



PSYCHOLOGY FOR
LIVING
MARCH / APRIL 2000

- **The Gift of Feelings**
- **Three Keys to Effective Parenting**
- **I Thought GOD Would Heal ME**

Emotional Baggage

by Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

I am writing this while I am traveling on an overseas trip. At each stop, my wife and I have to pick up our baggage, clear customs, or move it to another airline or our hotel. Our baggage is heavy, and as I was lugging it between stops, I started thinking of the emotional baggage that so many of us carry. Then I thought of the approaching Easter season when we remember that Jesus Christ was crucified and rose again in order to reconcile us to God. This was his greatest eternal gift to us. But in dying instead of us, Christ was also relieving us of some of our heaviest emotional baggage and burdens.



Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

Every person carries at least three heavy pieces of emotional baggage. **We fear** that someday we will be found out for who we really are and that we will have to pay for our sins and failures. **We feel guilt** over not being all that we could be. And **we crave acceptance** and love by those that matter to us. When Jesus was crucified, he provided the ultimate solution for each of these universal life struggles.

First, he took the penalty for our sins and removed us from under the law, which we could never fulfill. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Christ has brought us out from under the doom of that impossible system by taking the curse for our wrongdoing upon himself" (Galatians 3: 13). The Apostle John also wrote, "There is no fear in love. Perfect love casts out all fear" (I John 4:18). Since Christ has paid the penalty for all of our sins, we have no need to be afraid of God and his justice.

Second, when Jesus died for our sins, he also removed the foundation for all of our guilt before God and our associated guilty feelings. The Apostle Paul wrote, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). Therefore, we will never be condemned by God because Jesus took the condemnation we deserved. Since God has forgiven us and doesn't condemn us, we have no need to condemn ourselves with guilty emotions and self-hating feelings because of sins that are forgiven.

Finally, when Jesus died and rose again, he made us God's loved children forever. Even though he has created the entire human race, we do not become fully his children until we place our faith in Jesus Christ's dying and being raised from the dead for us. But once we do, we are God's children for eternity. Paul wrote, "Long ago, even before he made the world, God chose us to be his very own, through what Christ would do for us; he decided then to make us holy in his eyes, without a single fault—we who stand before him covered with his love" (Ephesians 1:4, TLB).

What wonderful assurances and life-changing truths. Our punishment is paid—so we can be free of fear. Our guilt is gone—so we no longer need to suffer from a guilty conscience. And we have become God's eternally loved and accepted children. We don't have to keep on carrying our emotional baggage. What a healing message we remember at this Easter Season!

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Three Keys to Effective Parenting
.....by Doreen J. Dodgen-Magee
- 6 Don't Let Unfulfilled Wishes
Destroy Your Marriage
.....by Maribeth Ekey
- 8 Wanted: Loving Parents!
.....by Vicki K. Harvey
- 10 I thought God would heal Me
.....by Phillip Aaron
- 12 The Gift of Feelings
.....by Dick Innes
- 14 Preadolescent Hypersensitivity
.....by Bruce Narramore & Vern Lewis
- 16 Life without Legs
.....by Harold C. Herr
- 19 Ask Dr. Narramore
.....by Bruce Narramore
- 20 Reflections
.....by Clyde M. Narramore
- 21 To Think About
.....by Ruth E. Narramore
- 22 NCF in Action
- 23 Health Watch
.....by Eva Hallam Solberg
- 24 Letters



THE STAFF

President:
Dr. Bruce Narramore
Founder:
Dr. Clyde M. Narramore

Director of Publications & Editor:
Dick Innes

Editorial Staff: Ruth E. Narramore, Eva Hallam Solberg
Art Director: Richard W. McDill
Photographer: Benjamin Burnweit

Published bimonthly by the Narramore Christian Foundation, 250 W. Colorado Blvd., Suite 200, Arcadia, California 91007. All material in this issue is subject to United States and international copyright laws. **Permission to reproduce** may be obtained only by writing the editor. **Change of Address:** When ordering a change, please send your OLD address along with the NEW, enclosing the label, if possible. **Manuscripts featuring a Christian perspective on family, relational and emotional adjustment are welcome if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.**

How to get PSYCHOLOGY FOR LIVING on a regular basis: This helpful publication is not sold by subscription but is sent to supporters of the NCF ministries. Your donation of \$20 or more will bring each issue of LIVING magazine to your home along with other beneficial literature on everyday problems. Write to NCF, P. O. Box 661900, Arcadia, CA 91066-1900, or phone (626) 821-8400.



Three Keys to Effective Parenting

by Doreen J. Dodgen-Magee

My phone rings and I pick up the receiver to hear my answering service informing me that I have “an urgent call from Holly,” a student in a parenting class I teach. I dial the number and am taken back when the phone is answered and I hear a shrieking child in the background. I tell Holly that I am returning her call and she quickly interrupts and tearfully says, “I’m losing it. Chelsea won’t put her shoes on, and I told her we couldn’t go on our play date until they were on! We’re really late, and I’m really mad, and Chelsea’s furious! I’ve looked in three books and in my notes from your class, and I can’t figure out what to do. What do I do?”

Somewhat baffled, I shake my head and reply, “Your child is screaming, you are fuming, and you’re looking at books?!”

“Of course,” Holly answers. “What else can I do? I have no idea what to do with her!”

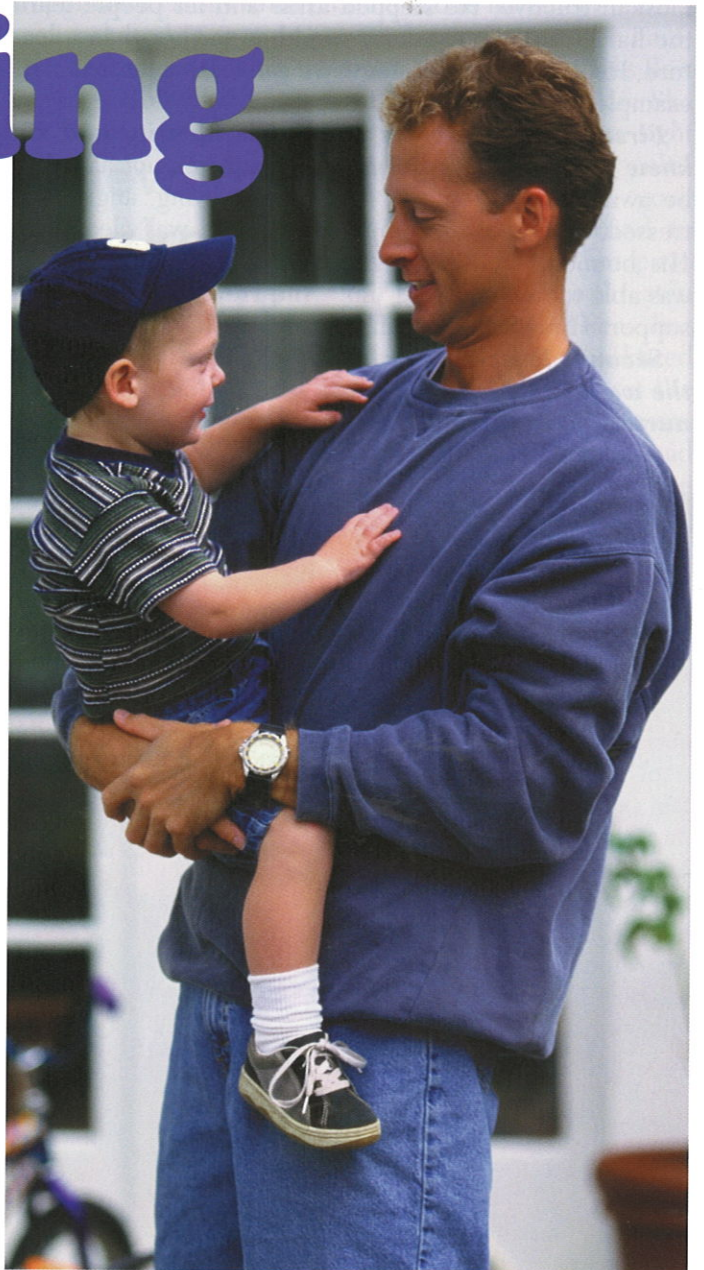
Holly is not alone. Plenty of young mothers know exactly how she feels. Tired from sleep loss, lack of time for self or spouse, and the task of rethinking their life goals and priorities since the arrival of their children, parents are often left floundering for ideas and on the verge of tears — or rage.

Couple this with an ever-growing library of literature providing guidelines for “perfect parenting,” and these moms and dads are ready to trade in their parental instincts for the advice of “experts” with “fool-proof guarantees.”

Unfortunately, books and courses spelling out rigid formulas, techniques, and rules often short-circuit the natural parental creativity and instincts that moms and dads already possess. Too many books and formulas miss the unique needs of the child and the common-sense solutions already available to the parent.

So I listened until Holly quieted down. Then I asked her what she and her daughter really needed most right then. “We need to slow down,” she said. “and figure out what is really important — getting her shoes on, getting to the play date on time, or getting along with each other.”

“You’re right,” I said. “You know what you need to do; you just lost sight of it in your anxiety to be on time.”



Relationship, not Rules

Good parenting is the product of a loving, sensitive relationship between parents and a child. Although there are many good books on parenting, and many helpful parenting principles, the absolute bottom line is the unique relationship between you and your child. If you have this, ideas and solutions to your parenting problems will follow. Jesus’ life and relationships give an excellent model to follow. He trusted His intuition and sensitivity to people. He didn’t rigidly follow the rules. In fact, He broke some

of the Pharisees' most cherished regulations. Certain of who He was, His interactions with those He encountered richly demonstrate a grounded flexibility. When listening was required, He listened. When firm correction was in order, He provided it. When natural consequences were most instructive, He stepped aside and let people learn the hard way. When a story would go farther than a lecture, He provided an analogy. We can learn a lot from His example.

First, Jesus was clear about His identity and He knew Himself incredibly well. Jesus was not afraid to be aware of His feelings — whether loving, angry, distressed, troubled, or compassionate. He was clear with His boundaries and straightforward in His speech. He was able to say “yes” and “no.” And He enlisted others to support Him and help Him.

