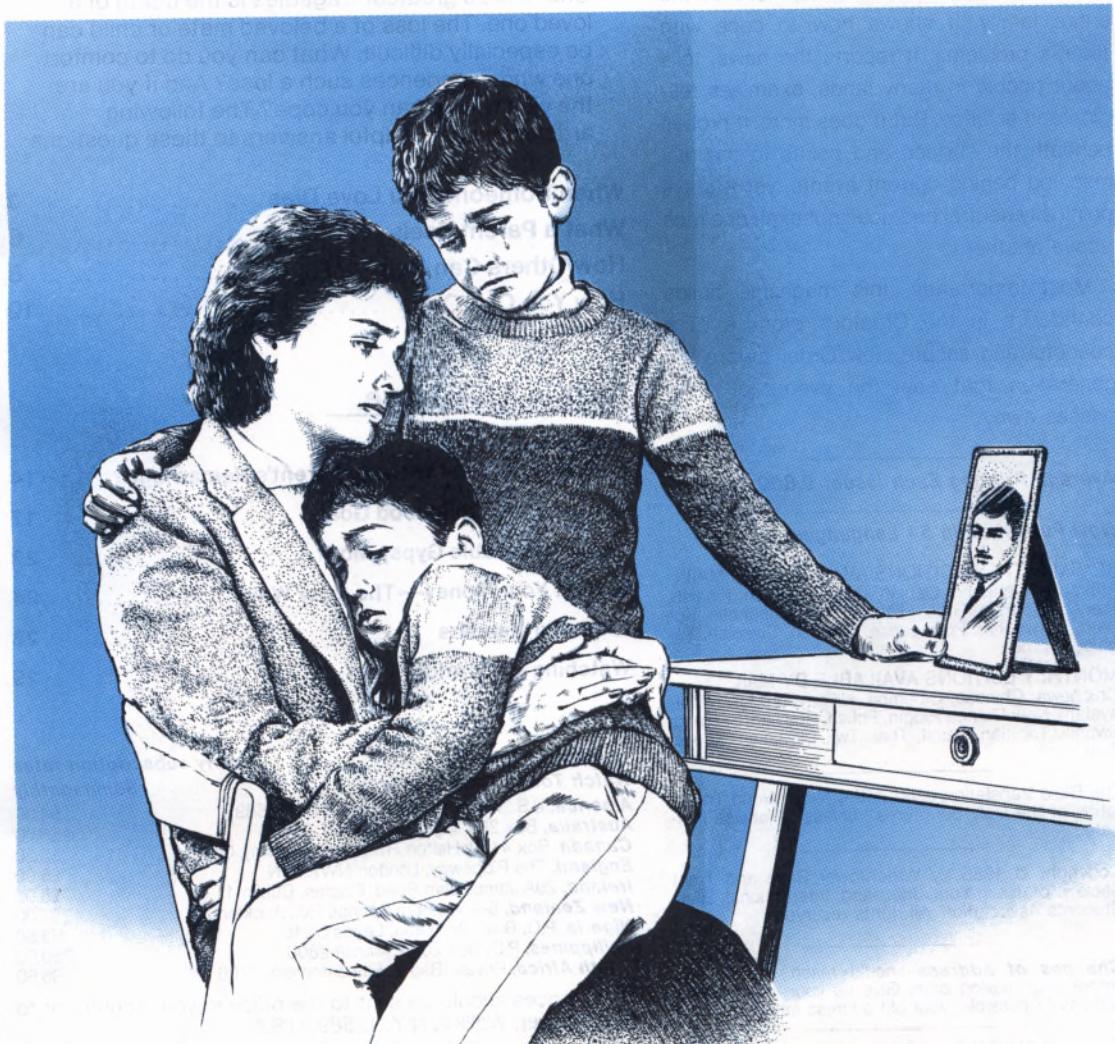


Awake!

APRIL 22, 1985

Heavenly Messenger



***When Someone
You Love Dies . . .***

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AWAKE! is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

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Feature Articles

One of life's greatest tragedies is the death of a loved one. The loss of a beloved mate or child can be especially difficult. What can you do to comfort one who experiences such a loss? And if you are the victim, how can you cope? The following articles provide helpful answers to these questions

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When Someone You Love Dies...

Ricky and MaryAnne had been happily married for 18 years and had one child. But for about a year Ricky had been having pain in his shoulder. By the summer of 1981, it had intensified and he was slowly becoming paralyzed. Emergency surgery revealed a cancerous tumor high up on his spine. Several months later, on February 2, 1982, Ricky died at the age of 48. "It was hard to accept," explains MaryAnne. "For a long time it was like he was still going to walk in the door."

HAVE you, or someone you know, had a similar experience? When someone you love dies, feelings and attitudes may surface that you've never before experienced. Perhaps you wonder if you'll ever feel normal again. Or, like MaryAnne, you have difficulty accepting it, although some time has gone by.

Nevertheless, you can recover—not forget, but recover. 'But how?' you ask. Well, before we can answer that, it's helpful to know more about how it feels when a loved one dies. Recently *Awake!* interviewed a number of persons who had lost a loved one in death. Their comments appear in this series of articles. It can be reassuring to know that others have felt as you may feel. And understanding how they have dealt with their feelings may be of great help to you.

Recalls MaryAnne in explaining how she felt just after Ricky died: "I would

talk about him incessantly. It was a way of keeping him alive. For the first year I was in a state of shock. There are so many things that you have to do to get your affairs in order. You get so involved with those things that you don't have time to deal with the emotional part of it.

"I ended up in the hospital with high blood pressure. Finally, while I was in the hospital, away from the pressure of home and everything else, then I was able to face what had happened to me. It was like, 'Where do I go from here?'"

An unusual reaction? Not really. When first learning that a loved one has died, it's rather common to go into psychological *shock*. As others who have experienced it say: "You hear what's said to you and yet you don't hear everything. Your mind is partially focused in present reality and partially not."

This shock may act almost like an anesthetic. How so? Explains the book *Death and Grief in the Family*: "It's a kind of protection that allows the enormity of what's happened to sink in gradually." Such shock may help cushion you against the full emotional impact of your loss. As Stella, a widow in New York City, explained: "You're stunned. You don't feel anything."

"There Must Be Some Mistake!"

Along with this initial numbness, it's not uncommon to go through various



"Dead? I can't believe it!"

forms of *denial*. "There must be some mistake!" can often be heard during the early hours of grief. For some the loss is difficult to accept, particularly if they weren't with their loved one when he or she died. Recalls Stella: "I didn't see my husband die; it happened in the hospital. So it was hard to believe that he was dead. He went out to the store that day, and it was as if he would be coming back."

You *know* your loved one has died, yet your habits and memories may deny it. For example, explains Lynn Caine in her book *Widow*: "When something funny happened, I'd say to myself, 'Oh, wait until I tell Martin about this tonight! He'll never believe it.' There were times in my

office when I would stretch out my hand to the telephone to call him, to chat. Reality always intervened before I dialed."

Others have done similar things, such as consistently setting the wrong number of plates for dinner or reaching for the departed one's favorite foods in the supermarket. Some even have vivid dreams of the deceased or imagine seeing him on the street. It's not uncommon for survivors to fear that they're going out of their mind. But these are common reactions to such a drastic change in one's life.

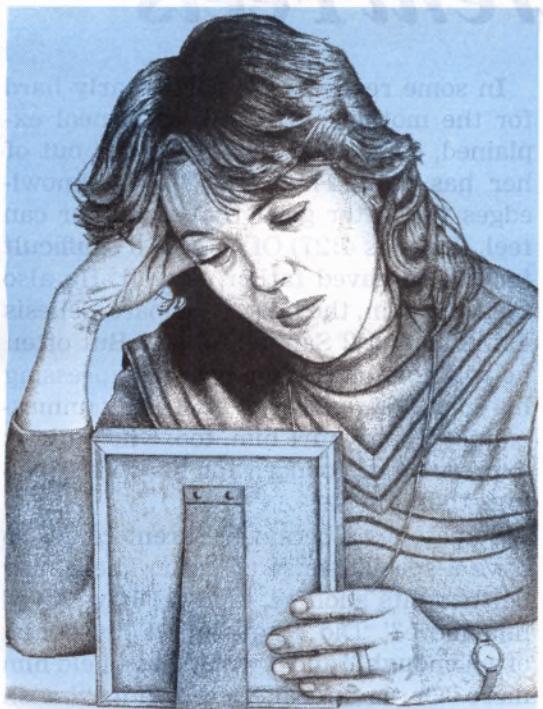
Eventually, though, the pain cuts through, perhaps bringing with it other feelings that you weren't prepared to deal with.

