in the entire nation. Dr. Bruce Narramore serves as a consultant to the program and taught the first intensive course in the unique doctoral program in 2001.

This month we want to introduce you to six of the outstanding doctoral students in this program. Each of these outstanding students are already in positions of Christian leadership and each student is receiving a scholarship from the Narramore Christian Foundation to enable them to finish this critically needed doctoral program training. Just think of thousands that each of them will help when he/she finishes training.

Madora Samaco Perez was widowed at age thirty-two after seven years of marriage. She has raised two children while serving as Minister for Worship, Christian Education, Counseling, and Administration at Diliman Bible Church. Madora has a special ministry to young people with drug problems, single parents, and street children who have been emotionally, physically and sexually abused. She has also served as a tentmaker in the City of Baguio, worked as a research assistant in the College of Food Science at the University of the Philippines and has put up a food outlet in an outlying province.

Cecilia T. Regencia received a B.S. in Accounting and took graduate studies at the Alliance Biblical Seminary (Manila) before entering the Christian counseling doctoral program. She has worked in various capacities in the business world and served as Director of PSALM, Inc., a Christian ministry in the greater Manila region. Cecilia is an active member of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of the Philippines.

Elson T. Lao is a staff member with Campus Crusade for Christ and a youth leader and deacon in his church. He has a bachelor's degree in commerce and accounting and worked in a family business before entering full-time ministry.

Moises Casiple Ardina, Jr. received his bachelor of theology degree from Ebenezer Bible College in the Philippines, and a master's in Christian counseling from Alliance Biblical Seminary. Moises has served as a senior pastor for his church and Dean of Men and Director of Christian Service at Ebenezer Bible College and



Evelyn Aton Palarca




Ruel R. Billones

Seminary He is a popular speaker and seminar leader on relationships and marriage and family living and is studying for his doctorate in order to deepen his ministry to pastors who are facing burnout and family problems. Moises and his wife, Anne, have a twelve-year-old son, Mikhael Adrian.

Evelyn Aton Palarca has an incredible array of educational and ministry experiences. She graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, served in secular business (as a CPA practitioner), with Christian organizations, and as a lecturer at University of the Philippines and De la Salle University. In addition to a busy professional career, Evelyn is active in the women's ministry of the Conservative Baptist Association of the Philippines and serves as an adult Sunday School teacher and member of the Board of Elders at the Capital City Baptist Church. She and her husband, Meriande are parents of four young adult children.

Ruel R. Billones is the Residential Program Director for a live-in counseling community for men with addictive issues. He also serves as a visiting clinical psychologist for a drug rehabilitation program. Ruel has studied in the United States, Switzerland, and Germany, as well as the Philippines where he received a Master of Divinity degree from the Asian Theological Seminary.

"Wow," you may say. "What an outstanding group of leaders with terrific backgrounds!" Please pray for these committed men and women as they are being equipped to have an even greater impact for Christ in the Philippines. 

NCF Helps Sharpen Relationship Skills in India and the Philippines


Did you know that interpersonal conflicts are among the three most frequent problems missionaries face? They are. Missionaries are no different from the rest of us and sometimes their personality and relational styles conflict. Without help, these conflicts can undermine an entire missionary endeavor or destroy a missionary team.



Without help, conflicts can undermine an entire missionary endeavor or destroy a missionary team.

Recently, NCF partnered with Christian leaders from Relationship Partners to offer intensive five-day seminars on "Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills" in India and the Philippines. The India workshop was held at the Hindustan Bible Institute, and the Philippine workshop was sponsored by Reach Ministries and held in Manila. This practical, biblically based seminar helps missionaries to think through and improve their interpersonal skills in their families and ministry. Participants hear short lectures and then practice communicating on topics like "Loving Listening," "Relationship Killers," "Building Personal Trust," "Living in Community," "The Ministry of Encouragement," "Biblical Confronting," and "How to Receive a Confrontation."

One participant told the seminar leader, "I tend to compromise my values due to my silence. I have learned to confront hard situations through this workshop." Another commented, "The session on encouragement was great. It gave me an opportunity to write to my wife saying 'You are a great person in my life!' which moved me to tears."

The Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills workshop was developed by Ken Williams of Relationship Partners and is now being offered at locations around the world. 

Tribute Gifts

Would you like us to join you in honoring your loved one? You can send a Tribute Gift or Living Memorial Gift to the ministries of the Narramore Christian Foundation.

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Presented by:


Mrs. Sharon K. Harris

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Compiled by Eva Hallam Solberg

Obsessions and Compulsions in Children

Many of us have persistent worries or repetitive routines that seem not entirely sensible. In people with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), these concerns and habits can become all-consuming and self-destructive. Although it is mainly familiar as an adult problem, OCD afflicts two to three percent of Americans.

Anxiety often accompanies obsessional thoughts. So does depression, partly because it may have symptoms in common with OCD — indecisiveness, rumination, and irrational guilt. The standard treatment for OCD at any age is exposure and response prevention — confronting patients with the things, places, and circumstances that provoke obsessions and forbidding performance of the compulsive rituals.

The therapist and patient join in making a list of situations, graded from least to most troublesome, and the level of exposure is gradually increased. Eventually, if all goes well, habituation reduces anxiety and makes the compulsive behavior unnecessary.

Behavior therapy is usually conducted in weekly sessions for three to five months. Additional therapies are muscle relaxation, deep breathing, and other techniques of anxiety management. Assertiveness training may help reduce anger, anxiety, or guilt associated with obsessional thinking. Family support groups are helpful.

—*The Harvard Mental Health Letter*

Herbal Remedies: Are They Safe and Effective?