Second, Jesus knew who He was dealing with and the ways in which they could best be led, instructed, nurtured, or corrected. He communicated in ways that

capitalized on the listener's style and temperament, and tailored His interactions to those He was with. Jesus wasn't rigid in His approach with people.

Third, Jesus had a long-term goal. He was clear about what He valued and He maintained a clear focus on His goals. Jesus came to earth for a purpose, and He always related to others with that purpose in mind. And in every interaction He worked out a plan that was congruent with His values of love, honesty, holiness, and respect for the significance of every human being.

Knowing Yourself

We parents also need to know ourselves. We need to be aware of our strengths and weaknesses, our values, biases, and the childhood feelings and experiences that shape our approaches to parenting. A father who has unresolved anger over the rigid, punitive punishment he received from his parents, may overcompensate with his own child by failing to discipline. A mother who has strong feelings of failure when she cannot meet her own perfectionistic expectations for herself at home, church, or in the community, may become depressed or resentful at her child for taking so much of her time.

We were all raised in less-than-perfect environments that have influenced our values and ways of relating and being in the world. As adults, we need to examine ourselves and see how effective our ways of living are. Perhaps we have personal deficits which need attention. If we do not, our parenting will be driven by our unconscious, rather than by our intentional, choices.

If your personality style is causing problems in your parenting, forget the books on parenting. Spending time with a spouse, friend, pastor, therapist, or other trusted individual can help. Explore your own spiritual lacks and how your own temperament and/or childhood experiences have impacted you — and now, years later, the way in which you parent and relate to your own child. Ask for honest feedback on the way you interact with your child. If you and your spouse approach parenting very differently, get another party to



help you talk it over. It is even more important that you communicate and understand each other than it is that you agree wholeheartedly on all of your parenting interventions. Even when you disagree, you can develop a plan for handling those situations.

Knowing Your Child

If your nose is stuck in a book, or your mind is entangled in a rule-giving flow chart, you may be learning more about the book than you are about your child. You need to look at your child, listen to him and get to know him better.

Jesus was interested in our inner lives. The Bible says, "Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12: 34). Get to know your children from the inside out. Consider the ways in which your child processes information. Does your daughter learn by direct instruction, by trial and error, or by watching? Notice the kind of interventions to which she responds positively . . . and why. Ask her what she dislikes about those to whom she responds negatively. Responding to a child without a knowledge of how she or he ticks will render many of your most sincere efforts useless. Jesus tailored His encounters to the specific traits, needs, and styles of each person. As parents, we need to do the same.

A tricky issue here lies in how well your child's temperament and style complements, or clashes with yours. If there is a good, natural fit between your child's personality style and yours, the relationship often develops quite smoothly, and creative parenting interventions are easy to come by. If you have contrasting styles, however, you are more likely to have hassles and clashes. That's one reason God gave children two parents! At least one of the parents should be more sensitive to a particular child. If your child's style conflicts with yours, be careful and be patient. Learn to value his own distinctive style and learn to see the strength in it. You can also use a child's contrasting personality to help you smooth out a few rough edges of your own!

Some children have special problems which need professional attention. If your child continues to have problems over a period of time, you may want to have an evaluation by a person who is professionally trained to diagnose and treat such difficulties.

Having a Plan

Even moms and dads who have a great match between their personalities and their child's need plans for educating, guiding, disciplining, and communicating with their child. They need goals — to raise a healthy, happy, responsible, spiritually-committed child — and a general plan for handling disciplinary problems.

Once you realize that mealtimes, mornings, playtimes,

or nap times are difficult with your child, plan ahead! Develop a plan that allows for some changes, (depending on the situation), yet provides you a basic framework for handling those problems the next time they arise.

Let's think back to Holly, for example. It is extremely important to Holly to be on time and to have her children well behaved. The moment Chelsea's desire to be bare-foot encountered Holly's desire to be prompt, sparks flew because Holly had no thought-out, intentional plan. She


“Somewhat baffled, I shake my head and reply, “Your child is screaming, you are fuming, and you’re looking at books?”

had lost sight of her ultimate goal. She tried to use her power to threaten Chelsea, but that backfired and upset the child even more. If Holly had been secure within herself and thought

this type of situation through, she probably would have decided it was less important to be punctual for their play date than it was to have a happy time together. This was an opportunity for Chelsea to learn to deal with conflicting wishes and emotions.

Holly could have taken time to find out why Chelsea didn't want to wear her shoes. Perhaps they hurt her feet. Or perhaps she was feeling rushed. Or maybe she was just in a bad mood, ready to be upset by anything. Having an understanding mother was more important than having a punctual mother at that point. If Holly had listened and been sensitive to Chelsea's thoughts and feelings, she could have preserved a good emotional connection with her daughter, found a reasonable solution, and moved on. To do that, Holly needed to (1) *know herself* (especially her anxiety over being on time), (2) *understand her daughter*—especially why she sometimes cries and doesn't want to cooperate—and (3) *have a plan*—built around her long-range goal of raising an emotionally and spiritually mature and happy child.

Like Holly, all parents need to know themselves and be sensitive to their own moods and personalities. They need to understand their children's individual, unique styles, needs, and temperments. We need to keep our long-range goal for our children in mind and have a plan to help them move in that direction.

Doreen J. Dodgen-Magee, Psy.D. is a Christian psychologist who lives in Oregon with her husband, Thomas, and their children, Connor and Kiaja. She maintains a counseling practice in Portland and teaches classes for parents of young children. 

Don't Let **Unfulfilled** Childhood **Wishes**



Destroy Your Marriage



by **Maribeth Ekey**

Sarah and Jack were in the third year of what was a second marriage for both of them. Sarah resented Jack's not paying enough attention to her children. She wanted Jack to spend more time with her eight- and ten-year-old daughters. Her wishes—which had become demands—were becoming a constant source of friction between Sarah and Jack. It was hard for Sarah to let go of her wishes.

Sarah's daughters were excited about their new daddy. He was

much more attentive to them than their real father had been. He giggled at their jokes; they were just sure their baseball game had improved because of his coaching; and he would read them stories as though he were the actual characters, screwing up his face in truly funny ways. His new daughters adored him and courted him. But when Jack was not available to the girls—even after their best attempts to charm him into another game or "just one more story"—their faces fell. They would become terribly disappointed, and they had no finesse in hiding their feelings. Nor did

they want to since sometimes Daddy wavered and gave in if they got sad enough!

Her daughters' sadness was the part Sarah could not bear. She could not stand seeing her daughters look so pitifully sad. In those moments, she thought Jack was harsh and unreasonable, and in her anger at him, she had difficulty loving him.

In reality, Sarah's girls need to learn to deal with some disappointments so they will know how to deal with losses later in life—especially relationships with men. Fathers need to say "no" to their daughters sometimes. Always gratifying a child's wishes leads to unrealistic expectations. A young girl can be the center of her daddy's world, but one day as an adult in a world of five billion people, she will become less special. Fathers who give *too much* special attention to their daughters can make the transition from home to the world difficult.

Too much frustration of wishes can be harmful (Ephesians 6:4). It can lead to a child's giving up in a quest for closeness with others. But meeting all of our children's wishes isn't helpful either.

The growing child needs to be weaned gradually from the need for special attention and learn that others have needs, too. Achieving this goal is one of the keys to the emotional maturing of the developing child. Actually, Jack was maintaining a fairly good balance.

The High Cost of Pursuing Childish Wishes

Sarah was overreacting. Her response to the interactions between Jack and her daughters was out of tune with what was actually happening. Sarah wished Jack would *always* gratify her children's wishes so she could pretend everything was idyllic in her current reality. In this way, she could avoid dealing with her own unmet childhood wishes. But attempting to do this through her daughters was creating a double bind for the family. On one hand, if Sarah got her way, it would be harmful for her daughters; on the other hand, as Jack resisted her wishes, her ongoing demands put a strain on their relationship, as well as on Jack's relationship with his stepdaughters.

Since Jack had grown up under a critical, domineering mother, he tended to react negatively toward domineering people. So when Sarah kept pressuring him, he started feeling resistant to spending time with his stepdaughters, whom he otherwise enjoyed.

The Wish Behind The Wish

Sarah came to me for therapy seeking help for her daughters. But as we explored the conflicts, she realized she needed help in resolving some of her own emotional struggles. So Sarah and I began to piece together her background.

Sarah had been the pampered center of her mother's world until age three, when her baby brother was born. From that time on Sarah was painfully playing second fiddle. But Sarah was gutsy. She retaliated and set out to win her daddy's heart. She was beguiling and persuasive and she appeared to have won him over. It felt like a triumph. In the face of her mother's obvious preference for boys, little Sarah had won the kingpin.

The great big "So there!" she nurtured in her heart did not,

however, erase the sadness and emptiness she felt in the loss of her mother's attention. She wished for an idyllic relationship with Daddy that would soothe all her hurts, make her feel special rather than demoted, and assure her that she didn't need her mother, anyhow. But underneath these wishes, the sadness and emptiness surrounding the loss of her status and closeness with her mother lay undisturbed and unresolved. As an adult Sarah still unconsciously craved her father's affection and attention so she would not have to face her sadness and emptiness regarding the loss of her mother's attention.

This need for her father's special attention to cover her own pain was being acted out years later with Jack and her own daughters. For Sarah the temporary and harmless dejection on her daughters' faces when they felt disappointed by their stepfather was tapping into a far greater pain—hers! She thought her daughters must be feeling as badly as she did as a child. Her


daughters' occasional disappointments reminded Sarah of those occasions in her own childhood when her father had failed to cater to her wish for special treatment. This plunged her into dark despair. Now when she saw her daughters confronting their disappointments, she could not see their losses as natural and necessary. She could only see them as catastrophic—like her childhood losses had felt.