"He Left Us!"

"My kids would get upset and say, 'He left us!'" explained Corrine, whose husband died about two years ago. "I'd tell them, 'He didn't leave you. He didn't have any control over what happened to him.' But then I'd think to myself, 'Here I am telling them that, and I'm feeling the same way!'" Yes, surprising as it may seem, *anger* quite often accompanies grief.

It may be anger at doctors and nurses, feeling that they should have done more in caring for the deceased. Or anger at friends and relatives who, it seems, say or do the wrong thing. Some get angry at the departed one for neglecting his health. As Stella recalls: "I remember being angry with my husband because I knew it could have been different. He had been very sick, but he had ignored the doctors' warnings."

And sometimes there's anger at the departed one because of the burdens that his or her death brings upon the survivor.



Many survivors go through feelings of guilt: "If only I had . . . "

Explains Corrine: "I'm not used to handling all the responsibilities of caring for the house and the family. You can't call on others for every little thing. Sometimes I get angry about that."

On the heels of anger often comes another feeling—*guilt*.

"He Wouldn't Have Died if Only I Had . . . "

Some feel guilty because of anger—that is, they may condemn themselves because they feel angry. Others blame themselves for their loved one's dying. "He wouldn't have died," they convince themselves, "if only I had made him go to the doctor sooner" or "made him see an-

other doctor" or "made him take better care of his health."

For others the guilt goes beyond that, especially if their loved one died suddenly, unexpectedly. They start recalling the times they got angry at or argued with the departed one. Or they may feel that they really were not all that they should have been to the deceased. They are tormented by thoughts such as, 'I should have—or shouldn't have—done this or that.'

Mike, a young man in his early 20's, recalls: "I never had a good relationship with my father. It was only in recent years that I really even started talking to him. Now [since his father died] there are so many things I feel I should have done or said." Of course, the fact that now there's no way to make it up may only add to the frustration and guilt.

As difficult as it is to lose a spouse, a parent, a brother, or a sister in death, what some consider to be the most tragic loss of all is the death of a child.

Common Grief Reactions*

Shock—"I don't feel anything")

Denial—"There must be some mistake!")

Anger—"How could he leave me like this?")

Guilt—"He wouldn't have died if only I had . . . ")

Anxiety—"What will become of me now?")

Fear of insanity—"I think I'm losing my mind")

* This is not to suggest that there necessarily are stages of grief, with one following the other in orderly progression. People are individuals. Thus grief reactions may vary greatly in intensity and duration.

What a Parent Feels

GENEAL had taken her six children—five girls and one boy—for a vacation to visit some friends in upstate New York. One day the girls decided to go into town. The son Jimmy and another boy asked if they could go hiking. The boys were told to be very careful and to return by early afternoon.

By late afternoon the boys hadn't returned. "The later it got, the more worried I grew," recalls Geneal. "I thought maybe one of them had got hurt and the other wouldn't leave him." The search continued through the night. Early the next morning they were found and everyone's worst fears were confirmed—the boys had fallen to their death. Though ten years have gone by, Geneal explains: "I'll never forget when that police officer walked into the house. His face was extremely pale. I knew what he was going to tell me even before he said a word."

And the feelings? They go beyond the common feelings that accompany other losses. As Geneal explains: "I gave birth to Jimmy. He was only 12 years old when he died. He had his whole life ahead of him. I have had other losses in my life. But the feeling is different when you're a parent and your child dies."

The death of a child has been described as "the ultimate loss," "the most devastating death." Why? Explains the book *Death and Grief in the Family*: "A child's death is so unexpected. It's out of order, unnatural. . . . Parents expect to look after their children, keep them safe, and raise them to be normal, healthy adults. When a child dies, it's as if the rug has been pulled out from underneath us."

In some respects it's particularly hard for the mother. After all, as Geneal explained, something that has come out of her has died. Thus the Bible acknowledges the bitter grief that a mother can feel. (2 Kings 4:27) Of course, it's difficult for the bereaved father as well. He also feels the pain, the hurt. (Compare Genesis 42:36-38 and 2 Samuel 18:33.) But often he will hold back from openly expressing his emotions for fear of appearing unmasculine. It may hurt him, too, when others express more concern for his wife's feelings than for his.

Sometimes a bereaved parent comes to have a special sense of guilt. There may be thoughts such as, 'Could I have loved him more?' 'Did I tell him I loved him often enough?' and 'I would have held him more.' Or, as Geneal expressed it: "I wish I could have spent more time with Jimmy."

It's natural for parents to feel responsible for their child. But at times bereaved parents will blame themselves, feeling that they failed to do something that could have prevented the death. For example, the Bible describes the patriarch Jacob's reaction when he was led to believe that his young son Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob himself had sent Joseph out to check on the welfare of his brothers. So perhaps he was plagued with guilt feelings such as, 'Why did I send Joseph out alone? Why did I send him out into an area abounding with wild beasts?' Thus, Jacob's "sons and all his daughters kept rising up to comfort him, but he kept refusing to take comfort."—Genesis 37:33-35.



**To many, the death of a child is
"the ultimate loss"**

As if the loss of their child were not enough, some report another loss—the loss of friends. Friends may actually stay away. Why? Geneal observed: "A lot of people shy away because they don't know what to say to you."

When a Baby Dies

Juanita knew how it felt to lose a baby. By the time she was in her early 20's, she had had five miscarriages. Now she was pregnant again. So when a car accident forced her to be hospitalized, she was understandably worried. Two weeks later she went into labor—prematurely. Shortly afterward little Vanessa was born—just over two pounds (0.9 kg). "I was so excited," she recalls. "I was finally a mother!"

But her happiness was short-lived. Four days later Vanessa died. Recalls Juanita: "I felt so empty. My motherhood was taken away from me. I felt incomplete. It was painful to come home to the room we had

prepared for Vanessa and to look at the little undershirts I had bought for her. For the next couple of months, I relived the day of her birth. I didn't want to have anything to do with anyone."

An extreme reaction? It may be hard for others to understand, but those who, like Juanita, have gone through it explain that they grieved for their baby just as they would for someone who had lived for some time. Long before a child is born, they explain, it is loved by its parents. When that baby dies, it's a real person that's lost. Gone are the parents' hopes of taking care of the one who's been moving inside its mother's womb.

Following such a loss, it's understandable that the newly bereaved parent may feel uncomfortable around other pregnant women and mothers with their children. Recalls Juanita: "I couldn't stand to see a pregnant woman. Why, there were times when I actually left a store right in the middle of shopping just because I saw a pregnant woman."

Then there are other feelings—such as fear ('Will I ever have a normal child?') or embarrassment ('What do I tell friends and relatives?') or anger. Recalls Bonnie whose daughter died two and a half days after birth: "There were times when I felt, 'Why me? Why my little baby?'" And sometimes there's humiliation. Juanita explains: "There were mothers leaving the hospital with their babies, and all I had was a stuffed animal that my husband had bought. I felt humiliated."

If you have lost a loved one in death, it can be helpful to know that what you're going through is normal, that others have gone through the same thing and have felt similarly.



How Others Can Help

IF THERE'S anything I can do, just let me know," we may say to the newly bereaved friend or relative. Oh, we sincerely mean it. We would do *anything* to help.

But does the bereaved one ever call us and say, "I've thought of something you can do to help me"? Not usually. Clearly, we need to take the initiative if we are truly to assist and comfort one who is grieving the loss of a loved one.

A Bible proverb says: "As apples of gold in silver carvings is a word spoken at the right time for it." (Proverbs 25:11; 15:23) There is wisdom in knowing *what* to say and what *not* to say, *what* to do and what *not* to do. Here are a few helpful suggestions that are based on what some bereaved persons told *Awake!*

What to Do . . .

