

LOOK WHAT'S INSIDE

POSITIVELY "NO"

DEPRESSION

LAST LAUGH

NCF IN ACTION

Encouragement

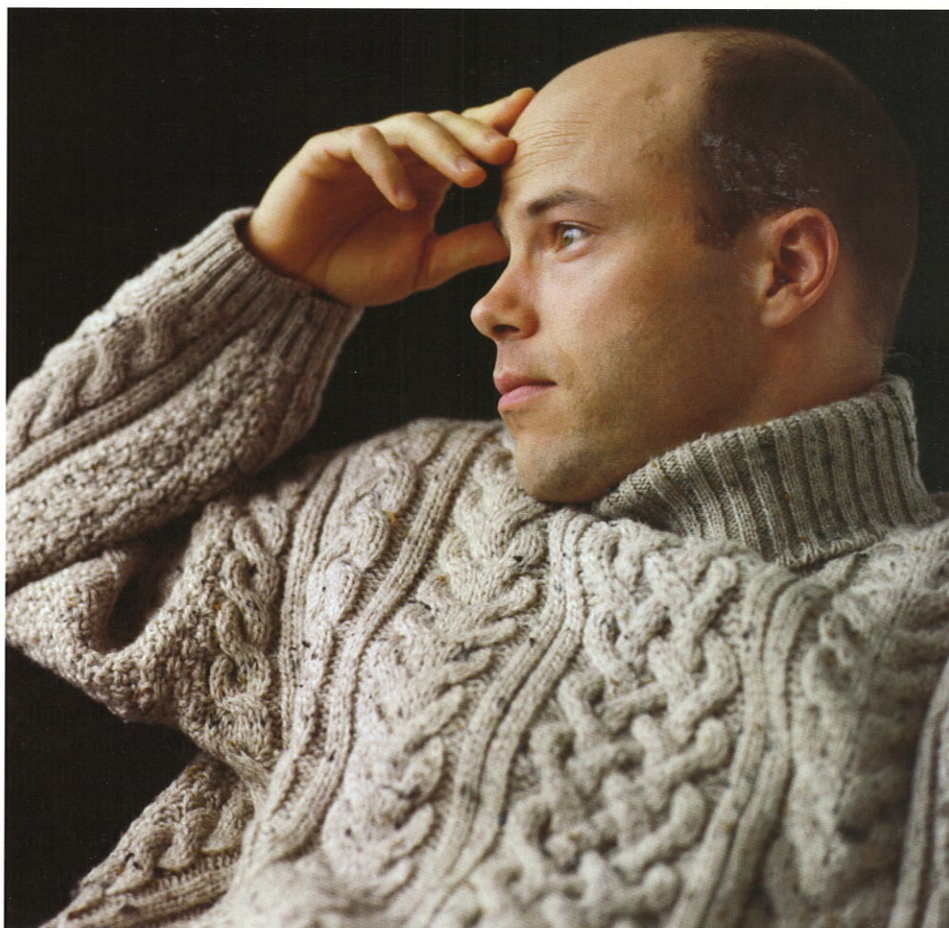
By Dick Innes

In his book, *Homemade*, Dr. Ernest Mellor shares: "Recently my wife and I sat charmed at an outdoor performance by young Suzuki violin students. After the concert, an instructor spoke briefly on how children as young as two, three, and four years old are taught to play the violin. The first thing the children learn, he said, is a proper stance. And the second—even before they pick up the violin—is how to take a bow. 'If the children just play the violin and stop, people may forget to show their appreciation,' the instructor said, 'but when the children bow, the audience invariably applauds. And applause is the best motivator we've found to make children feel good about performing and want to do it well.'"

Being appreciated and encouraged is important not only for children, but also for adults. When genuinely expressed, it is a powerful source of motivation. This is especially important in families ... for one's spouse, children, and siblings. And let's not forget the lonely, elderly, widowed, singles, and the divorced. In fact let's get into the habit of thanking and encouraging all those who help us in any way.