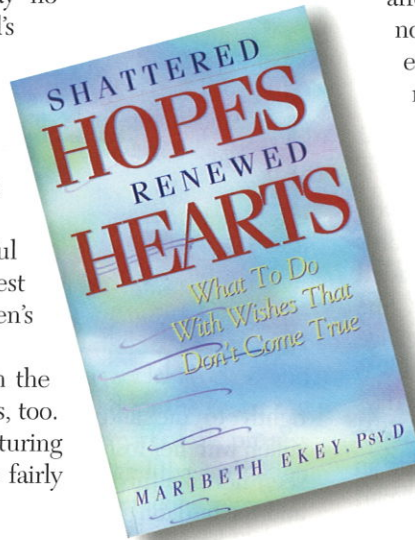
A Resolution

There were several steps to the resolution of this couple's conflict. **First**, Sarah was willing to consider that perhaps the problem was not all Jack's. This can actually be the most difficult step in resolving marital problems. Blaming one's partner can bring a type of temporary relief. Instead of continuing to demand that Jack change his behavior, Sarah began to realize that part of what she was wanting was not realistic.

Second, as Sarah explored her own long buried and defensive wishes toward her father, she began to understand how much his over-gratification had cost her. From this perspective, she could begin to appreciate and respect Jack's saying "no" to the girls.

Last, Sarah was willing to do the painful work of facing and resolving the sadness behind her unrealistic wishes. That freed her from overreacting to Jack's saying "no" on occasion to her daughters. And Jack was willing to listen to and care for his wife once he could get out from under the "bad guy" role and was able to support her through this process.

Maribeth Ekey, Psy.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist located in Fullerton, California. This article is adapted from her book, *Shattered Hopes, Renewed Hearts*. Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1998. 

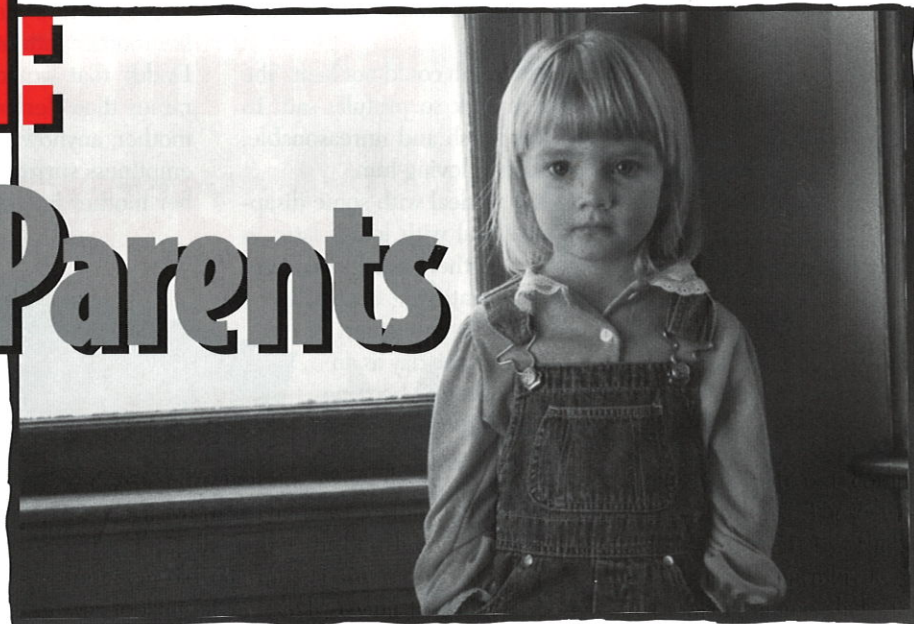
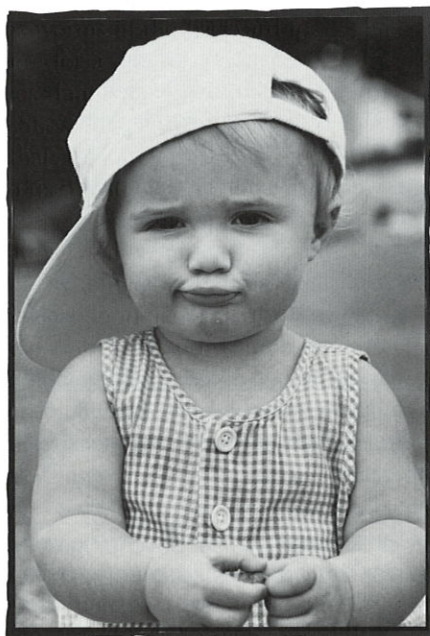


Wanted: Loving Parents

by Vicki K. Harvey

“And when I come, I’ll call you Mom.” These were the words spoken by the curly-headed four-year-old charmer at my elbow. She was looking at me shyly, trying to gauge my reaction. At this instant, I knew I was in love. We had met Nicole only four days before, and were sitting in the living room of her foster parents’ home discussing an upcoming visit to our house. It was all part of the “dating” process of adopting an older child. At this point we were “friends of the family” who just wanted to show Nicole our house. It was all part of introducing the idea of a new family gradually, allowing her and us time to bond.

Nicole was having none of it. She knew what was up, and she was way ahead of us. The planned four-hour visit to our house turned into an overnighter. The next day when we tried to take her back, she clung



tightly to me and was withdrawn and sullen with her foster family. They’d never seen her like this and decided this back-and-forth “dating” was too difficult for her. If we were sure she was for us, they said we should take her permanently right then. We did, stopping at Mervyn’s on the way home for an emergency supply of clothes. That was a year ago. Neither we nor Nicole have ever looked back.

Today, Nicole is a vivacious kindergartner, nearly indistinguishable from her classmates. She had the lead in her recent school play. She roughhouses with her two big dogs and her daddy on a daily basis. She digs worms in the backyard to take them for a ride in her wagon, and sees fantasy figures in the clouds. She’s so free with hugs and kisses that I often can’t go from room to room without becoming a recipient. And she goes to therapy once a week. Her prayers are more poignant than those of her friends: “Please God, give all the children a good mommy and daddy. Keep the bad people away. I love my mommy and daddy.” And quietly, a few weeks ago, her middle and last names changed as her adoption became official.

Three years ago John and I had to decide what we were going to do about a family. I had postponed this decision while I completed my graduate training and became established in my career. Now, nearing forty years of age, I was having diffi-

culty getting pregnant. We consulted a fertility specialist and began the tests and the Clomid and the “window of opportunity” each month when John would rush home for our so-called romantic time together. Talk about stress! None of it felt right. Is this how God meant to create our family? This was how friends of ours were going about it. It was what our parents



wanted us to do. But something about it didn’t fit for us.

About this time I read an article about the foster care system in Los Angeles County and the nation in general. In the U.S. there are 500,000 children living in foster care. Of those, 110,000 are candidates for adoption (figures have been updated to reflect the 1999/2000 census). There are 20,000 foster kids per year who reach age eighteen never having been adopted. These numbers are staggering, and they hit me hard. To reach adulthood never having a parent who had made a commitment to you? Not having any-

where to belong? I thought this was one of the worst travesties imaginable.

The problem is that most people who adopt want babies. The courts, as they must, are determined to protect the rights of both birth parents and children, and by the time they legally free the child for adoption, the child is often way out of babyhood. In Nicole's case, she should have been adoptable by at least age three. But she "fell through the cracks," staying in a foster home for over a year before an overworked system finally caught up with where her case was legally, terminated parental rights, and brought us in as potential parents.

As we prayed, we knew in our hearts that we were meant to adopt an older

on the Internet. There were dozens of ethnicities, physical limitations, emotional problems, and intellectual capacities to choose from. We were supposed to say what would and would not be acceptable. This made no sense to me. What if we excluded club feet, but the child that could bond with me had that particular problem? Would that in any way alter our love for her? Absolutely not! But the form had to be filled out. In the end, our one hard and fast requirement was that it be a girl between four and six years of age. Now, knowing what I do, I would also require that the child had lived in one stable, loving foster home. I think the year she spent with her excellent foster parents made all the difference for Nicole. My own intangible requirement was that she still retained the capacity to "connect" with us. I explained this to the social worker, and then hoped and prayed for the best.

By far, the toughest part of the process was the waiting. That, and the realization that someone else — someone you don't know very well — is in charge of picking out a child for you. I like to be in control. This felt as far out of my control as about anything I could imagine. As months went by without word, we wondered, *Have we been forgotten? Is anything going to happen?* When we called to get an update, we received a curt response. "We don't have a match for you. We'll call you if and when we do." I bought little-girl furniture, stenciled balloons and birds on the



walls of her room, and waited.

Now, looking back, I kick myself for my impatience. If we'd been called sooner, it wouldn't have been Nicole. No other child would have been as perfect for us. The love that wells up in me daily for this irrepressible little sparkplug is amazing to me. God was planning all along for us to be a family. It's clear to me that He orchestrated the "match." Why do I have to learn time and time again to wait and trust?

Sure, there have been adjustments. Nicole's initial wish to come to us belied her lack of understanding of what was involved in starting all over with a new family. There were a few delays in her social development. But already, after less than a year of treatment, those have been largely overcome. Do I love her as much as a natural-born child, or if I'd begun with her as a baby? Not having experienced either of those, it is hard to say for sure, yet when I consider my own bursting heart, I know the answer.

Parents who reach out in this way not only have the ordinary joy and love that come to us from our children (to help compensate for the nonstop demands), but there is, I think, an added dimension. These are children that have already experienced the unfairness of life. They take nothing for granted. As Nicole is learning that here, finally, is a place she can trust, relax, be, grow, she is making up for lost time with leaps and bounds. We are ring-side for the show. And we get the deep satisfaction that comes from being part of God's grand adventure in bringing all of His children back to Himself. I wouldn't miss that for the world!

Vicki K. Harvey, Psy.D., is a Christian psychologist who lives in Southern California with her husband, John, and their adopted daughter.



child. But the psychologist side of my brain set off warning sirens by the dozens. Was I nuts? Hadn't I learned anything in graduate school? All the critical building blocks for mental health are established in that critical mother-infant bond in the first year or two of life. It's almost impossible to repair the damage if that is significantly disrupted. And we were talking about taking a child who had undoubtedly had several disruptions, not to mention the original trauma that caused her to be taken from her parents in the first place.

Still, against my human judgment but believing God was in this, we persevered. We were heartened to hear in our orientation meeting that while foster children do initially display mental and emotional difficulties, once they are placed permanently in a stable and loving home, many of these problems lessen or disappear. We were told that children are incredibly resilient. All they need is someone to give them a chance.