Listen: One of the most helpful things you can do is to share the bereaved one's pain by listening. So ask, "Would you care to talk about it?" Let him decide. Talmadge recalls when his father died: "It really helped me when others asked what happened and then *really listened.*" So listen patiently and sympathetically. "Weep with people who weep," recommends the Bible.
—Romans 12:15; James 1:19.

Provide reassurance: Assure them that they did all that was possible (or whatever else you know to be *true and positive*). Reassure them that what they're feeling may not be at all uncommon. Tell them of others you know of who successfully recovered from a similar loss.—Proverbs 16:24; 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14.

Be available: Make yourself available, not just for the first few days when many friends and relatives are present,

but months later when others have returned to their normal routine. "Our friends made sure that our evenings were taken up so that we didn't have to spend too much time at home alone," explains Teresia, whose child died in a car accident. "That helped us cope with the empty feeling we had."
—Compare Acts 28:15.

Take the initiative: "Many people just went ahead and did things for me," recalls Cindy. "They didn't simply ask, 'What can I do?'" So take the initiative. Instead of a "come any time" invitation, set a date and time. If the bereaved one at first refuses, don't give up too easily. Be like the hospitable woman Lydia mentioned in the Bible. After being invited to her home, Luke says, "She just made us come."—Acts 16:15.

Expect negative emotions: Don't be too surprised at what bereaved ones

may at first say. Remember, they may be feeling angry and guilty. If emotional outbursts are directed at you, it will take insight and compassion on your part not to respond with irritation.—Colossians 3: 12, 13.

Write a letter: Often overlooked is the value of a condolence letter. Its advantage? Answers Cindy: "One friend wrote me a nice letter. That really helped because I could read it over and over again." Such a letter need not be long, but it should give of your heart.

Pray with them: Don't underestimate the value of your prayers with and for bereaved ones. The Bible says: "A righteous man's supplication . . . has much force." (James 5:16) For example, hearing you pray in their behalf can help them resolve such negative feelings as guilt.—Compare James 5:13-15.

What Not to Do...

Don't pressure them to stop grieving: "There, there, now, don't cry," we may want to say. But it may be better to let the tears come. "I think it's important to allow bereaved ones to show their emotion and really get it out," says Katherine, reflecting on her husband's death.—Romans 12:15.

Don't say, 'You can have another baby': "I resented people telling me I could have another child," recalls Teresea. They may mean well, but to the grieving parent words to the effect

that the lost child can be replaced can 'stab like a sword.' (Proverbs 12:18) One child can't totally replace another.

Don't necessarily avoid mentioning the departed one: "A lot of people wouldn't even mention my son Jimmy's name or talk about him," recalls Geneal. "I must admit I felt a little hurt when others did that." So don't necessarily change the subject. Ask the person whether he needs to talk about his loved one. Some bereaved persons appreciate hearing friends tell of the special qualities that endeared the departed one to them.

Don't be too quick to say, 'It was for the best': Trying to find something positive about the death is not always comforting. Recalls Cindy: "Others would say, 'She's not suffering' or, 'At least she's in peace.' But I didn't want to hear that."

It may be better not to say, 'I know how you feel': Do you really? For example, can you possibly know what a parent feels when a child dies if you have not experienced it yourself? And even if you have suffered a similar loss, realize that others may not feel precisely as you felt.—Compare Lamentations 1:12.

To help a bereaved person will call for compassion, discernment, and much love on your part. Don't wait for the bereaved one to come to you. Don't simply say, "If there's anything I can do . . ." Use your initiative to do something helpful.

One question remains: What can the bereaved ones do to cope with their feelings, to deal with their loss better?

How You Can Cope



IFELT a lot of pressure on me to hold in my feelings," explains Mike, in recalling his father's death. It taught him a valuable lesson. So when Mike's friend lost his grandfather, what did Mike say? "A couple of years ago I would have patted him on the shoulder and said, 'Be a man.' But now I touched his arm and said, 'Feel however you have to feel. It will help you to deal with it. If you want me to go, I'll go. If you want me to stay, I'll stay. But don't be afraid to feel.'"

MaryAnne also felt pressure to hold in her feelings when her husband died. "I was so worried about being a good example to others," she recalls, "that I did not permit myself the normal feelings. I felt that's what others expected of me. But I eventually learned that trying to be a pillar of strength for others wasn't helping me. I began analyzing my situation and saying, 'Pick yourself up now. You've wallowed in self-pity long enough. Cry if you have to cry. Don't try to be too strong. Get it out of your system.'"

So both Mike and MaryAnne recommend: *Let yourself grieve!* And mental health experts agree. As the book *Death and Grief in the Family* notes: "The most important thing about grieving is to do it, to go through the process of healing." Why?

"It's a release," one psychologist told *Awake!* "Releasing your feelings can re-

lieve the pressure you're under." Another doctor added: "The natural expression of emotions, if coupled with understanding and accurate information, lets the person put his feelings in proper perspective."

Of course, not everyone expresses grief in the same way. And such factors as whether the loved one died suddenly or death came after a long illness would have a bearing on the emotional reaction of the survivors. But one thing appears certain: *Repressing* your feelings can be harmful both physically and emotionally. So don't be afraid to release your grief. But how?

Releasing Grief—How?

Talking can be a helpful release. As Shakespeare wrote in *Macbeth*: "Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break." So talking about your feelings to "a true companion" who will listen patiently and sympathetically can bring a measure of relief. (Proverbs 17:17) And if the listener is a bereaved person who has effectively dealt with his own loss you may be able to glean some practical suggestions on how you can cope.

Communicating your feelings can also help to clear up misunderstandings. Teresa explains: "We heard of other couples that got divorced after losing a child, and we didn't want that to happen to us. So any time we felt angry, wanting to blame each other, we would talk it out. I think

we really grew closer together by doing that." Thus talking out your feelings can help you to understand that another may grieve differently.

Cindy found that talking out her feelings with a close friend helped her to cope when her mother died. She recalls: "My friend was always there for me. She cried with me. She talked with me. I could just be so open with my emotions, and that was important to me. I didn't have to be embarrassed about crying."

Cindy touches on something else that can facilitate the release of grief—*crying*. In many cases the tears flow automatically. But in some cultures people repress this valuable outlet. How so? Explains the book *The Sorrow and the Fury*: "Society regards as inferior anyone who sheds tears when he feels hurt, angry or lonely. The medals belong to the stoics, pained though they may feel within."

Especially do men often feel the need to hold back tears. After all, they are taught, a "real" man doesn't cry. A healthy attitude? Answers the book *Recovering From the Loss of a Child*: "The honest gut emotion of cleansing the soul with tears of grief is akin to lancing a wound to drain the infection. A man or a woman is entitled to the right of expiating sorrow."

And the Bible agrees. Thus, we read how "Abraham came in to bewail Sarah [his wife] and to weep over her," and how David "began to wail and weep" when King Saul and Jonathan died. (Genesis 23:2; 2 Samuel 1:11, 12) And what about Jesus Christ? Surely he was a "real" man beyond compare. Yet when his dear friend Lazarus died, Jesus "groaned in the spirit and became troubled," and shortly afterward he "gave way to tears." (John 11:

33, 35) So, then, is it really unmanly to cry?

Dealing With Guilt

As noted in the previous articles, some have feelings of guilt after losing a loved one in death. Realizing that it's rather normal to feel that way can be helpful in itself. And, here again, don't keep such feelings to yourself. Talking about how guilty you feel can provide a necessary release.

Perhaps you feel that some neglect on your part contributed to your loved one's death. If so, realize that no matter how much we love another person, we can't control his or her life. We can't prevent "time and unforeseen occurrence" from befalling those we love. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Besides, no doubt your motives weren't bad. For example, in not making a doctor's appointment sooner, did you intend for your loved one to get sick and die? Of course not! Then are you really guilty of causing that one's death?

Teresea learned to deal with the guilt after her daughter died in a car accident. She explains: "I felt guilty that I had sent her out. But I came to realize that it was ridiculous to feel that way. There was nothing wrong with sending her with her father to run an errand. It was just a terrible accident."

'But there are so many things I wish I had said or done,' you may say. True, but who of us can say that we've been the perfect father, mother, or child? The Bible reminds us: "We all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man." (James 3:2; Romans 5:12) So accept the fact that you are not perfect. Dwelling upon all kinds

of "if onlys" won't change anything, but it may slow up your recovery.