As the Scripture teaches: Let us get into the habit...to encourage one another (See Hebrews 10:24-25). †

Guilt and Grace



By Bruce Narramore

Frustration was written across Carl's face. "I don't know what's wrong with me," he said. "I read the Bible every day. I've helped several of my friends come to know Christ, and I don't have any huge sins that I'm aware of. But something isn't right. No matter how hard I try, I'm never satisfied. I feel like I'm never good enough and can never do enough. I don't have the joy in the Christian life that I used to feel."

What's Carl's problem? A psychologist would quickly recognize Carl's ten-

dencies toward perfectionism and his need for constant activity to feel worthwhile. He would probably give Carl a label like "neurotic" and start by helping him understand how his childhood experiences programmed him with an insatiable need to perform in order to try to feel accepted.

But this is only the psychological side of Carl's problem. There is also a very important spiritual side with tremendous psychological implications. Carl is apparently striving to please God and earn His approval the same way he tries to please others and earn their love. In fact, if the Apostle Paul could talk with Carl, he

Life Does Not End With Retirement

By J. Grant Swank, Jr.

At 90, Grace Pierce said: "Stop learning and you stop living." This woman is the head sales clerk at an art supply store. She determined some time ago to work beyond retirement age. "Grace has more pep and energy than anyone here," a workmate related.



"My job is important to me because it lets me be among people. You learn by being with people. When you stop learning, you stop living. I don't intend to stop either one," she reasoned.

A minister friend of mine who approached his ninety-fifth birthday told me that he wished he had not left the full-time pastorate at age 83. He wanted back on the job! He missed the books, preparing sermons, being with people every day, learning new concepts at clergy conferences—the whole world of what had fed him down through his adult life.

One of his favorite scriptures was Psalm 71:8-9: "Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honor all the day. Cast me not off in the time of old age..."

Another friend who turned 55 promptly enrolled in a doctoral program. For years he had wanted to continue his studies beyond his master's degree. At 55 he concluded it was time! Learning and living go together.

Is it enough to close out life with an evening newspaper, feet up on a hassock and then the lights out? There must be

more than that for a mind that has been productive over the years.

Maggie Kuhn, 78, founded the Gray Panthers. That meant she had to keep up to date with public relations skills, communicating with the media, organizing her senior citizen forces. Yet she knew she could do it. With that, she made a lasting impact on our culture.

"The junkyard haunts me because America does the same thing to people. When we turn 65, we are trashed. Well, I don't want to be dumped on a scrap heap," she protested.

Start now to learn more and live more. What we are right now is what we will become even more so. Habits make deep grooves.

Counselor Gary Collins declares that "cheerful old people were once cheerful young people, and complaining, miserable old people griped when they were young, too."

When Cab Calloway turned 72, he was playing the lead in "Bubbling Brown Sugar." Dubbed the "King of Hi-De-Ho", he explained that the title came about this way: "Once I forgot a lyric and I just started singing hi-de-ho. Pretty soon, it became a part of my routine."

Regarding his outlook on life, Calloway said: "I am not a worrier. I never have been. Whatever came, came. Right now, I want to do my music forever. I love to entertain. That's my whole life. I know if I stop, I'd die."

"They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be ... flourishing to show that the Lord is upright. . ." (Psalm 92:14-15). †

would probably say, "Carl, you think you have to do something to please God. But let me tell you something. No matter how hard you work or what you do, you will never feel like you have done enough! You are trying to relate to God by law rather than by grace."

The biblical doctrine of God's grace holds one of the most life-transforming psychological truths of the entire Bible. Understanding and experiencing the grace of God can transform our entire attitude toward life as well as our relationship with God and others.

Two Ways with Four Differences

According to the Bible, we can relate to God in one of two ways. We can either relate to Him by law or we can relate to Him by grace. There are four important differences between relating to God by law and relating to Him through grace.