One of our first decisions was narrowing down what kind of child we would accept. The form reminded me of shopping



I thought God



Michelangelo Buonarroti 1475-1564

by Phillip Aaron

The little mission house was filled with excitement. The congregation sang in anticipation of miracles God was about to do. I had taken a yellow legal pad and was hurriedly writing down my feelings. For this was to be the night of my healing.

As I wrote, my thoughts went back to how this all began. While a student at Mercer University, I attended a Baptist church in Macon, Georgia. The church decided to start a mission, and I was chosen to teach adults. This, despite the fact that I had a birth injury which caused cerebral palsy, and, as a result, I walked on crutches.

One day the pastor announced a healing service for the following Sunday night. I felt that I was the reason for the special service. My reaction was to make fun of the idea. I would say, "When I get healed I'm going to date every girl on campus." Some of my close friends, however,

convinced me that since I had never tried a healing service I should put it to the test.

So now the zero hour was approaching. I had special times of prayer on Friday and Saturday. In no way was I taking this event lightly. No question about it, I believed God was going to heal me.

The worship service was too long, and as I was wrapped up in my own thoughts, I didn't hear much of anything. I was jarred from those thoughts when the pastor announced the healing service would begin.

The little mission house was extremely crowded. Most of the young people from the sponsoring church were present. There were a few people there who, it was said, needed healing. A chair was placed in the middle of the floor. The pastor instructed me to sit there. All the young people stood in a circle around the chair, holding hands. Prayers for my healing began.

I tried to block my thoughts, to concentrate on Christ and my heal-

ing. There was no begging in my prayer; I just knew healing would happen. I felt the pastor's hand moving up and down my legs and was aware of his voice. During the prayer I felt another hand touch me, and repugnance ran through my body. I don't understand the significance of that brief moment, but I know what I felt. It would be difficult to know how long the congregation prayed. During the prayer a strange feeling swept over my body. Something was happening to me! Then I heard a loud, "Amen!"

Lifting my head from the prayer, it was as if a white sheet was before my face. I couldn't see! I heard the movement of people to make a path for me to walk. Everybody expected me to walk!

A wave of disappointment swept over me. I wasn't healed. I groped for my crutches and walked toward the door. A little boy, about eight years old, came and put his arms around my waist and said, "Some day you'll walk." I put my hand on his head, as if

would heal Me

in a blessing. The congregation was confused and afraid. Some of the people still expected me to walk. They felt God's presence and that He was dealing with me. Although I was blinded, I managed to get to the door and go outside.

As I stood in the cool night breeze, wave after wave of sadness flowed over me. I was not embarrassed that God did not heal me — just extremely disappointed.

A man from the congregation asked me what car I had come in, and I could not speak. Some men picked me up and put me into a car. There, alone with God, the tears came. Through the torrent of tears, I regained my sight. The knot in my throat relaxed and I was able to speak. I have no idea how long I was alone in the car, but finally someone asked if I

wanted to go back to the dormitory. I knew that if I went back alone, it wouldn't be good for me.

Fortunately, deep within me was a desire to hear the gospel. I needed an affirmation of faith. I sat in the back of an unlighted church and listened to a late radio broadcast to the Philippines.

After that healing service experience, it seemed as if all energy had left my body. It was all I could do to make it to classes. My friends left me alone because they did not know what to do. The next week after the disappointing healing service, I prayed, "Lord, if you can use me as I am, here I am. Give me power for service. I promise never to tamper with Your power."

It took time for me to regain my physical strength after that experi-

ence, but I did. There followed a period in my life of questioning.

Forty years have passed since this happened. I still have to contend with cerebral palsy, and I don't like being handicapped. I feel like a prisoner in my body. However, in spite of it, I have a successful ministry with Jeanie, my wife, and we have three wonderful children.

I'd like to tell the world: If you are the parents of a handicapped child, don't be discouraged. If you are handicapped, you can make a difference.

Reverend Phillip Aaron has served as a missionary to Southern Baptist Home Mission. Retired from that, he is still actively preaching. Reverend Aaron also writes a column for the Sanger Herald. He and his wife, Jeanie, live in Reedley, California.

Editor's comment:

Healing is a subject that many of us struggle with. For instance, why does God heal some people and not others? There are undoubtedly many reasons for this. Some would say that the person seeking healing didn't have enough faith. Others might say that it was the one praying who didn't have enough faith. But, according to Jesus, we need only as much faith as a small mustard seed (Luke 17:6) for mighty miracles to happen! So it doesn't necessarily take a great deal of faith to be healed!

On the other hand, some physical illnesses and emotional distresses are caused by unresolved personal issues. For example, David talked about his bones "being consumed" because of guilt (Psalm 31:10). Unresolved guilt, anger, grief, fear and other negative emotions upset the balance of body chemistry and can cause various physical problems. With ulcers, it sometimes is not so much what we are eating that distresses us, but what is eating us! That's one reason James said, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16, NIV). In other words, for some sicknesses, we need to re-

solve what is troubling us from within if we want God to heal us.

When it comes to physical illnesses and problems, such as Phillip's cerebral palsy (over which he had no control), why is it that God sometimes heals these problems but oftentimes, does not?

Perhaps only eternity will reveal the answer to this question. We know that the Apostle Paul had some kind of problem which many Bible scholars believe was a physical ailment, and God chose not to heal him. Paul's answer (after he had prayed three times and wasn't healed) was, "But He (God) said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me" (2 Corinthians 12:9, NIV).

It is interesting to note, too, that while Jesus raised Jarius' daughter from the dead, John the Baptist lost his head and stayed dead. So to say that it is God's will to heal everybody in this life simply isn't true. We should seek healing, resolve any issues in our life that may be blocking healing, and if we are not healed, then ask God what He is wanting us to learn through our illness and how He can use our suffering for His glory.



The Gift of Feelings

by Dick Innes

Do you know the number one complaint I hear from wives who attend seminars I lead on relationships? It's this: they don't know how to communicate effectively with their husbands as their husbands don't share their feelings with them, nor do they understand their (the wife's) emotions.

Feelings

Feelings. Imagine living in a world without them. It would be like "playing a trombone with a stuck slide." Pretty dull and boring to say the least.

And yet, so many of us men were taught from childhood that feelings weren't important. By the time I was

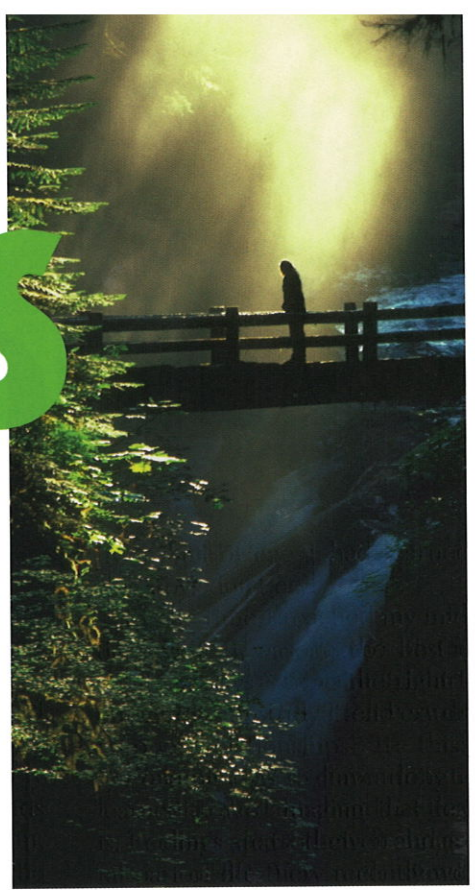
five years of age I had learned that "big boys don't cry!"

By the time I reached my mid-thirties, while I was, to the best of my ability, always "doing the right thing" outwardly, inwardly I felt very dry and empty.

Fortunately, I have long since learned how damaging that teaching is. Feelings are God-given and are a vital part of life. Very recently we were saddened by the tragic death of John F. Kennedy, Jr. and his wife and sister-in-law. One highlight in the midst of all the sorrow related to the Kennedy family was the comment from a radio commentator who quoted an incident in the life of the late Bobby Kennedy, John Jr.'s uncle. On one occasion when Bobby was just a boy and was crying, one of the Kennedy men said to him, "Don't you know that the Kennedy men don't cry!" to which Bobby answered, "This Kennedy does."

Consequences

When we bury our negative feelings we can become physically ill, act out in destructive behavior patterns, and damage or even destroy our relationships with the ones we love the most. Sometimes to medicate our pain we can become addicted to alcohol, drugs, gambling, shopping, work, or many other addictive behaviors. Patty, for example, was a young adult who took one of these strange paths. Little by little she became addicted to shopping. Many of her spare hours were spent at the mall. Buying things gave her a temporary lift. She bought clothes, jewelry, and other items she neither needed or used. In time her apartment was crowded with small and large box-



es of goods she had never worn. Dissatisfied, she continued to buy more and more, but her addiction failed to bring real happiness.

Sometimes we try to camouflage our deep hurts. But when we hide our grief and tears, where do the tears go?

Dr. Clyde Narramore talks about a group of young people returning from the mission field to enter university in the U.S. As children, some of them were left in boarding school at a very early age where they were only allowed to cry for three nights after they were first separated from their parents.

"What did you do with your tears after that?" Dr. Clyde asked them. They replied, "We cried in our stomachs!"

That's the sort of thing that makes us physically ill. Sadness and grief, like all pure emotions, are God given. Tears are God's method to help us "drain the pain." For example, when Jesus' friend Lazarus died, Jesus did a beautiful thing. He wept. And David, the psalmist, wept when he was separated from his dearest friend, Jonathan. Many of his Psalms are an expression of raw emotion.

The point is, when we fail to express our hurt feelings in creative, positive ways, we are likely to express them in destructive ways.

Feelings

When some people are carrying an overload of buried anger, for example, and it gets triggered by some seemingly insignificant incident, they explode, lash out and verbally or physically abuse a loved one. Some even kill!

Or we can internalize our feelings. This can cause us to become very hard, cold and distant from the ones we love the most. We build walls around our heart to protect us from feeling our pain, not realizing that the same walls we build around our negative feelings also block out our positive emotions of love, joy, peace, wonder, and so on. This is what Janet did.