If you feel that your guilt is real, not imagined, then consider the most important factor of all in allaying guilt—God's forgiveness. The Bible assures us: "If you kept a record of our sins, who could escape being condemned? But you forgive us, so that we should reverently obey you." (Psalm 130:3, 4, *Today's English Version*) You can't move back into the past and change anything. But you can beg God's forgiveness for past mistakes. Then what? Well, if God promises to wipe the slate clean, shouldn't you do the same?—Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9.

Dealing With Anger

Do you also feel a bit angry, perhaps at doctors, nurses, friends, or even the one that died? Realize that this, too, is a rather common reaction to loss. Why? Explains one psychologist: "Hurt and anger go together. For example, when someone hurts your feelings, you have a tendency to get angry. Anger is a protective, defensive emotion."

So ask yourself: 'Why am I angry?' If you can't come up with a satisfactory answer, then perhaps your anger is the natural accompaniment of the hurt you feel. Recognizing this can help. As the book *The Sorrow and the Fury* explains: "Only by becoming aware of the anger—not acting on it but knowing you feel it—can you be free of its destructive effect."

It may also help to express the anger. How? Certainly not in uncontrolled outbursts. The Bible warns that prolonged anger can be dangerous. (Proverbs 14:29, 30) But some express their anger in

writing. One widow reported that she would write down her feelings and then days later read over what she had written. She found this a helpful release. Others find that vigorously exercising when they are angry helps. And you may find comfort in talking about it with an understanding friend.

While it's important to be open and honest about your feelings, a word of caution is in order. Explains the book *The Ultimate Loss*: "There must be a distinction drawn between expressing [anger or frustration], one to another, and dumping it on each other. . . . We need to let each

Some Practical Suggestions

Rely on friends: If others offer to help, let them. Understand that it may be their way of showing you how they feel; perhaps they can't find the right words.

Take care of your health: Your body needs sufficient rest, healthful exercise, and proper nourishment as much as ever. If you've been neglecting your health, a checkup by your family doctor might be in order.

Postpone major decisions: If possible, why not wait until you are thinking more clearly before you decide whether to sell your house or to change your job?—Proverbs 21:5.

Make allowances for others: Try to be patient. Realize that it's awkward for them. Not knowing what to say, they may clumsily say the wrong thing.

Don't be unduly anxious: You may find yourself worrying, 'What will become of me now?' The Bible counsels to take one day at a time. "Living more on a day-to-day basis really helps me," explains one widow.—Matthew 6:25-34.

other know that while we are acting out our emotions, we are not blaming each other for causing them." So be mindful of talking out your feelings in a nonthreatening way.—Proverbs 18:21.

Beyond these suggestions, there is another aid in coping with grief. 'What is that?' you ask.*

Help From God

The Bible assures us: "Jehovah is near to those that are broken at heart; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves." (Psalm 34:18) Yes, more than anything else, a relationship with God can help you to cope with the death of someone you love. How?

First, it can help you to deal with your grief now. Many of the practical suggestions offered thus far have been based on God's Word, the Bible. Applying such principles can help you cope.

In addition, do not underestimate the value of prayer. The Bible urges us: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you." (Psalm 55:22) If, as we've already noted, talking out your feelings to a sympathetic friend can help, how much more so will pouring out your heart to "the God of all comfort" help you.—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

It's not that the benefits of prayer are just psychological. The "Hearer of prayer" promises to give holy spirit to his servants who sincerely ask for it. (Psalm 65:2; Luke 11:13) And that holy spirit, or active force, can equip you with "power beyond what is normal" to go from one

* It should be noted that in some cases there may be a need for professional help, especially if the bereaved one has a history of mental health problems or has suicidal symptoms. For guidelines, please see *Awake!* of October 22, 1981, pages 24 and 25.

day to the next. (2 Corinthians 4:7) Remember: There is no problem that a faithful servant faces that God cannot help him to endure.—Compare 1 Corinthians 10:13.

A second way that a relationship with God helps us to cope with grief is that it inspires *hope*. Consider: How would you feel if you knew that it was possible to be reunited with your dead loved one in the near future right here on earth under righteous conditions? A thrilling prospect indeed! But is it realistic? Jesus promised: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."—John 5:28, 29; Revelation 20:13; 21:3, 4.

Can we really believe such a promise? Well, since Jehovah God created life in the first place, should he not be *capable* of restoring to life someone who has already lived? Further, since "God, who cannot lie," has *promised* to do so, can he not be trusted to carry out his word?—Titus 1:2; Isaiah 55:10, 11.

Mike firmly believes so. With strong faith in that resurrection hope, he notes: "I've got to think about what I should be doing to please God now, so that when my dad comes back in the resurrection, I'll be there to meet him."

Jehovah's Witnesses will gladly assist you to learn more about this heart-stirring hope. Such hope makes a difference. No, it doesn't eliminate the pain, but it can make it easier to bear. That doesn't mean that you'll no longer cry or will forget your loved one. But you can recover. And as you do, what you have experienced can make you more understanding and sympathetic in helping others to cope with a similar loss.

Young People Ask...

How Can I Deal With My Parent's Remarriage?

The house was jammed with people and filled with the trappings of a wedding. Congratulations were being exchanged between relatives. The bride's two children from a former marriage were playing games and dodging in and out of the crowd. But off by himself was Shane, the groom's 14-year-old son.

"The day Dad married Rita was the worst day of my life," Shane later revealed. "It made me sick. I could tell my Dad expected me to be jumping for joy, too, like everybody else. But I wasn't. I was mad. Mad at Dad for being a traitor to my Mom. Mad at Mom for going off to law school and leaving us alone. Mad at the two brats, Rita's kids, who were going to come live in our house . . . But most of all, I was mad at Rita . . . I hated her. And because I believed it's not right to hate, I was mad at myself, too."

IF YOU are part of a stepfamily, you well know that the remarriage of a parent can be emotionally bewildering. After relating the above in her book *Stepfamilies—New Patterns in Harmony*, Linda Craven adds: "But even when everyone in a new stepfamily wants it to be a happy one, there are problems that no one expected." However, knowing *what* feelings to expect, *why* these feelings exist, and *what to do to cope* with them often result, eventually, in a happy, stable stepfamily.

Some Painful Emotions

A remarriage destroys the hope that your parents will ever get back together. This can hurt deeply. You may feel insecure, betrayed, and jealous. Also, some youths feel uncomfortable about being in close quarters with "strangers" of the opposite sex. Especially for a teenager, who is entering "the bloom of youth," this close contact can be sexually arousing.

—1 Corinthians 7:36.

Remarriage shortly after the death of a parent can add to a youngster's troubled feelings. "The death of my mother made me turn very bitter," revealed 16-year-old Missy. "I tried to shut out people that were close to me. . . . I thought my father's fiancée was taking my mother's place so I was very mean to her. This almost ruined our friendship."

Because of loyalty to your natural parent, it may be that the more you care for a stepparent, the worse you feel. For instance, one evening 13-year-old Aaron told his stepmother that although they got along well, at times he wished that she was not married to his father. His stepmother said that she understood, and they had a warm and honest discussion. When Aaron kissed her good night, he said: "I love you, Veryl, even though I sometimes wish you were dead." They both laughed at the contradiction. Yet, this is a normal conflict of emotions with which most step-

A parent's remarriage can create feelings of anger, insecurity, and jealousy



children contend. In fact, a 1983 study published in *Family Relations* involving 103 adolescents reported that "issues of divided loyalty" were more stressful than any other problem.

"I Can Break Them Up"

If a parent of yours has remarried, perhaps you are thinking of trying to break up the new union. But remember, your natural parent and stepparent have exchanged vows *before God*. Jesus Christ said of married couples: "They are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man [or child] put apart." (Matthew 19:6) Even if you broke up the remarriage, this would probably not reunite your parents.

To try to separate two people who really care about each other *and are united in wedlock* can only cause pain for everyone, as 15-year-old Gerri found out. "I'd liked [Dad's] wife before, but I began not to like her as time went on," she said. One evening Gerri had a "big fight" with her step-



Love helps you cope with jealous feelings

mother, who then demanded that her husband choose between her and his daughter. He then had a long talk with Gerri. "He said he loved his wife and didn't want to lose her, but that he'd always love me, too, no matter what happened," confessed Gerri. "I knew what he was trying to say—that I'd have to move out. I felt all sick inside and couldn't say a thing."