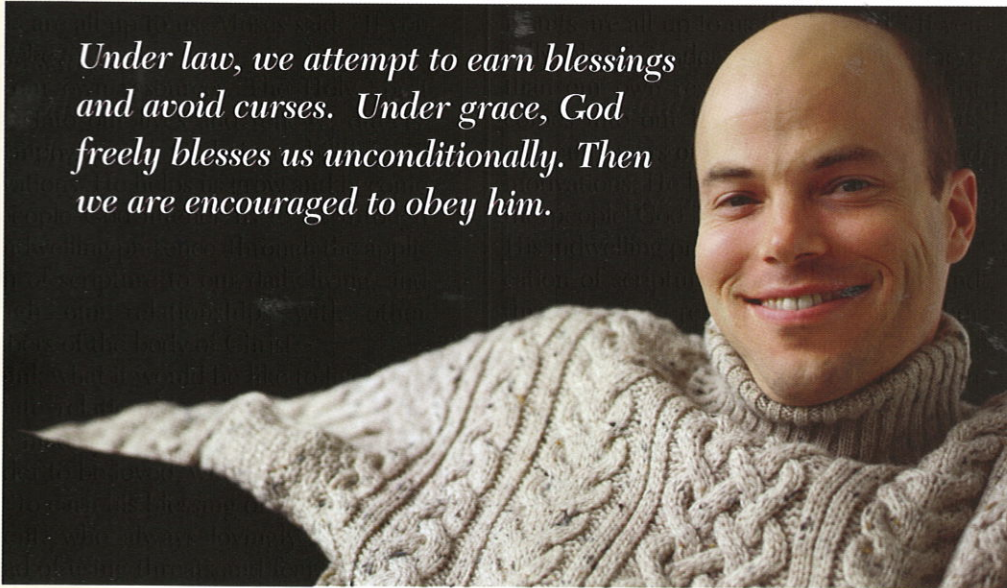
First, if we try to relate to God by law, we have to perform so that we will be accepted. That's what the law says. Unfortunately, since we are all sinful, we can never earn God's acceptance. The Bible says, "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:10). Since God is perfectly holy, it is impossible to earn the right to be in fellowship with Him for eternity or in our daily lives. We may as well stop trying.

By contrast, grace says: You are already totally accepted by God through Jesus Christ. There is not one thing we can do to make God love and accept us more than He does already. As we experience God's wonderful love, we want to love and serve Him in return, but the motive is entirely different. Under law we perform in order to be accepted. Under grace we perform because we are accepted!

Second. Under law, we work to earn God's blessings and rewards. God told the Israelites, "If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands ... all these blessings will come upon you" (Deuteronomy 28:1-6). Then God told them, "If you do not obey the Lord your God ... all these curses will come upon you and overtake you" (Deuteronomy 28:13, NASB).

Notice the big IF! Under law, we attempt to earn blessings and avoid curses. Under grace, God freely blesses us unconditionally. Then we are encouraged to obey him. Paul tells us, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us ...

Under law, we attempt to earn blessings and avoid curses. Under grace, God freely blesses us unconditionally. Then we are encouraged to obey him.



with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). There is absolutely nothing we can do to earn more blessings from God. He freely pours out His blessings on us as a gift of His grace.

Third, just as law and grace have two different bases of acceptance and blessing, they operate under radically different motivations. Law operates in large measure out of a motivation of fear. Impending judgment was hanging over Israel if they disobeyed. They staggered back under God's command that if even an animal touched the holy mountain it must die. Moses him-

self was so frightened at the sight that he shook with terrible fear (Hebrews 12:19-21).

By contrast, grace operates entirely from love. John sums this up when he says: "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment" (I John 4:18). Then John goes on to say, "We love because He first loved us" (I John 4:19). In a relationship of grace we are motivated to return our lover's love. We don't live well because we are afraid. We live well when we love.