She was bright and finished college without much trouble. But then she began to separate herself from her family and others. Janet only lived 60 miles from her parents who loved her and were concerned about her. But she took many opportunities to keep her distance from them. She installed a phone with an answering machine so she could hear what people were telling her without having to talk with them. Janet actually lived a world of hiding and anonymity. She filled her years with as little contact with the world as she could manage. If Janet wanted to know when her parents would be away from their home, she would contact an acquaintance who lived close to them to get the information without having to talk to her mother and dad. Unfortunately, such behavior is part of daily living for many people.

Some people react to damaged emotions by becoming ill. For some, the first symptom of buried anger or other negative emotions may be death by heart attack. Others may get ulcers, dermatitis, cancer or any of a score of other symptomatic illnesses that can take years off their lives. For me personally, when I learned to cry again, I was healed of hay fever from which I had suffered relentlessly. And when I learned to get in touch with my anger and express it in healthy ways, I was healed of painful bursitis in both shoulders.

Perhaps this is why James wrote, "Confess your sins and faults to one another and pray for one another so you will be healed."¹

But you ask, is buried anger a sin? God's word says, "If you are angry,

“Feelings. Imagine living in a world without them. It would be like “playing a trombone with a stuck slide.”

don't sin by nursing your grudge. Don't let the sun go down when you are still angry—get over it quickly for when you are angry you give a mighty foothold to the devil.”² Or as another translation puts it, “In your anger, do not sin.”

The emotion of anger isn't a sin. It's what we do with it that is either right or wrong, healthy or unhealthy, creative or destructive. Buried anger can turn into resentment, bitterness, and even hostility or rage.

Unconfessed guilt can also make us ill or depressed. David wrote, “There was a time when I wouldn't admit what a sinner I was. But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration. All day and all night your hand was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water on a sunny day until I finally admitted all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, ‘I will confess them to the Lord.’ And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.”³

The Purpose of Feelings

Feelings are an emotional barometer. They are an indicator of what is going on in our inner self or mind. For instance, if I lack peace, or feel guilty or anxious, my feelings are telling me that something is out of harmony and needs to be resolved.

Second, warm loving feelings keep us close to and feeling connected to the ones we love the most . . . and also to God. Emotions also put sparkle into

life. People whose emotions are buried are not very dynamic.

Taking Control

To allow feelings to control us and act them out blindly can be very immature and childish. To be an adult is to feel our feelings and express them in healthy, appropriate and creative ways and thereby be in control of them.


God's Word says, “Surely you [God] desire truth in the inner parts,” or as another translation puts it, “You deserve honesty from the heart; yes, utter sincerity and truthfulness. Oh, give me this wisdom.”⁴

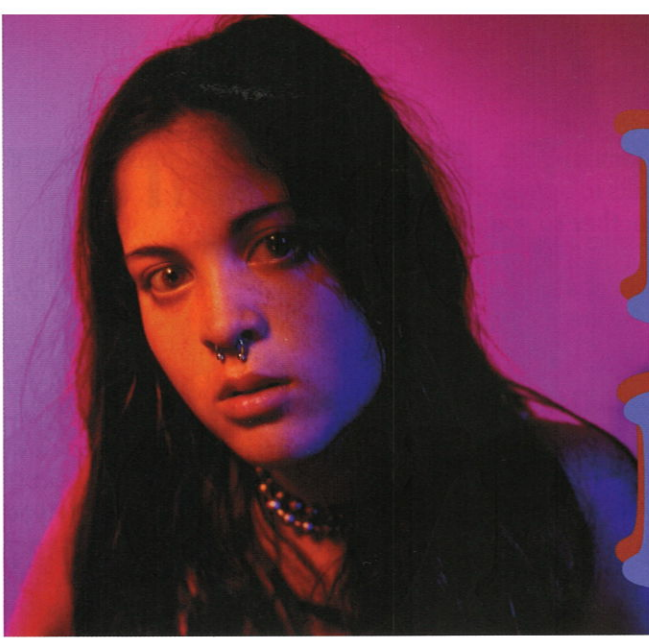
What is God saying here? I believe he is saying that we need to be honest with ourselves and with God about both our feelings and our motives. When we are this, we have discovered the key to warm, loving, and close relationships both with our loved ones and God.

When it comes to love, however, we need to realize that it is much more than a feeling. It is also a commitment of one imperfect person to another imperfect person regardless of how we feel. We need to do the loving thing consistently, even though we may not always feel like it. If our feelings are regularly lacking, we may need psychological counseling to get in touch with them so that our loving feelings can grow.

If I am out of touch with my feelings, the loving thing to do for the ones I love is to get the help I need so I can learn to feel their love and so they can feel mine. Only then will I be able to relate on a meaningful, intimate, Christlike level.

In the meantime, we need to do the loving thing whether we feel like it or not. This is part of Christian love. But simply doing the right thing is not enough. It is essential that we cultivate a healthy emotional life so we will both act and feel the way God intended us to do.

1. James 5:16 2. Ephesians 4:26-27 (TLB).
3. Psalm 32:3-5 (TLB). 4. Psalm 51:6 (NIV and TLB). 



Pread Hyper

by Bruce Narramore & Vern Lewis

If you have an eleven or twelve-year-old son or daughter, you have probably observed their growing need to think for themselves and to cope with the rapid changes in their bodies. You may have also noticed increasing sensitivity and emotionality. Preadolescents are getting ready to enter the most revolutionary and unsettling years of their lives. With the changes and stresses of adolescence, increased moodiness, shortened fuses, and heightened emotional sensitivity can come.

When our children were eleven and eight, our family took a six-month sabbatical leave to another state. My wife and I were writing every day but our evenings and weekends were entirely free. Each night we had some family time together, talked with the children about their day, shared games, or planned some interesting activities. Many evenings we gathered in the living room and read *The Hobbit*, by J.R.R. Tolkien, and other children's books. Then we prayed about our day and for friends back home and other things. Although we have always been a close family, that period of concentrated family time was like a magnet pulling us together. It gave us a chance to communicate our love, listen to each other, and have a lot of fun together.

I am convinced that this six-month period of relationship building was one reason our children handled adolescence so well. It enabled Kathy and me

to solidify our friendships with Richard and Debbie so that they saw us as encouragers and friends instead of parents who only showed up when they needed discipline or correction. It also let us fill up their emotional gas tanks so they had inner resources for the trip through adolescence that lay ahead.

When our sabbatical was over, we vowed that we were going to maintain a slower lifestyle and preserve our family times together—but it wasn't easy. From the moment we walked in the door at home, the phone started ringing and responsibilities quickly filled our calendar. Every week we had to struggle to make time for family fun together.

Be Available

I cannot overemphasize the importance of building happy relations with your children in the impressionable years just prior to adolescence. Everything you want to do for your teenagers will depend on how loved and understood they feel by you. Preadolescence is your last chance to relate to your children as children and to strengthen childhood feelings of intimacy that will nourish them for life.

If you haven't already done it, take a few minutes to consider how momentous this time can be. God gave you children to love and prepare for adult life in less than 20 years, and the majority of that time is gone. Before long your children will be making life-changing decisions and setting out on their own.

Have you done all you can to get them ready? If not, it's not too late. You still have a few impressionable years when they are open to your input. If you haven't learned to have fun with your children, start now. If your children see you as a "heavy" who shows up only to discipline or tell them no, now is the time for that to change.

Provide Stability and Structure

Older preadolescents are just beginning to break out of their relatively quiet and stable childhood years. Their bodies are changing. Their minds and emotions are changing. Their schools and friends are changing. Since nearly everything is in a state of flux, they need a stable anchor in the middle of their shifting world. Relatively organized and calm parents help calm and reassure their children. Parents whose own schedules are irregular or whose lives are filled with excessive pressure or confusion compound their teenagers' emotional imbalance and hypersensitivity.

I realize it may be difficult to structure your schedule, and you may not be naturally cool, calm, and collected. But the fact remains: *Children in these formative years need relatively calm and organized parents and a family that provides stability and a model of balanced emotional expression and control.*

John and Carol worked at this as their children were approaching adolescence. Even though Carol took a job selling real estate to supplement their

Adolescent Sensitivity

family income, she arranged her schedule so that she could be home when the children returned from school at 3:00, and she limited her evening work to a maximum of two nights weekly. The whole family managed to have breakfast together most mornings, and they regularly had supper between 5:30 and 6:00. On the nights Carol worked, John was always home. By coordinating their schedules, John and Carol were able to offer their children both the security of a regular routine and an available, non-preoccupied parent every evening. This let the children know that John and Carol intended to be readily available for them during their crucial adolescent years.

Although your emotional stability and

availability are more important than a rigid schedule, a reliable family routine goes a long way toward offering adolescents a trustworthy place of security and support. By middle adolescence, your sons and daughters may prefer to ignore your family routines for their own activities, but it helps them greatly to know just when and where you will be in case they need you!