Possible benefits and dangerous effects or drug interactions of some herbal remedies: Ginkgo Biloba: May improve memory and ward off dementia, but more research is needed. It allows people with poor blood flow to the legs (claudication) to walk farther with less pain. May enhance the effects of blood thinners and cause serious bleeding.

St. John's Wort: Improves mild to moderate depression. Can decrease blood levels of several prescription drugs, including blood thinners, oral contraceptives, and antivirals; can cause confusion, excitability, and shakiness if combined with certain antidepressants.

Ginseng: Does not appear to effectively treat any condition. May interact with blood-sugar controlling agents, the blood thinner warfarin, and certain antidepressants.

Echinacea: May prevent or speed recovery from upper respiratory tract infections, but more research is needed. May cause severe allergic reaction.

Saw Palmetto: Improves urinary symptoms and discomfort of enlarged prostate in men. May cause false-negative results on prostate-specific antigen test for prostate cancer.

Kava: Reduces anxiety. May cause serious liver damage; experts advise against its use.

—*New England Journal of Medicine*

A Christmas Tree From Jesus

By Ruth E. Narramore

It was my first Christmas home from China. I was thrilled with all the beautiful decorations in the store windows and in people's homes. China—being a pagan nation—did not celebrate Christmas. Of course, in our family we did, but our decorations were very minimal—paper chains and homemade ornaments. Nothing else



Ruth Narramore

was available. And our “tree” was usually a potted plant borrowed temporarily from the compound outside our living quarters.

But this year I was in America and things were different. I was especially excited at the prospect of having a real, honest-to-goodness Christmas tree. But trees were expensive that year and my parents, being missionaries, weren't exactly flushed with money. We had to look for bargains.

“Wait until the day before Christmas and trees will be very cheap,” friends advised. “By then the tree-lot owners are eager to get rid of their merchandise and they practically give their trees away.”

So that's how it was that my parents and I went out in quest of that special tree on the 24th of December. I was so happy I could hardly contain myself.

But my enthusiasm waned as the day wore on and it became apparent that there were no trees. They had all been sold; the lots were empty. There was a shortage of trees that year, my parents were told by the



empty-handed salesmen.

I think our little family tramped all over the Ridgewood section of Brooklyn before returning home—without a tree. My parents felt keenly disappointed for my sake. They knew how much their six-year-old daughter had counted on a Christmas tree.

That evening we sat down at the dinner table and Daddy called on me, as he sometimes did, to ask the blessing. I bowed my head and prayed fervently—but I doubt if I even mentioned the food. “Dear Jesus,” I said, “you know how much I want our house to be pretty for your birthday. So please, please send us a Christmas tree.”

I had no sooner finished my prayer and said “Amen” when the doorbell rang.

“I'll get it,” I said jumping up. “Maybe that's our Christmas tree!”

As I raced toward the door, Mother was close on my heels—not because she expected to see a tree, but in order to console me in my dis-

appointment. (No wonder God tells adults to have the faith of a child.)


We opened the door. Standing before us was a smiling little man balancing a fir tree beside him. I was sure he must be an angel!

“They gave my sister this tree at work today,” he explained, “but we already have a Christmas tree. I just wondered if you'd know anyone who would like to have it.”

We did! We surely did!

God proved that day that He was interested in the prayers of a little child. And He proved that He honors child-like faith.

Why would God involve Himself in something as mundane as a Christmas tree? Why? Because He cares about the happiness of a child.

Do we forget that Christmas is the story of a baby? Christ came into this world as an infant, then lived His childhood in the home of a human family. He understands the desires, the frustrations, the concerns, and the needs of little children. He's been there Himself! 

NAIROBI, KENYA

Missionary Counseling Center Is Dedicated In Africa

Judy and her colleagues are missionaries to a war torn country in Africa. When a mortar shell was fired into their home they were debriefed by missionary counselors and they have been able to continue their urgently needed assignment.

Eleven year old John was having difficulty completing his school-work and was often restless and inattentive. A missionary psychiatrist diagnosed John as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. He prescribed medication and helped the family learn how to help John cope at home and school. John is doing much better and his parents have been able to remain in their place of ministry.

Peter is a teenage MK who became depressed and suicidal. He received therapy and medication and is now doing well. His parents have been able to continue their ministry assignment.

Judy and John and Peter all

received help from the counseling staff of the Tumaini Counseling Center in Nairobi, Kenya. Tumaini, directed by NCF staff associate, Dr. Roger Brown, is the only counseling center of its kind on the African continent and serves missionary families from more than twenty African countries and more than fifty different mission agencies.

After more than three years of planning, preparation and construction, the staff of the Tumaini Counseling Center have just moved into their new headquarters on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya. With assistance from the Narramore Christian Foundation, Dr. Brown and his colleagues have been able to move from a cramped, noisy facility in downtown Nairobi (that was periodically burglarized) into a lovely facility nestled in a two-acre parcel of land dotted with small trees, shrubs and lushly flowering

bougainvillea.

This peaceful setting provides a wonderful place of renewal for missionary families who come to recover from traumatic experiences and receive help for a wide range of personal and family problems and struggles.

Shirley Brown (below), wife of Tumaini Counseling Center director, Dr. Roger Brown, puts finishing decorating touches on the lovely new missionary counseling center headquarters.







FOUR FACTS You Should Know About Your Finances

✓ If you are 55 or older, you can receive, depending on your age, annual returns between 6% and 12 % for as long as you live, through an NCF Annuity *and* receive a tax deduction.

✓ If you haven't updated your will for 5-8 years it could be seriously out of date.

✓ You can avoid paying capital gains tax on your appreciated property.

✓ Narramore Christian Foundation offers a variety of plans to meet your individual needs.

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