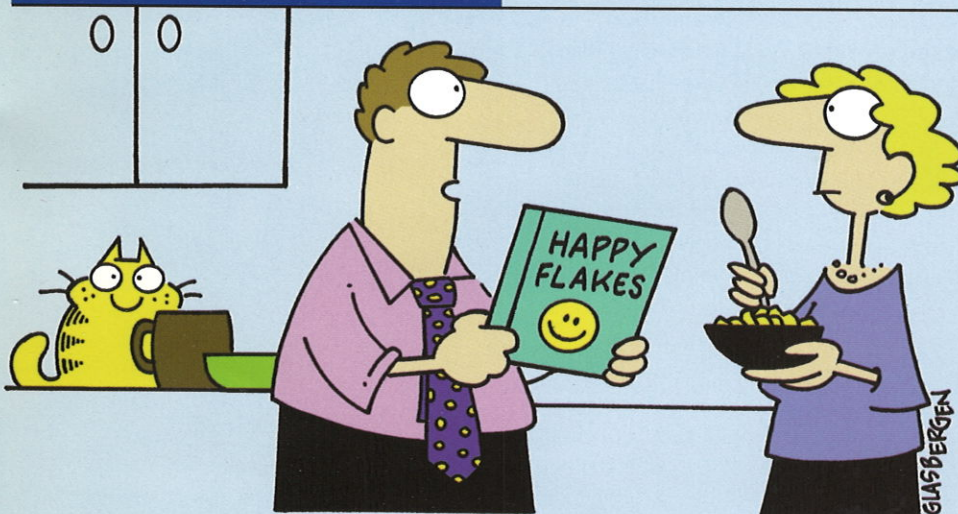
Finally, under law, our work and its

results are all up to us. Moses said, "If you fully obey." Under grace, we have more than our own resources. The Holy Spirit comes into our lives and renews, directs, and empowers our God-given abilities and motivations. He helps us grow and become the people God intends us to be through His indwelling presence, through the application of scripture to our daily living, and through our relationships with other members of the body of Christ.

Think what it would be like to live in an intimate relationship with someone who never made you perform in a certain way in order to be loved, who never made you strive to earn his blessing or to avoid punishment, who always lovingly motivated instead of using threats and fear, and who came alongside you to lovingly help you grow and become the wonderful person you were created to be! Think how different Carl would be and feel if he were experiencing God's grace. He wouldn't have to keep questioning his adequacy and striving to do better and better to wring a little love and acceptance out of his demanding God. He would be free to love God and others and become the wonderful person God created him to be. That is the relationship God wants us to have with Him. There is no more profound experience or deeper spiritual and psychological truth than the truth of God's grace. †

LAST LAUGH

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"Each 8-ounce serving contains the minimum daily requirement of vitamins, minerals and antidepressants."

PSYCHOLOGY
FOR LIVING

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Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of NCF's MK R



Twenty-fifth anniversary MK participants, July, 2003.

By Bruce Narramore

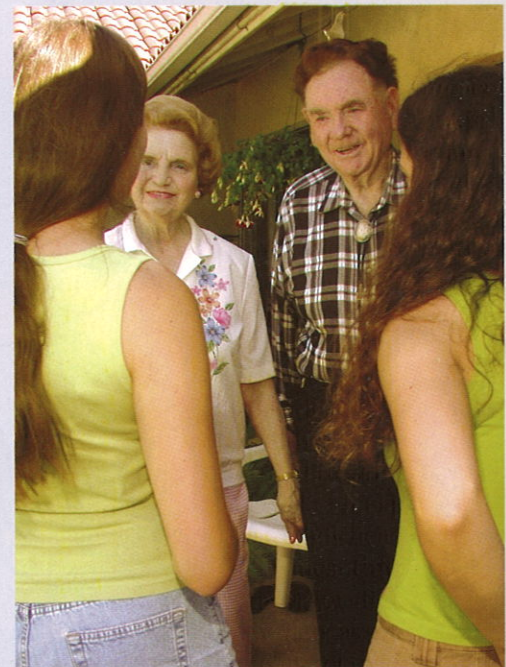
As I walked into the lounge of nearby Biola University I knew we were in for a great summer. The room was filled with energy and excited chatter as the first group of 39 sons and daughters of missionaries prepared to take their seats for the opening session of NCF's 25th annual MK reentry program.