Gerri ended up moving back in with her natural mother—who was also remarried. But now she was determined to get along with her stepfather. Proverbs 11:29 warns: "He who brings trouble on his family will inherit only wind." (*New International Version*) Such a person could end up deprived of a comfortable home, yes, possessing nothing but the wind. True, a child may consider the stepparent as the cause of the trouble, but one must view matters *realistically*.

Love Helps You Cope

The principled love described in the Bible is more than just an emotion; it is an

expression of unselfishness. At 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 the Bible tells how this love acts.

—Love “does not look for its own interests.” Eric had a hard time adjusting to his stepfather, but he put forth the needed effort because, as he explained: “I could see that he did a lot of good for my mother.” It is important to ‘seek not our own advantage, but that of the other person.’ (1 Corinthians 10:24) Could it be that after being on her own for a time, your natural mother may *want* to depend on another adult to help her with discipline and decision making?

It is also important to develop “fellow feeling” for your stepparent. (1 Peter 3:8) Sharon, now 27 years old, reflects back on when her mother remarried. “I knew my stepfather felt like an outsider. However, I began to think that he had feelings too. He was always there when we had problems. I knew he was not comfortable coming into a family with five kids, so I tried to put myself in his shoes. He wanted to be accepted just as we did.”

—“Love is not jealous.” Often youths do not want to share their natural parent’s love with anyone else, as if there were only so much love to go around. But love can *expand*. “Our heart has *widened out*,” wrote the apostle Paul. Some among those to whom he wrote had apparently become cold toward him. But Paul stated: “You are not cramped for room within us, but you are cramped for room in your own tender affections.” Paul had “widened” his love to include all of them. They were the ones that needed to respond to such affection and to “widen out” in their own love.

—2 Corinthians 6:11-13.

Your natural parent can expand his or her love to include a new mate and still maintain the previous affection for you. But are you willing to open your heart to include a stepparent? Such love does not

mean that you are disloyal to your departed parent. Your stepparent will never replace that one who will always have a special place in your heart. But when you widen your heart to include affection for your stepparent, you open up the opportunity for a rich interchange of love.

—2 Corinthians 12:15.

—Love “does not behave indecently.” Reportedly, illicit sex relations take place among family members in 25 percent of stepfamilies. Not only is this a sin against God but it betrays the family’s trust and affection. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10, 18) It is vital to “deaden” sexual feelings. David’s mother remarried when he was 15. Because three of his four stepsisters were also teenagers, he said: “It was necessary to put up a mental block concerning sexual feelings.” Of course, you would also want to watch carefully that the way you dress or behave at home does not arouse sexual desires in others.

—Colossians 3:5.

—Love “bears up under anything . . . It gives us power to endure in anything.” (Charles B. Williams’ translation) At times nothing seems to make the painful emotions go away. Marla admitted: “I felt that I had no place in the home. I even told my mom that I wished I had never been born. But running away from home didn’t solve anything. (I did this a couple of times.) Being rebellious didn’t help. The best thing is to endure.” In time she and her stepfather became good friends. Even if your parent has died, you will find that if you bear up, perhaps pouring out your feelings to a trusted and qualified friend, the pain will gradually lessen.

So showing principled love is the best way to cope with a parent’s remarriage. Regardless of how intense your feelings become, always remember: “Love never fails.”—1 Corinthians 13:8.

Achieving My Childhood Goal



ICAN remember my first curiosity about God. My mother was walking me home from kindergarten, holding my hand. "Mama, where did God come from?" I asked, looking up at her.

"No one knows, dear," was her reply. This worried me because I thought Mother knew everything. 'No one knows where God came from' continued to disquiet my little five-year-old mind.

Understandable Bible Teaching

Two years later my parents allowed me to spend part of my summer vacation with an aunt and uncle who lived in Racine, about 25 miles (40 km) from our home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. My aunt shared with me the wonderful hope offered by the Bible—that of someday living in a paradise.

She explained that "paradise" means a place of natural beauty, like a magnificent garden or park. There you would enjoy happy times with your family and play without fear with animals like lions and

tigers because they would be as gentle as kittens. And you would never have to leave this place because God says that people living there will never need to die! —Luke 23:43; Revelation 21:3, 4; Isaiah 11:6-9.

Many people say the Bible is difficult to understand, that it is not written to be understood. But the scriptures that describe the details of these things were not at all difficult for me to understand when my aunt showed them to me. They were quite easy to picture, being in line with human experience—not at all a fairy tale or fantasy. Childhood fantasies come and go, but this Bible-based hope of living in Paradise has influenced my life for the last 23 years, and today it is just as real as it was back when I was only seven.

Not All Worship Is Approved

Even as a child, I could appreciate that a God who cared about people so much as to offer them such a delightful life certainly deserved to be worshiped. But my aunt showed me that not all worship was pleasing to God. She had me turn to Psalm 115, where it says of those who worship in the wrong way: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of the hands of earthling man. A mouth they have, but they cannot speak; eyes they have, but they cannot see; ears they have, but they cannot hear. A nose they have, but they cannot smell. Hands are theirs, but they cannot feel. Feet are theirs, but they cannot walk; they utter no sound with their throat.

Those making them will become just like them, all those who are trusting in them.”—Psalm 115:4-8.

These scriptures, too, were not difficult for me to understand. Clearly, God does not approve of the use of images in worship! My mind instantly flashed back to the statues and pictures in church that we bowed down to and kissed, and to the picture of Jesus in my bedroom that I prayed to. The weakening realization came over me—my religion, the religion of my parents, did not agree with the Bible! From this point on, it became my foremost desire to worship God “with spirit and truth.”—John 4:23.

My aunt had particular reason for showing me such scriptures as those in Psalm 115. She knew that my father, who was her younger brother, had been deeply indoctrinated in the use of images in worship in the Orthodox religion. Father had immigrated to the United States from the Ukraine following World War II, and he, Mother, my two younger sisters, and I regularly attended the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Milwaukee.

Beginning of Family Opposition

When I returned home I told my parents about the things I had been learning. But immediately I sensed that they did not appreciate my aunt's talking to me about her religion. So I kept quiet—and worried. The Scriptures say, “Honor your father and your mother,” but now I was torn between two fathers—my natural father and a heavenly Father who also required obedience and honor.—Ephesians 6:1-3.

Over the next few years, my parents continued to allow me to visit my aunt and uncle. While I was there, they took me to meetings at the Kingdom Hall, and a young Witness even took me with her from house to house to tell others about

God's promises. The Witnesses took a genuine interest in me, treating me as a real person, and I enjoyed very much being with them. Each time I returned home my father would ask, “Whose religion do you like better?” I would always reply, “Ours, Dad.” As a small girl, I was too afraid of him to tell him the truth.

Then the day came when I decided I was just going to have to show Dad from the

Now I was torn between two fathers

Bible about all these things I had been learning—about how it was wrong to use images and pictures in worship, and about the wonderful future we could enjoy right here on earth in the Paradise God was going to create. I was about 12 at the time. Well, my father became furious and forbade me to see my aunt again. From that moment on, our home was never the same. And it became more tense as the years went by.

So what was I to do? How would I ever be able to serve Jehovah now? I can remember fervently praying that Jehovah would not bring the new Paradise earth until I could be one of his servants. Then one day, after I had turned 14, there was an answer to my prayers.

Setting My Goal in Life

Sitting at my desk one afternoon doing my homework, I happened to look out my bedroom window. Across the street were two young women carrying large purses. My heart beat faster! They looked like Witnesses! I raced out of the house. “Are you Jehovah's Witnesses?” I asked.

“Yes,” they replied.

"So am I," I said, since I considered myself one. The girls were full-time pioneer ministers. I explained the opposition at home, and so we arranged to study together at places other than my home. We studied off and on in secret for four years.

From these studies, it became clearer and clearer that Jehovah's Witnesses were the only religion teaching and practicing the truth from the Bible. The young Witness who was helping me to learn the Bible gave me many publications to read. One of these was the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. From reading it I learned that the life of Jehovah's servants was by no means dull. This yearly publication was full of missionary experiences. How wonderful it would be to be a missionary, I thought, and have the same kind of exciting experiences in life! That became my goal.