Learn to Handle Hypersensitivity

Eleven-year-old Janet had an extra dose of preadolescent sensitivity. If her older sister got anything she didn't get, Janet pouted and cried, "Unfair!" When her mother asked her to do anything around the house, Janet indignantly claimed she had

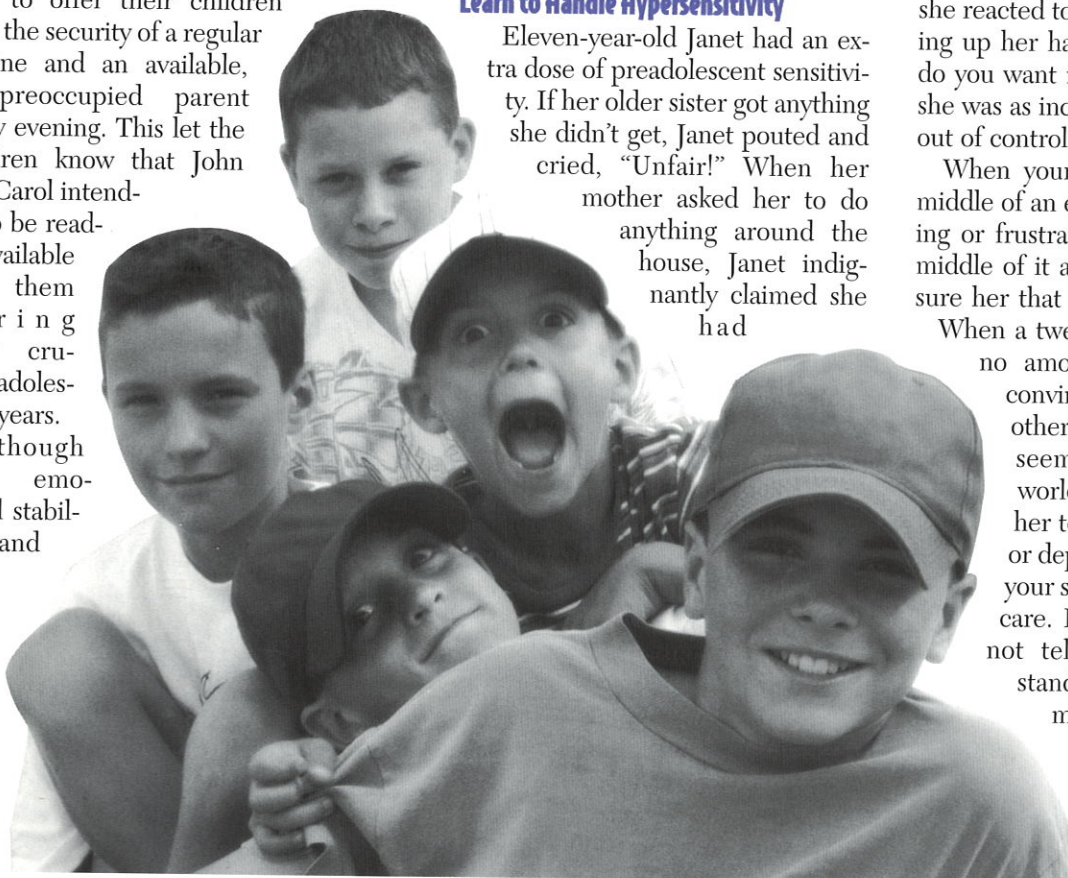
already done more than her share. When a boy showed the slightest interest in her, Janet was on Cloud Nine. And when the smallest thing went wrong, Janet hit the pits.

Unfortunately, Janet's mother wasn't much better. She was excited and energetic when her business went well, but hit the skids when things turned tough. She set rigid limits for her children one day and dropped them the next. And she reacted to Janet's pouting by throwing up her hands and moaning, "What do you want me to do?" In many ways she was as inconsistent and emotionally out of control as her daughter.

When your preadolescent is in the middle of an emotional outburst of crying or frustration, don't jump into the middle of it and tell her to stop or assure her that "everything will be fine."

When a twelve-year-old girl is upset, no amount of reassurance will convince her she should feel otherwise. For her, every upset seems like the end of the world. First, just listen. Allow her to express her anger, hurt, or depression. Let her know by your sensitive listening that you care. But whatever you do, do not tell her, "Mother understands!" That will probably make her scream. As a budding young adult who wants to become different from her mom, she may not

Continued on page 23 ↪





Life

without Legs

by Harold C. Herr

The day after Thanksgiving, November 24, 1972, was just another day on our 300-acre dairy farm, and I proceeded to work as usual with long hours and devoted energy. I managed to leave the fields of golden grain the previous day for about three hours to enjoy a feast with my family, little knowing what lay ahead the following day.

While operating the corn picker this Friday afternoon I noticed that one corn-gathering chain was not moving. Disengaging the power-take-off, I observed that the chains were loose, so I proceeded to adjust the tension. I then engaged the power-take-off from a standing po-

sition on the ground, and still one gathering chain did not move. With the corn picker dividing points in a raised position and the machine in operation at about 100 revolutions per minute, I looked into the center corn-divider-access hole to determine why the left gathering chain did not turn. In so doing, I unconsciously bent my right knee in a forward position and into the right gathering chain which was in operation. The gathering chain pulled my leg in a wedged-tight position with knee forward, and the toe of my shoe pointed downward toward the snapping rolls. The slip clutches on the gathering chains were activated, so the chains stopped their moving.

With pains in my legs from the wedging pressure, I realized my leg

would be taken into the machine should the chains resume movement. I tried desperately to decide the next move. *Will the slip clutches wear out or will they re-engage and pull me into the snapping rolls?* My hasty decision was to take hold of my leg with both hands and, with a quick jerk pull my leg free. This was not the answer, as it only loosened my leg enough to permit the slip clutches to reengage and take my leg into the snapping rolls. One leg was pulled in only to be followed by the other.

In a matter of seconds, my legs were practically mutilated to the knees while I remained in a sitting position with the snapping rolls turning under my groins. I screamed loudly for help and almost immediately my voice was



faint. Aware that no one was near to hear my call— no one but God— I prayed a simple prayer, “Lord, please send help!” A passage of Scripture from Psalm 18:6 has become very precious to me since that time— “In my distress I called upon the Lord and cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of His temple, and my cry came before Him, even into His ears.”

Losing a lot of blood and knowing that to faint would mean toppling into the corn gathering chamber and fall into the left hand rolls which were just anxious to grab my jacket or arms, I managed to pry up

and clutch my fingers under the manufacturer’s nameplate which was held by two tiny metal screws. I had hopes that, should I faint, the gripped fingers would continue to hold me in an upright position.

During the next 10 to 15 minutes of gruesome agony, I concluded this situation could very well mean death for me. But I was resolved to the fact that “live or die,” I was a child of God, and He gave me perfect “peace of mind.”

As I remained in this position, I intermittently called with my weakened voice for help. Presently, a very handsome fifteen-year-old lad

avidly dressed in green appeared on the scene. He was a neighbor boy who lived less than a mile from our farm who had taken a walk in the nearby woods to look for deer tracks. When I saw the young man, whom I have since surnamed Robin Hood, I knew God meant to save my life. With renewed courage, I gave the lad instructions to stop the machine and proceed to get emergency aid. Scott did a terrific job of getting things moving by entering the house and using the telephone. My wife and son, who had been shopping, arrived just as he had completed the call, and togeth- ➔

er they continued to seek help.

Rescue workers soon arrived with cutting torches and emergency equipment. Also, many friends and neighbors appeared on the scene. After about 45 minutes of work, during which time I witnessed and made suggestions to the workmen, I was removed from the machine and rushed to the hospital. It was necessary to have emergency surgery to remove both legs above the knees.

I have been told by my family that during this time of surgery and anxiety, the waiting room for constant-care families was the scene of much prayer on the part of devoted family and several ministers who rushed to our aid. During the next few days, amidst pain and suffering, I became aware that there is a lot more to the world in the way of goodness and mercy in people than I had ever dreamed.

During the next few weeks of recovery, I was completely overwhelmed with kindness from the hospital staff, friends, and neighbors. The clergy and Christian friends from near and far upheld me in prayer. On Wednesday following the accident, 160 friends, including many Amish neighbors, came to harvest the remaining 20 acres of corn by hand. It was real teamwork. They husked and conveyed 2600 bushels of corn into storage in one single day. The local church and farm women organization prepared lunch for all the workers. There was even coffee and homemade donuts provided for snack-time. I have been told that the fellowship among the laborers was just wonderful. A dear neighbor took pictures, from sun-up to sun-down of the day's activities and compiled an album for my enjoyment.

This type of experience, which very few people will have in the course of a lifetime, was mine by the permissive will of God and surely it was for a purpose. His word has been proven so many times—especially that verse in

Romans 8:28 which says, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

I have had many hours of therapy and practice on trainer legs in preparation for the final limbs which are being made. My wheelchair is mostly found in the car trunk being used regularly on Sunday mornings so I could teach my teenage Sunday School class and attend the morning worship service. For mobility in the house, I find it most convenient to scoot on my bottom with the use of my hands, and I can raise myself from the floor to a chair. With the help of some extra bars in the bath, I can care for my physical needs completely.

My family has relieved me of much responsibility in our dairy program. Though there are many jobs I cannot do, I have not sat idly by. I have passed my driver's test and been reinstated using hand controls. Also, I have operated a loader backhoe as well as the different farm tractors having plowed and tilled 150 acres of ground, mowed and raked hay, plus maintaining the garden and lawn. I am still the number "one" service or "fix-it" man for our machinery. Life is great!

As one whose faith and love for the Lord is stronger than ever before, although now handicapped, I ask the Lord to guide and give me added patience. I know I have lost a lot, but I also have a lot left.

Many folks who have heard this story have asked, "How would you

feel about the accident if you were not a Christian?"


My answer is simple: "I would be a bitter and resentful man, angry at the lack of safety switches or guard bars as well as my own impetuous response. I would spend a lifetime feeling sorry for myself, as I jealously watch the unimpaired walk by."

True, I may have recovered somewhat as I became accustomed to my crutches and my restricted travel on artificial legs, or moved around slowly on my wheelchair, but I would never have enjoyed the confidence of knowing that I will walk and run again in eternity! There I will live forever, walk with Jesus, and run with Peter and John. I will meet my parents and loved ones, and stroll the Milky Way without crutches or a wheelchair. All this will be possible because my ultimate earthly joy was in receiving the free gift of eternal life as I surrendered the control of my earthly life to Jesus Christ.

Amazingly enough, this gift is still offered to anyone who is sorry for his sins and in repentance, asks Jesus to be the Lord of his life.

This knowledge gave me a happy life without legs, but with the assurance of an eternity with a new and better body that will never grow old, die, or even get sick!

As a Christian, I can assure you that with Jesus there is life without legs!

Harold C. Herr retired from farming with his son six years ago and lives with his wife, Bonnie, in a retirement home in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. 



On the way home after a long day of harvesting.

Critical in-laws

by Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

“My husband and I have been married for five years and live just down the block from my parents-in-law. We love my father-in-law but I have never been able to build any kind of a relationship with my mother-in-law because I never feel safe around her. She constantly criticizes everything I do. After reading your booklet on perfectionism, a light bulb came on. My husband and I have decided to ask his parents to join us in family counseling. The problem is this: whenever we suggest that she might need some help working through her past (she grew up in an alcoholic home), she denies that she has any problems. We have about had it and my husband’s father is about ready to leave his wife because her criticism has gotten so bad. She follows him from room to room in their house to make sure that he doesn’t make a mess. Do you have any suggestions?”