Ecuador, Indonesia, Ghana, Senegal, Turkey and 20 other countries were "home" for these outstanding young men and women. I was touched as they talked about their moms and dads and described their ministries: Bible translators, church planters, airplane pilot, women's Bible study leaders, child evangelism, agricultural and economic development, field directors, Bible school professors, medical doctor, and director of technology were just a few of the ways the mothers and fathers of these MKs were sharing the love of God.

After the opening sessions the MKs settled in to take a battery of personality and

vocational tests. Then they received feedback on their test findings. This was followed by discussions on the impact of growing up between cultures. Topics like "Leaving and Grieving," "Finances," "Dealing with Emotions," "Dating and Relationships," "College Orientation," and "Maintaining Your Walk with the Lord" provided vital insights. Group discussions, individual counseling, recreational activities and daily devotional and prayer times rounded out the busy two week seminar.

As one MK put it as she prepared to leave, "The seminar was awesome. The staff was incredible and they met my needs on a very personal level. I feel prepared for my next steps." Then they headed off to 30 colleges and universities throughout the United States. Pray for these precious young men and women as they continue their journey into adulthood in this strange country—the United States of America! And thanks to all of the caring Christians who have for 25 years made this life changing program possible. †



Dr. Clyde and Ruth Narramore chatting with MKs during Fourth of July barbecue.

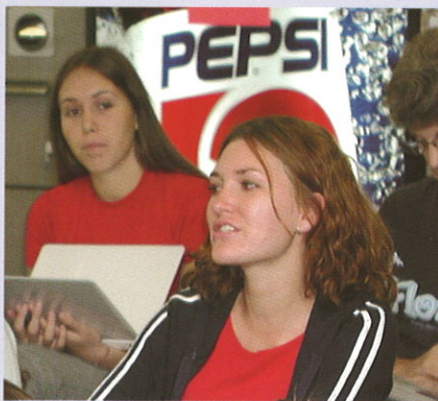
Entry Program



Bruce Narramore shares guidelines for handling strong emotions.



Rachel Hill (Columbia), and Noelle Lee (Equador).



Kat Wroughton (Peru), and Tiffany Talsma (Nigeria).



Harry Bradford, Seminar Director, answers questions from attentive MKs.

What People Are Saying About NCF

From an NCF Workshop:

"I will be interacting with others much more from a standpoint of God's grace. That will affect my entire ministry."

—*Missionary*

"I dealt with 30 years of anger and made major inroads into understanding and dealing with my personal depression."

—*Pastor*

"I gained more freedom to be myself and to know that that is OK. Because of that I will be better able to listen to the new missionaries who come into our care."

—*Seminar Participant*

"These have been two of the most significant weeks of our lives."

—*Missionary*

From an MK Seminar:

"I am an MK [missionary kid] from Kenya, Africa. My parents are with Wycliffe Bible Translators and have been working in Kenya since 1984. This next year I will be going to college at Biola University in La Mirada, California. I will be studying to be a secondary English teacher. This seminar has far exceeded my expectations. All of the information I gleaned will make my transition much, much easier. I made many amazing friends with whom I was able to open up, listen and be listened to, grieve, and most importantly, laugh with until it hurt. This seminar has touched me deeply."

—*H.P.*

From Kyrgyzstan:

"I would like to express my thanks to you and your organization for the booklet you sent. I received it and I was happy because every time I tried to subscribe for any books from the Internet, they told me I must be an American or Canadian citizen. So thank you again. And if you have anything else which might be interesting for me, I would appreciate your help."