My family never discovered our study, although they were suspicious that I had some contact with Jehovah's Witnesses. A tip-off was the Bible literature they sometimes found in my bedroom. My sisters (they are twins two years younger than I) would go through my drawers, look under the bed, and search my entire room for

literature that they could take and show to my parents. The only places that escaped the search were the pockets of coats hanging in the closet.

Opposition Grows

As I refused to adhere to my parent's form of worship, homelife became increasingly difficult. Mother would sometimes go for days without talking to me, even refusing to answer a question I might have about school, clothes, anything at all. In time I was not allowed to ride in the same car as the rest of the family. Various relatives, prompted by my parents, would come to visit and ridicule me and my beliefs.

There was much arguing, fighting, and crying. As a result, most of my growing-up years were miserable. What a help it was to be able to read Jesus' words in Matthew 10:34-37 where he says that his teachings would "cause division" in some households. Jesus went on to say that the love we have for God must be even greater than the love we have for those who are as close and dear to us as our own parents.

My father always warned me that if I ever became one of those "Jehovahs" I would have to leave home, and I had no reason to doubt him. Shortly after graduating from high school in 1971, I explained to Dad that since I was now 18 and old enough to get married, I was old enough to choose my own religion—and I chose to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. By then I had a job and was prepared to leave home. But although a heated argument followed, Dad never once told me to leave. I could hardly believe it! Jehovah was blessing my efforts.

Why Their Opposition

My parents were religious people and sincerely believed that their form of wor-

In Our Next Issue

- **A Look at
the 'Japanese Miracle'**
- **Do We Know What the
Bible Originally Said?**
- **Will Being in a Stepfamily
Ruin My Life?**

ship was correct. I am sure that they only wanted the best for me. Dad had been an elementary school principal and teacher in the Ukraine, and it was his dream that his children would be formally educated and successful in America. Dad and Mom wanted us to develop culturally, so beginning at an early age, we girls learned to play musical instruments.

Now it seemed that their oldest daughter was rejecting everything they had wanted for her, including a college education. It wasn't that I was against a college education in itself, but from my understanding of the Bible I was convinced that this system of things was soon to end. In view of that, I believed that I should be concentrating on the lifesaving preaching work instead of getting more involved in a dying system. I was convinced that teaching others how to gain life in God's Paradise was more important than anything else.—2 Peter 3:13.

At the same time, I must admit that some of the persecution from my family was my own fault. You see, I was learning many facts regarding religious teachings—what was true, what was false. Yet I failed to appreciate that serving God "with spirit and truth" also includes the putting on of "the new personality," which involves exercising such wholesome qualities as peace, mildness, long-suffering, and self-control. (Ephesians 4:22-24; Galatians 5:22, 23) So it was understandable that my parents' disappointment was intensified by my lack of tact, and they responded with opposition.

After telling Dad that I was going to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I began attending the meetings at the Kingdom Hall regularly. Then, in December 1972, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. Jesus said at Mark 10:

29, 30: "No one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news who will not get a hundred-fold now in this period of time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, with persecutions, and in the coming system of things everlasting life." Soon, in keeping with Jesus' promise, I was developing friends among Jehovah's people that filled the emptiness of not having a close relationship with my family. Certain ones were just like mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters to me.

Working Toward My Goal

I still wanted to become a missionary. But only pioneers qualify to attend the Bible school of Gilead, after which they are sent to foreign missionary assignments. However, the preliminary step to achieving that goal—beginning to pioneer—would present problems.

First of all, it would be a further blow to my parents. They were somewhat satisfied that my well-paying job as a secretary was at least keeping my life from becoming a total waste. Also, what would I tell my boss? He had hired me with the understanding that I would be with the firm for some time. I would be quitting even before they were able to see a return on their investment of training me. Again I earnestly prayed to Jehovah for strength and courage to be able to take this step.

Taking a deep breath, I walked into my boss' office one day in the summer of 1973 and explained to him my goal of being a full-time preacher. His words dumbfounded me: "Larisa, if this is what you really want to do with your life, you'd be a fool for staying here." I couldn't believe it! Here was a worldly man telling me that if I wanted to serve the true God Jehovah in

a greater capacity, I would be a fool for not doing so!

The next day brought a greater surprise. My boss approached me and asked if I would consider working part time. Was I hearing correctly? "But there are no arrangements for part-time work with this firm," I replied.

"Yes, I know, but I can work something out," he said. Along with that, he offered me "any days and any hours" I wanted. What evidence that Jehovah was backing me up, and certainly evidence of the truth of Jesus' words, 'Keep on seeking first the kingdom, and all these other things will be added to you'!—Matthew 6:33.

Thus August 1973 saw me in my first month of pioneer service. As I anticipated, my family strongly objected to my decision, and it became necessary for me to leave home. Although the situation made me very sad, I am happy to say that as the years passed, tensions abated in our family, and finally we were able to enjoy a wholesome relationship, laughing and joking and talking together as a family.

Before Mom's death in August 1979, she welcomed me home on visits from my pioneer assignments in the southern part of the United States. Then, on April 5, 1980, David, who shared my goal in life, became my husband. Happily, Dad came to our wedding and even gave us a generous gift. So although neither he nor my sisters appreciate how I feel about worshiping Jehovah, we enjoy good relations.

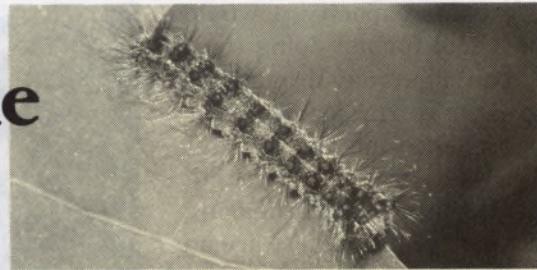


Serving in my missionary assignment in Honduras

In January 1984, after serving well over ten years in the pioneer service, David and I received one of the surprises of our life. Returning home one afternoon, we found a large envelope. It contained an invitation to the 77th class of Gilead that was to begin in April! Last September we completed school, and a few days later we were off to our missionary assignment in Honduras, Central America.

Now I am enjoying some of those thrilling experiences that I always eagerly anticipated reading about in the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. Having achieved my childhood goal of serving as a missionary, I want to hold on to this grand privilege of service. Yet my major goal is to continue to worship Jehovah "with spirit and truth," eventually winning his favor, and then enjoying that grand Paradise where he will reward his servants with the desire of their hearts—life forever in Paradise! (Psalm 37:4)—*As told by Larisa Krysuik*.

The Unstoppable Gypsy Moth



USDA Forest Service

THEY are everywhere," complained the young woman to her husband as she desperately flailed her arms to ward off a spiny, dark-brown caterpillar swinging toward her in the wind. She was right. The caterpillars were everywhere—crawling on tree trunks and branches or dangling on invisible silken threads. The two of them, tired of picking caterpillars off each other, cut short their walk in the woods. The caterpillars were a nuisance.

A nuisance? Authorities say they are a plague. In 1980 these caterpillars defoliated five million acres of northeastern forests in the United States. Worse, in 1981 they stripped a record 12.8 million acres. "They have also defied every assault mounted against them," says *Smithsonian*, "until their invasion front now stretches along a wavy and indistinct line from Virginia and Maryland, through West Virginia and into western Pennsylvania and New York, with numerous isolated pockets scattered beyond." Even the West Coast states of California, Oregon, and Washington are threatened.

The enemy, it seems, is unstoppable. Emerging from their eggs in late April or May, the one-eighth-inch-long (0.3 cm) larvae will feast on any of 500 types of trees and shrubs if necessary, though oak leaves remain their favorite. Carried by winds that catch their silken threads, they float from tree to tree or hitchhike on cars, campers, or lawn furniture into new territories—hence the name gypsy. By

the time they reach a full 2 1/2 inches (6.5 cm) in length, each caterpillar can put away 12 square inches (77 sq cm) of leaf in 24 hours. When on a rampage, they are truly pests—crawling over driveways, dropping onto plates at backyard barbecues, creating a steady rain of excrement and half-eaten leaves. At their worst, they kill trees that are too weak to withstand successive years of leaf loss.