Thanks so much for sharing your struggle with your mother-in-law. I can certainly understand the frustration you must be feeling—not to mention that of your father-in-law. People who are excessively critical are usually struggling with their own feelings of worthlessness and guilt. By constantly picking out the faults of others they try to shift their own horrible self accusations onto those about them. This provides them temporary relief of their heavy emotional burdens. The cost, of course, is ruined relations with others who now become the focus of her own inward self-criticism and hatred. Jesus spoke of this when he said, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” (Matthew 7:3)

I do have four suggestions: First, pray for her. Your mother-in-law is a very unhappy person who needs to open up and let others into her life in a loving, caring way. Pray that God will help her be open to your love and to your concerns.

Second, I strongly agree with your decision to ask your mother-in-law to join you in family counseling. If she will, that will be the best solution since it will not only help you, it will get to the root of her problem. Since her husband is considering leaving her, it may be helpful for your entire family to meet with her as a group if she does not respond to individual requests. The purpose of this group meeting would not be to vent your anger and frustration, but to lovingly yet clearly let her know that her style of relating makes each of you want to withdraw from her instead of move toward her

in love. Tell her that you would like to be close and enjoy her and that you know she has a great deal she could contribute to you, but that when she criticizes, you do not want to be close to her.

Third, if she refuses to face her need and seek help, you need to learn to draw very clear boundaries. Simply tell her, “Mom, we do not want to be around you when you constantly criticize us. We received enough criticism when we were children. As adults, we need the freedom to run our lives as we believe God would have us. If you can be positive when you are around us, we would love to spend time with you. But if you feel you must continue to criticize us, we will not be inviting you to our home and we will not be coming to yours very often.”

She will probably become defensive and angry and critical. But if you are loving, simply hold your ground and repeatedly tell her that you love her and would like to be with her, but not if she is going to continue to be critical. As you talk with her, you might also say something like “I know you are probably hard on yourself, and very self-critical, and we are sorry. But you need to find help for yourself for that problem. We will no longer let you treat us so insensitively.”

Finally, in all of your discussions, remember that she is hurting terribly inside. She is afraid to open up “the can of worms” caused by her alcoholic home with all of the hurt, anger, sadness and confusion that reside there. Try to be as sensitive and kind and loving as you absolutely can, but at the same time, be direct and honest. The Bible tells us to “speak the truth in love.” Do not refrain from speaking the truth, but be sure you do it lovingly.



Bruce Narramore, Ph.D.

Your Questions Answered

If you have a question for Dr. Narramore, please address it to:

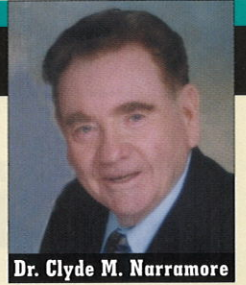
Ask the Counselor

Narramore Christian Foundation

250 W. Colorado Blvd., Suite 200 Arcadia, CA 91007

Fax: (626) 821-8409

Email: anfc@msn.com



Dr. Clyde M. Narramore

Exploding on my Consonants

by Clyde M. Narramore

One day as a senior in high school I walked down the hallway and noticed a sign on the bulletin board—“**SPEECH CONTEST.**” So I entered the contest, learned my speech, and a week or so later I won. On the following Monday Mr. Smith, the speech teacher, said “Narramore, I want to see you during fourth-period study hall in the auditorium.”

“Great,” I thought to myself, *maybe he’s going to compliment me and give me some sort of prize.*

But that isn’t what he had in mind. When we met he said he’d like to hear me give my speech again because there was to be a contest among all the high schools in our part of the state, and I was to represent our high school.

So I stood on the stage and began to give my speech. After the first few paragraphs, he stopped me and said, “Oh no!”

“Is something wrong?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said, “nearly everything. First of all, you’re dead.”

I thought for a minute then said, “I don’t feel dead.”

“Well,” he said, “when you’re dead, you don’t know how dead you are.”

“What do you want me to do?” I asked. “Be energetic,” he said. “Be dynamic and persuasive. More energy!”

“How do you do that?” I asked.

“One way,” he said, “is to explode on your consonants.” Instead of just saying “m”, explode and say a big “Mmm uh,” and rather than saying “t” make it a big “Tuh,” instead of saying “j” make it a big “Juh.” “This,” he said, “will make your speech come to life.”

I thought to myself, *What a crazy thing to do!*

Then he said “Now try it!” So I did, and he said, “Oh no, you’re still dead! I want you to really explode!”

So I tried it again. But it still wasn’t enough.

Then he told me, “When you go home this evening practice while you do your chores. Practice exploding.”

I thought, *I’m from a sensible family and I wouldn’t dare “explode” in front of my five older brothers.* But that evening while I was milking a cow. I began to explode on my consonants—“Mm uh, Cc uh, Ff uh, Tt uh, Kk uh, Pp uh.” I remember my brother Laurence, who was milking a cow near me, saying, “Clyde, what on earth are you doing?”

“I’m exploding on my consonants,” I said.

“Why are you doing that?” he asked. Then I told him about the speech contest and my coach. “Well,” he said, “Do

you have to do it here in front of all these cows?”

A day or two later I saw my speech coach again, and he wanted to hear me explode. He said, “You’re doing a little better, but you’re far from good; you’re still stiff and half dead. Then he said, “Now I want you to *project.*”

“Project what?” I asked.

“I want you to project your voice.”

“I don’t think I can.” I said, “It’s in my throat.”

He smiled and said, “Now as you stand there on the stage look back and forth at the back of the auditorium. There’s a big board about a foot wide and about three inches thick. It extends clear across the back. And all along that board are some ten-inch nails driven into the board about two inches.”

“I don’t see the board or the nails” I said.

“You have to imagine this,” he replied, “When you speak, imagine there’s a board with all those nails driven in part way, and every time you open your mouth to speak, pound them into the board. Go back and forth with your eyes. The people will think you’re looking directly at them. And remember, no one ever sits in the first twelve rows!”

“Oh,” I said, “at assembly, I think all the seats are filled.”

“I’m not talking about people,” he said, “You must *imagine* that no one is sitting in the first twelve rows. By the time your voice reaches the third row, about half of your impact has dissipated, so you have to project louder than normal.”

By that time I thought, *I wish I hadn’t entered this crazy contest, I didn’t know there was so much to it.*

Finally the big evening for the valley contest came, and my coach drove me to the city where it was to be held. (I was only seventeen.) Twenty-five or thirty high schools were competing. A lot of talent. I don’t know how it happened but at the end I was pronounced the winner!

On Monday morning my coach, (dear Mr. Smith) said, “Narramore, I want to see you the fourth period in the auditorium.” I thought, *Surely I’ve learned everything there is to know, and maybe he’s going to give me a rather grand prize or something.*

Instead he asked me to give my speech again. “Oh no, that’s terrible!” he said.

“Well, I won over all the other schools Friday night,” I replied.

“That’s just because the others weren’t very good,” he said. “Now,” he continued, “I want you to use your body. You’re six feet tall. You’ve got long arms, big hands and long fingers, and I want you to really use your body.”

“What do you want me to do with it?” I asked. Then he

began to show me what a speaker could do.

Next came a session on emotion. When I asked what emotion was, **he said it was what I didn't have!** "You've got to stir people," he said. "Everyone wants to be stirred emotionally. People will respond if you motivate them." So we worked on that and many other things.

A few weeks later I left our ranch home for the state finals in Phoenix. My mother said she'd pray for me.

"You'll do well," she said. "You'll win."

I thought, *Well, that's Mom, always encouraging me.*

When I came home that night she asked if I had won, and I said I had placed in the top three!

At the end of the contest, a lady in the audience came up to me and said, "Young man, I like the way you speak. Someday you're going to be speaking to millions of people."

I blinked, wondering where that would be. In Arizona we had lots of jackrabbits, but not many people!


"You know what I like about your speaking?" she continued. "You're so dynamic and full of energy—so full of life and enthusiasm. You really motivate people!"

A thought flashed through my mind—I wished my coach had been listening to her. If he had, I would have said, "Well, I guess some people have it, and some don't!"

The following morning, the three of us who had won saw our pictures on the front page of the newspaper.

The final night of the contest was like riding on Cloud Nine. But the next morning I was back to earth again, at our ranch, in the corral, sitting on a stool milking cows, no longer thinking about exploding on my consonants!

Through the years I've reflected on what that intensive experience has meant to me. It quickened an interest in public speaking. It started a love affair with the public platform. The lady at the state finals was right. I *have* spent most of my life speaking on the radio and at many places around the world. Occasionally I have been asked if I ever get stage fright. And I must say that I never have. But the experience meant something else to me. It gave me an opportunity to get to know my speech coach really well and to appreciate his demand for excellence. He could confront me and say anything he wanted and I wouldn't take offense. I knew he liked me and that he was a pro. It also impressed me with the fact that throughout life I should be encouraging everyone I could because **EVERYONE IS WORTH UNDERSTANDING** and has the potential to be a real winner!

Note: These reflection features are taken from Dr. Narramore's autobiography *EVERY PERSON IS WORTH UNDERSTANDING* which he is currently writing. 

Alive Forevermore

by Ruth E. Narramore

The whole world was keyed up to greet the new millennium on January 1, 2000. With spectacular fireworks, and elaborate, mammoth celebrations all over the globe, our world welcomed in the beginning of the third millennium. Yet with all of that, great multitudes totally missed the real significance of this worldwide celebration.




Ruth E. Narramore

Yet, I must give *Reader's Digest* a little credit. On the cover of its December 1999 issue was an illustration of the face of Christ. On the bottom was a caption asking, "Whose millennium?" Eagerly I read the article to see if the author truly comprehended the monumental import of the world's millennial date change. He wrote about Jesus, His exemplary life, and His great teachings that have impacted people the world over for 2000 years. But he, too, missed the most important fact of all—the fact that Jesus is alive!