—*R.G.*

Positively “NO”

By Janice Thompson

“**M**any of us are people pleasers. In trying to be agreeable and keep others happy, we drop a wonderful little word from our vocabulary” – Linda D. Tillman, Ph.D. (www.selfgrowth.com)

Saying “no” for many people can be difficult—especially to those we love. As toddlers, we had no trouble with this word, but as we grew, it became tougher to voice. But “no” doesn’t have to be a negative word. In fact, learning to use this little word can save us hours of grief and undue pressure. It can help ensure our spiritual and emotional freedom and our peace of mind.

People to Whom It Can Be Difficult to Say “No”

Parents: While we need to respect our parents at all ages and stages of life, there are times when it’s okay or even essential to disagree. When a parent’s request is unreasonable, be direct and honest, but always let them know you value their opinion. When Jesus’ mother was upset because he stayed in Jerusalem talking with the religious teachers, she said, “Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” But twelve-year-old Jesus replied, “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49).

Children: Children, young and old, tend to pull on adult heartstrings. Ironically, sometimes the best thing we can do for our children is turn down their requests. This is especially true if we have a manipulative child or a child who wants to do something that is potentially harmful.

Boyfriend/Girlfriend: Ah, love! We want to cater to the one we are drawn to romantically, especially in a new relationship. However, always saying “yes” to a boyfriend or girlfriend can have devastating consequences. Learning to say “no” is a critical part of the communication between people in love.

Boss: When a boss’s request goes beyond the call of duty and you feel it is unreasonable, start by interjecting your opinion, even if you’re a little timid at



first. You might be surprised to learn he/she is simply trying to see how far he can go before you react or refuse.

Salesmen: There are several techniques to saying “no” to unsolicited sales. Naturally, the first would be to use caller ID and simply not answer telemarketing calls. When you’re face to face with someone and he/she just won’t seem to go away, learn to be bold. Practice these words, “Thank you, but I’m not interested.” If they persist, kindly but firmly repeat your lack of interest and shut the door.

Students: Teachers, especially young and inexperienced ones, can have a difficult time saying no to persistent students, especially those who are full of excuses.

Teachers need to say “no” in the first week of school. If they don’t, they will unknowingly reward their students’ repeated excuses.

Peers: Teens aren’t the only ones who can’t seem to say “no” to their peers. Even adults often have a difficult time turning down their friends, even when they know they should. Learn to distinguish between offending and offering the truth in love early on in a friendship. It will help you as the relationship grows and will prevent you from becoming a slave.

Church leaders: We need to honor and respect our church leaders, from the pastor to the deacon to the Sunday School teacher. However, there is room to politely

Helping A Loved One Who Is Depressed

By Andy J. Johnson

disagree, even with someone in spiritual leadership. When that person crosses a line, manipulates, or is untruthful it's time to interject the truth. Don't allow spiritual "leadership" to become spiritual control and don't allow flattery to draw you into an unwarranted obligation.

Spouse: Saying no to our spouse is rarely easy, but even the strongest of marriages will provide such opportunities. Pray for peace in all situations and proceed carefully. Remember, you are going to live with this person "till death do us part." Finding a workable way to disagree is a learned art.

In-Laws: Your in-laws are your elders and deserve the respect you show your own parents. However, you are not required to submit to their every whim, notion, or desire. Keep an open line of communication with your husband/wife and let him/her know early on that, while you love and respect your in-laws, you don't necessarily feel compelled to jump when they call or do as they suggest.

Getting Courageous

Learning to say a healthy "no" is an art. It requires us to be aware of our own needs, desires, and thoughts. It requires sensitivity to others. And it takes skill, practice, and courage. With time and effort, we can learn when to move forward with boldness and when to use a more cautious approach. The Lord will guide us by His Spirit. When we do make mistakes, we can learn from them and move on.