The moth was accidentally introduced to America in 1869 when a windstorm upset a cage of gypsy moth caterpillars imported by a French naturalist working in Medford, Massachusetts. The caterpillars crawled out the window. Twenty years later Medford was swarming with them. For the next ten years pest fighters in Massachusetts fought the insect with torches, creosote paint, scrapers, sticky paper, and sprays of lead arsenate and other poisons, and they almost succeeded in eradicating them. But as the number of moths dwindled, so did the interest in fighting them.

Yet their territory kept expanding. By 1900 they had nibbled through Massachusetts. They were in Rhode Island by 1901. They moved to New Hampshire in 1905, Connecticut in 1906, Vermont in 1912, and New York in 1922. By 1934 they were in Pennsylvania. But even as their territory expanded, the amount of forests they defoliated varied—a disconcerting fact for pest fighters trying to predict the enemy's next move.

Life of an adult moth lasts only a week, long enough for mating. The female lays egg clusters that may contain as many as a thousand eggs



USDA Forest Service



USDA Forest Service

A faint hope of stopping them came in the 1950's with the aerial spraying of DDT. But pest fighters were forced to turn to less toxic chemicals when DDT was banned due to its lethal effects on other wildlife. In the meantime, more selective controls were developed. One popular bacterial agent in use, *Bacillus thuringiensis*, is fatal only to moths and butterflies. Another viral agent kills only gypsy moths but is very expensive and not available in large quantities. Additionally, of the some 45 predators and parasites of the gypsy moth that have been introduced to North America, about a dozen have gained a foothold.

But despite millions of dollars spent on poisons and biological weapons, the moths still push west and south at 5 to 15 miles (8 to 25 km) a year. Some authorities maintain that the widespread use of pesticides stimulates the spread of the moth. How? Moths that spread rather slowly or that have no immunity to poisons are quickly targeted and killed off. Therefore, surviving moths tend to be more mobile and poison resistant. Furthermore, these hardy strains reproduce at astounding rates, since they have no competition for food and because the most common poisons have eliminated their natural enemies.

Biologist Jack Schultz of Dartmouth College suggests that we rely on nature's

own defenses. He has demonstrated that defoliated trees grow replacement leaves high in tannin—making them less palatable to the caterpillars. "Just let the trees and plants alone," he urges. "Variability is a more potent control than uniform spraying, and tannin doesn't introduce toxic substances into the environment." Interestingly, a variety of natural causes —viral disease, predators, and stress from a lack of food—begin to operate when moth populations grow too large. For these reasons, since 1981 forest defoliation by the gypsy moth has dropped drastically.

The sight of a naked, dead-looking forest of oaks ravaged in midsummer by hungry caterpillars is shocking. However, the forest may not be as devastated as it appears. It has been suggested that such defoliation in eastern forests simply accelerates the growth of American beech, sugar maple, and eastern hemlock—climax species that are not favored as food by gypsy moths. Perhaps nature is demonstrating another natural control that someday will lessen the wild rampages of the gypsy moth. In any event, *Conservationist* concludes: "Long-range biological consequences of forest invasion by the gypsy moth now seem predictable and may actually be beneficial." That's taking a positive view. We might as well. After all, the little fellows are here to stay.

Budget Your Money



—The Easy Way!

IT IS Saturday evening. Ronald and Sherry, young parents, are having their evening meal, chatting between bites of food. Their conversation, a weekly ritual of, "You wouldn't believe how rough my week has been," is the same as usual. Sherry tells of her domestic triumphs and failures, Ronald of his exhaustion from a week of overtime work. Acknowledging each other with nods and an occasional, "Oh, really," the talk lulls.

That is, until Sherry mentions the new dress she bought.

From here on the conversation takes a definite turn for the worse. "Why did you have to do that? I've worked hard all week and *still* can't pay our bills!" snaps Ronald. "If you're *that* concerned, why did you buy that set of tools?" Sherry retorts.

"Because I need them for work!"

"Well, I need the dress too!"

Sound familiar? If so, you may take some comfort in the fact that many are experiencing money problems—and not just newlyweds either. Singles, retired couples, even those in high-income brackets often find themselves spending more than they make. Why, even a college professor ran into financial problems, though his salary is in the upper bracket.

The solution? Hiring a certified public accountant to manage your finances is probably out of the question. Ronald and Sherry, however, found a way that proved

practical. As it turns out, they were having weekly Bible discussions with a married couple who were full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses. This couple live on a very modest income, and Ronald and Sherry were curious as to how they managed. "We have a family budget!" was their answer.

That word "budget," though, conjures up scary images of long ledgers adorned with endless rows of figures. But don't let it frighten you away. Though Ronald and Sherry were perhaps a bit skeptical at first, they were helped to work out a simple, yet practical, budget that not only paid their bills (without Ronald's working overtime!) but even left them enough money to visit the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses, where this magazine is printed. Here's the secret:

Making Up a Budget

Really, all that budgeting involves is a listing of the amount of income and a listing of expenses—and then keeping the expenses within the income. It's quite simple. Let's start with that income. For most of us this should be easy, as it generally involves just a few items. (Salary, interest from savings accounts, pay for odd jobs, etc.) Making out the list of expenses, however, is a bit more tricky.

You might begin by working up (or purchasing) a form such as the one shown

here. Develop main headings, such as "food" and "clothing," but don't get too detailed and attempt to break "food" down into separate food items. Remember, too, to give yourself a listing for "unexpected" or "miscellaneous" expenses that will inevitably come up. Out-of-town guests, flat tires, or even an occasional impulse purchase are pretty hard to plan for. So you'll want your budget to be flexible.

For each expense, try to come up with a *realistic* figure for how much money should be set aside for it. If you're the type that keeps grocery receipts and bills, or who pays by check, this shouldn't be too hard. If not, you will just have to make an intelligent guess. You'll also want to remember monthly expenses such as rent or mortgage payments, and long-term expenses such as taxes, insurance, or a vacation.

Whether your budget sinks or swims will depend to a great extent on how realistic the figures you set are. Says one couple that has successfully lived by a budget: "Probably the most important point in making our system work is setting a realistic amount for the household expenditures. The system won't operate if the amount set aside for the household is so small you can't possibly get through the month on it."

While the husband will no doubt take the lead in establishing these figures, this

Expense Sheet for the Month of _____		
Expenditures	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent
Food		
Mortgage or Rent		
Electric Bill		
Fuel Oil		
Home Insurance		
Taxes		
Home Maintenance		
Auto Loan		
Auto Repair		
Gasoline		
Auto Insurance		
Telephone		
Dentist		
Doctor		
Health Insurance		
Clothing		
Recreation		
Vacation		
Assembly Travel		
Kingdom Hall Contributions		
Miscellaneous		
Savings Account		
Total (To be compared with total income)		

is definitely not a one-man project. The entire family should be involved if this budget is really to prove helpful. And naturally everyone is going to want a say in how much should be allocated for what. Wives, of course, might be concerned about the food budget. Youngsters might argue for more recreation money. By hearing everyone out, a much more balanced and realistic budget can be agreed upon. A word of caution, however: Do not let this turn into an angry bargaining session, such as governments and labor unions indulge in.

There people selfishly promote their own interests. Love, however, "does not look for its own interests," says the Bible. (1 Corinthians 13:5) Good advice for a situation like this. In fact, in one family a husband felt his love for his wife increase as he observed how cooperative and self-sacrificing she was as they established their budget.

When Expenses Exceed Income

Now that you have a rough draft of your budget, start adding up how much it costs for you to live. In some cases it will look as if you need more money than you make. If so, you had better check some of your estimated expenses. Some will doubtless have to be trimmed down. The college professor mentioned at the outset discovered that he was spending too much on food. He found that by just cutting down on eating out and on snacks, he could ease his financial difficulties. In your case, however, trimming the budget may be quite a bit more painful. You may have to scrutinize more carefully what your real needs are as opposed to wants.

Those living in the wealthier, industrialized countries especially need to consider this factor. The wisdom of the Bible's words at 1 Timothy 6:7, 8 is often disdained in our materialistic world: "For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." Yet for many, these words have proved their worth.