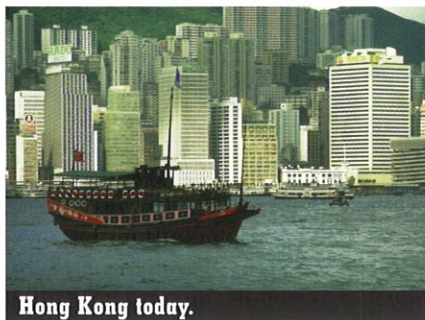
The Apostle John starts his account of the life of Christ by declaring: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-2,14).*

Jesus, the second member of the Trinity, existed as part of the Godhead long before time began or the advent of His supernatural human birth. In His 33 years in the form of a man here on earth He lived a sinless life. Then assumed upon Himself the punishment for the sins of humanity by allowing Himself to be put to death by crucifixion.

The days that followed this event were the darkest, heaviest, gloomiest that have ever crossed earth's horizon. But with the dawning of the third day, Christ had accomplished His mission: the bonds of sin and death were broken, and the Son of God arose! **Jesus was alive and will be forevermore!** Because He was the sinless Son of God, He emerged from the grave a conqueror! Because of that, all who align themselves with Him have the promise and hope of a glorious eternity in Heaven.

No other religion can offer such complete cleansing of our sins, peace with God knowing that our sins are all forgiven, and a wonderful, bright tomorrow that has no end. But this could never be without a risen Savior. How grateful we are and always will be that **Jesus is alive!** 

Dr. Narramore Teaches Counseling in China



Hong Kong today.

Reaching Into China

In January, Dr. Bruce Narramore and his wife, Kathy, traveled to Hong Kong to minister to Chinese church and mission leaders.

Bruce taught an intensive graduate course on "Guilt, Anger and Forgiveness in Counseling" for pastors and consulted with the program director of one of the first Christian graduate programs in counseling in China. Bruce also explored opportunities for extending NCF's ministries to mainland Chinese.

According to Dr. Narramore,



Dr. & Mrs. Bruce Narramore with Dr. Ben & Rachael Wai at Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary

"The church in China has a very strong evangelistic outreach but very little help for families and individuals struggling with personal problems. There are practically no fully trained Christian psychologists in the entire country—the most populous nation in the entire world! And pastors have limited training, and usually none in counseling."

The questions students asked Dr. Narramore were much like the ones he encounters in the U.S.—the largest number having to do with relationships—including dating and marriage. There were also many questions about how to deal with depression, low self-esteem, and guilt.

In China, however, personal problems are compounded by the political situation, the high level of drivenness to succeed (especially in Hong Kong), and long-standing cultural attitudes toward the roles of children and women.

"It appears that many Chinese men—unfortunately, including pastors—are not too sensitive to the needs of women and children. Churches in Hong Kong expect pastors to work six days per week. Men can also be controlling and authoritarian and expect their wives to carry out unrealistic responsibilities at home and work." As one of the pastors put it, "I often think myself not a success or acceptable person. I'm harsh on myself and family. Dr. Narramore's teaching helped me to accept myself and my family before

God."

Another student wrote, "I have used many guilt feelings to motivate my congregation. I see that I need to teach more on God's love and grace." And another, after a class session on the emotions of Jesus, told Dr. Narramore, "I feel relieved and released and closer to God when I see His human side. He is my best friend who understands my every unique feeling!"



Dr. Narramore lecturing in Hong Kong

China Homecoming

For Kathy Narramore, returning to China was a deeply meaningful homecoming. Kathy was born in Beijing to missionary parents.

Kathy was invited to address Chinese mission leaders. In recent years, Christians in Hong Kong have begun to send missionaries, especially to Muslim regions of Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, almost half of the 200 missionaries sent out have already had to leave the field because of adjustment problems. To help reduce this personal and ministry loss, the mission leaders asked Kathy to address them on topics of selection, training and care of missionaries.

Compiled by
Eva Hallam Solberg

Somatoform Disorders

There are few purely physical or purely psychological conditions. More often than not, where there is a medical condition, there will be psychological components, and where there are psychological conditions, there will be physical aspects. *Somatoform disorder* describes those conditions in which physical symptoms or complaints are not fully explained by a medical or physical condition. In somatoform disorders, the ever-present interplay between mind and body manifests in a complex, dramatic fashion.

A person is said to have

a somatoform disorder when his physical complaints or his problematic bodily sensations and functions are influenced primarily by the mind.

Phobias

Phobias — intense, unreasonable fears of specific activities, objects, or situations — are actually quite common in our society. In many cases, phobias do not pose any significant restrictions or disruptions to a person’s life. However, when phobic anxiety begins to interfere considerably and consistently with a person’s functioning, it becomes a serious disorder.

Commonly, phobias center on fear of animals, storms, heights, water, and blood. Some people

have phobic reactions to medical objects and settings. Other phobias involve such situations as flying, driving, riding in tunnels or over bridges, being on public transportation, elevators, and other enclosed places.

People who suffer from social phobia experience a constant dread of the possibility that they might have to interact with unfamiliar people, be subject to the scrutiny of others, or be humiliated or embarrassed. For example, people with a social phobia may avoid eating in restaurants because they believe others will comment negatively on their eating habits or manners. Social phobia may preclude people from writing in front of others or using

a public bathroom.

Phobias — like other anxiety disorders — can be treated in a variety of ways, although combined use of medication and cognitive-behavioral therapy has been found to be widely successful. Therapy may include insight and examination of feelings, especially when a phobia has arisen in response to a specific event or situation. Once the phobia is controlled through behavioral techniques, frequent practice or reexposure to the phobic stimuli is usually needed to maintain the benefits of treatment.

Johns Hopkins Family Health ©1999
by The Johns Hopkins University,
published by HarperCollins

➡ Continued from page 15

want you to understand! Besides, telling her you understand makes her feel a bit like a baby whose mother kisses the hurt to make it better. But she no longer wants to be your baby! The Bible offers excellent advice for times like these. It says we should be “quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.” Unfortunately, some of us tend to be quick to speak, quick to anger, and slow to listen!

If you really want to understand your upset preadolescents, you will learn to listen quietly until they have spewed out their anger, or confusion, or tears. Then (and only then) you may be able to offer a few words of encouragement or hope. Sometimes a silent hug is all they need. And sometimes the best thing to say is, “I’m really sorry, honey. I know it’s hard. If there’s anything I can do, please let me know.” Later you may be able to go

out together for a drive or get your daughter involved in something that will take her mind off her hurt. And after a day or so, you may be able to talk it over with her. But don’t push in too quickly.

The emotions of late preadolescents and early adolescents are highly volatile and must be treated sensitively. Your sons and daughters need the space to be different from you and the right to be upset if they want to. Young children may be told, “Don’t act that way!” (even though that’s not the best way to talk to young children either). But tell that to your preadolescents and they are likely to become more upset. Sometimes they just want to be left alone for awhile or be allowed to wade through their negative emotions without your interruptions or advice. This is another sign that they are differentiating themselves from you and wanting to have their thoughts and emotions according to *their* sched-

ules, not *yours*.

You can also help budding adolescents with their emotional upheavals by not only listening to what they are saying, but also to what they are feeling and leaving unsaid. The Bible says that as God’s children, “We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. But we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are...” (Hebrews 4:15). As earthly parents, we too need to hear their underlying hurts or fears and sympathize with them. For example, you might say, “That must really be discouraging,” “That must really make you angry,” or “Are you feeling sad, honey?” Preadolescents crave sensitive parents who understand their upsets and confusion, not simply their surface problems. And when we share our sensitivity to their thoughts and feelings, they gain encouragement and strength to move more confidently toward adulthood. ➡

Articles Really Help

God bless you and yours for the wonderful work you are doing for the Lord. I pass your magazine on to others. They enjoy it and mention articles that really help.

A.R., Pennsylvania

Read it from Cover to Cover

I really enjoyed the recent magazine and read it from cover to cover!

O.K.S., Montana

What has Happened to Your Magazine?

What in the world has happened to your magazine?! The print is now TOO small!, and much too light in color! The paper is now TOO shiny! For many years, this magazine was always my favorite Christian periodical, but now I can barely read it. And my vision has not changed! Please, think about these problems!

P.G., Maine

Thanks for your input. We haven't changed our type size, but you're right on the glossy paper! By changing paper we can print our entire magazine on one press run instead of having a separate run for the cover. This lets us increase the size of LIVING by four pages each issue and lower our costs thousands of dollars a year at the same time! We believe that's good stewardship. We want to make LIVING readable for everyone, however, so in response to your input, we are increasing the type size and space between lines a bit this issue. Let us know what you think.

Editor

Such A Pleasure

It is always such a pleasure to receive your Psychology for Living. Each time the magazine arrives, my husband and I enjoy reading it from cover to cover and are tremendously blessed by it. Thank you for all you are doing. May God continue to bless and use you in a wonderful way.

Why Haven't we Seen it Before?

Your magazine is excellent. My wife also read it, agreed, and asked, "How come we haven't seen this magazine before?"

Chair, Counseling Department, Christian College

Impressive

The current issue of LIVING magazine is impressive. It is of the finest quality. Your team is doing a great job.

J. S., Manager, Christian Radio Station

LIVING MEMORIALS

To Honor The Memory Of:

Presented by:

Alexis Cox	Margaret L. Minson
E.E. "Red" Evans	Shirley Cron
E.E. "Red" Evans	Mirian Nau
E.E. "Red" Evans	Betty & Dean Peterson
E.E. "Red" Evans	Carole & Russell Rigg
E.E. "Red" Evans	Eva Solberg
Charlotte Harris	Shirley Cron
Lloyd June	Evelyn C. June
Fred Chlaman	Margaret L. Minson
Martha B. Trabue	Polly Trabue Halliday

In Memory of:

Amount:

Given by:

Name

Address:

Mail to:

Narramore Christian

Foundation

P.O. Box 661900

Arcadia, CA 91066-1900

Send

acknowledgment to:

Name:

Address:



Narramore Christian Foundation
P.O. Box 661900
Arcadia, CA 91066-1900

Return Service

Moving? Change of address: Send this label or copy to it to above address six weeks prior to moving.

NON-PROFIT ORGAN.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
THE NARRAMORE
CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION
91066-1900