Of course, there will be many times when our answer should be a joyful "Yes!" When those opportunities arise, embrace them with excitement. When your response needs to go the other way, give it with just as much enthusiasm. Remember, too, we don't need to justify our decisions but follow the principle given by Jesus who said, "Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Your word is enough. To strengthen your promise with a vow shows that something is wrong" (Matthew 5:37, *NLT*). †

Janice Thompson is a Christian freelance author who has had many magazine articles published and is the author of two novels, *Duty to Die* and *A Class of Her Own*. She is happily married with four daughters and lives with her husband in Houston, Texas.

It is painful to see a loved one suffering from debilitating depression. It can also be a helpless feeling since our efforts often seem to be of no avail. But there is much that we can do. Here are some specific steps that you can take to help a loved one suffering from depression:

- Make sure he or she gets into treatment as soon as you detect that they are suffering from depression.

- Help him comply with his treatment such as going to psychotherapy sessions, taking medications, and making any recommended lifestyle changes.

- Provide emotional support and encouragement. Sometimes you can take him out to an activity. Be careful not to suggest things he should do on his own because he might be too depressed to do that and will only feel worse. Instead, tell him you will come by to pick him up.

- Pray with and for him if he is willing. Treat what he tells you as confidential. Do not provide information he shares with prayer groups or prayer chains even if the person says it is okay to do so. Too often things feel more out of control for the person when even well-intentioned individuals from prayer groups start asking him all kinds of questions. It is better to just tell the prayer group or chain that you have a

silent request. God already knows what the person's needs are.

- Help him focus on passages from the Bible that provide comfort and support. Depressed Christians tend to focus on the commands or judgments of Scriptures. Instead, give him supportive, encouraging passages and those pointing out that God loves him just as he is. Assure him that Christ has already paid the penalty for all of our sins.

- Don't criticize. A person who is depressed is overly critical of himself already. He does not need your help in identifying his faults or problems. He will tend to blow your criticism out of proportion and become even more depressed.

- Don't add to his burden. A depressed individual feels too much guilt, shame, and worthlessness. Remember how tender Jesus was with people who were aware of their sins or who felt downtrodden or oppressed. Depressed people need compassion and understanding, not shaming or blaming. Indeed, one of your greatest contributions to a friend who is depressed is to be a real friend and to encourage professional help. †

Andy J. Johnson, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Psychology at Bethel College, St. Paul, Minnesota. He also serves on the Counseling Services staff at Bethel.

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The Honor Of:**
Mary Lou Sparks

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Sharon K. Harris (daughter)

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Dr. Wade Wahl

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The 1 Cent Wonder Drug

Aspirin is the most popular drug in the world today (50 billion tablets swallowed annually) as well as the cheapest: a penny or less per tablet for generic versions. Advertising to the contrary, it is futile to pay more. It is hard to imagine life without aspirin, though it has been around for only a century. What did people do before that for a headache, high fever, a toothache, a sprain, menstrual cramps, or the miseries of arthritis?

Aspirin is acetylsalicylic acid and is based on salicylic acid, which was originally extracted from willow bark. It is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug, or NSAID (others include ibuprofen, with brand names such as Advil or Motrin, as well as prescription NSAIDs used for arthritis and other conditions). Aspirin can reduce swelling, relieve pain, and reduce fever. Unlike some other anti-inflammatory agents, such as prednisone, aspirin is not a hormone (hence the term "nonsteroidal"). Unlike some other pain relievers, it is not an opiate and thus is not addictive or habit-forming.

Besides its efficacy as a pain reliever and anti-inflammatory agent, aspirin is now known to keep platelets in the bloodstream from sticking together and blocking blood flow. Thus millions now take it daily or every other day to reduce the risk of the clots in the bloodstream that lead to heart attacks and strokes. When you have symptoms of a heart attack, such as chest pain, standard advice is to chew one aspirin tablet immediately while you seek medical help.

—UC Berkeley Wellness Letter,
May 1998



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- ✓ If you are 55 or older, you can receive, depending on your age, annual returns between 5.5 % and 11.5 % for as long as you live, through an NCF Annuity and receive a tax deduction as well.
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