So think twice before concluding that you need to bring in more income to make the budget balance. Working longer hours, getting an extra job, or putting another member of the family into the job market may well detract too much from

the quality of your family life. And often times families that take on extra secular work so as to meet some particular expense find themselves in a materialistic trap: Long after the expense is met they keep working. That added income becomes irresistible. So take another look at the budget and see if yet further (painful though they may be) cuts can be made. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Recreation and Entertainment:**

In the United States over 6 percent of income is spent on recreation and entertainment. This may just be too high for you. Reading, outings to the park, and so forth, are far less expensive than movies, restaurants, and sporting events.

- **Expensive Bad Habits:** Some spend \$1.25 out of every \$100 (U.S.) on tobacco. Gambling is another expensive vice. Would eliminating such habits strengthen your budget?

- **Food and Drink:** Alcoholic beverages are pleasurable but unnecessary. Plain foods, such as baked potatoes, are often not only cheaper but more nutritious than their fancier counterparts (such as French fries). In-season foods are also less costly. Rather than throwing out leftovers, find ways of using them, such as in stews and casseroles.

- **Credit:** Use conservatively, if at all. Money borrowed or items bought on credit may cost more because of interest.

- **Telephone calls:** If long-distance calls are creating a financial burden, consider cutting down on them. At times discounts are given for making such calls at certain hours of the day. Remember, too, people still enjoy receiving letters.

- **Clothing:** Do not rush to follow the latest styles. Conservatively styled clothes are often better purchases. A

housewife may want to consider making clothing for herself and the children.

After a period of no little travail, your budget will at last look workable. A few adjustments here and there and the family can view their accomplishment with pride. But now the hard part begins.

Living by the Budget

Figures written down on paper do not solve a family's financial problems. Actually, setting up the budget is the easier part. Living by it is not always so easy. It requires real self-control and discipline. And there is need of a way of allocating your money.

Much will depend upon the way in which you are paid, be it weekly, biweekly, or monthly. If, for example, you are paid weekly, you can make it a habit each week to parcel out enough of your wages to meet your *weekly* expenses, while at the same time setting aside a little bit each week so as to meet monthly and yearly expenses.

Some find it helpful to use the "envelope method." Simply take a few envelopes and mark each one for the type of expense it represents, such as food or clothing, and the amount. On payday you can distribute your income to each envelope. So when the time comes to meet the expense, the money is ready and waiting. And if you have not allocated enough money to pay a particular kind of expense, it is simply a matter of borrowing money from another envelope to do so.

Others prefer to use their checking account to pay bills, rather than having money lying around the house. In this case you can monitor how the money is being spent by means of check stubs and deposit slips. Some even keep a separate savings account for long-term bills. They

may pay their regular bills out of a checking account and then contribute each week (or month, depending on how the person is paid) to the other account to build up funds for long-term bills.

Whichever method is used, at the end of the month you should compare how much money was actually spent with how much was budgeted. A third column on the budget sheet can therefore serve to keep track of how much money was actually spent. Do not panic if at first the figures do not jibe well. Your estimated figures were just that—estimates. They were not engraved in stone. As the weeks go by, you may want to make a number of adjustments on your budget estimates until your figures approach reality. Rising expenses due to inflation may force you to adjust your estimated expenses regularly.

Too, by listing your expenses you may find yet further ways of cutting down. One man, for example, tried to cope with the rising cost of food by raising animals for food. Still he had trouble making ends meet. After keeping track of his expenses, he could see that the cost of feeding and caring for the animals was more than he was getting out of them. The solution? He simply gave up the animals and saved money.

Ronald and Sherry found that keeping a simple budget worked for them. And we hope that it will for you too. Bear in mind that the economic straits we are suffering are but an indication that we are living in what the Bible calls "critical times hard to deal with," "the last days." (2 Timothy 3:1) So the real cause of economic distress is out of your control. This does not mean, however, that you cannot use "practical wisdom" so as to cope better with modern life. (Proverbs 2:7) Keeping a budget may be just the thing to help you do that.

From Our Readers

About Dating

Thank you for your article "Young People Ask . . . Is Dating Really for Me?" (June 22, 1982) With the help of that article and prayers to Jehovah, I was able to clear up a situation in school.

S. H., Illinois

Ulcer Treatment

In your article "So You Think You Have an Ulcer?" (September 8, 1982) you make persistent use of the brand name Tagamet, and this might bias readers' preference toward a specific commercial designation of a substance available under other brand names that are equally effective. Tagamet is very expensive and not without ill effects. I think this recommendation was a serious mistake.

J. M., M.D., Portugal

Tagamet was not especially recommended but only mentioned as one of the current forms of treatment that was having a greater measure of success in some cases than antacids. In any article that we publish dealing with matters of health or medicine, we try to be careful not to recommend any particular treatment but rather to inform our readers as to what is available and how the treatment or medicine is supposed to work. Further information on the use of cimetidine products was published in our issue of June 22, 1983, page 28.
—ED.

Marmots

I enjoyed your article on marmots (September 8, 1984), but you say that the beaver is the largest rodent, with the marmot next. I understand that the

capybara, of Central and South America, is the largest living rodent.

E. G., South Africa

"Awake!" erred. The beaver can be 2.5 feet (76 cm) from the base of the tail to the end of the nose and weigh about 60 pounds (27 kg). The capybara can reach a length of four feet (1.2 m) and a weight of 110 pounds (50 kg).
—ED.

Child Molesting

I read your issue on child molesting. (January 22, 1985) I was unaware of the dangers. I am a young mother, and the threat of child molesting never crossed my mind. Now I am aware of all the dangers and some of the things I can do to prevent it from happening. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart.

J. M., New York

Meal-in-One Pancake

We really enjoyed your "cabbage pancake" article. (November 8, 1984) We did ours with bacon, green onions, and mushrooms, and it made a delicious supper. We also took the same variation to a potluck get-together, and it made a hit there too. Then we tried a delicious breakfast pancake, using the basic batter with sliced apples and breakfast sausage, good as is or with maple syrup. Just one thing—for us "foreigners." What is white cabbage? The closest I could get, after consulting the supermarket produce man was napa, or Chinese, cabbage. Anyway, thanks for the delightful recipe!

J. W., Colorado

Chinese cabbage is correct.—ED.

Watching the World

stampsA boy's world
migrating from one country to another
stamps like stamps to a
background of a map of the
globe's continents and oceans

UN "Talkathon"

• "A three-month-long annual rite, now ending in New York, has gone almost unnoticed," says *The Economist* in referring to the 1984 sessions of the United Nations General Assembly that were held from September to December. Noting that most of the world's governments send representatives "to make speeches and haggle over resolutions," the report notes that "with very few exceptions, these resolutions sink into instant oblivion. Each session pumps out well over 200 of them, totalling about a quarter of a million words. Much of this verbiage is vain repetition, year after year." Calling the United Nations assembly "a picture of a tedious, unproductive and costly talkathon," the report maintains that if it "would cut its annual output back to, say, 50 resolutions, perhaps half of them might make some real impact."

No "Wars" Since 1941

• "The formal declaring of war has gone out of style," says *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto, Canada. "The last time it occurred was on Dec. 11, 1941, when, after the attack on Pearl Harbor,

Japan's allies, Germany and Italy, declared war on the United States." Disregarding formality, there have been some 150 to 220 wars waged since World War II. In 1984 about ten wars were being fought, though no new wars broke out during the year. "In 1984, as in 1983, all the world's wars were fought in Third World countries. As a consequence, some that were relatively well off or had a promising future have been ruined; in others development has been set back," says the article.

Sports Fever

• "The pro football championship is the nation's premier betting event," said *The Wall Street Journal*, "with 17% of American adults having bet on the 1984 Super Bowl, according to a Gallup survey." An estimated \$5 billion to \$10 billion (U.S.) were wagered on the event. "Far more Americans watched Sunday's contest [on January 20] (110 million) than bothered to vote in the 1984 presidential election (89 million)," said the *New York Daily News*. "A 30-second commercial during the game cost a whopping \$525,000 [U.S.] which, as announcer

Frank Gifford pointed out, is more than it cost to build the original stadium in which the game was played." The *Daily News* adds that "after such a massive buildup, the games are almost always letdowns." This year many fans were disappointed because it was such a one-sided victory for the winning team.

Active Brain

• "People who exercise their brains with activities like crossword puzzles during mid-life are more likely to retain mental skills in later years than those with lazy minds," says *The Vancouver Sun* in a report on a study released by Pennsylvania State University. The research, which began in 1956, was based on tests taken every seven years by 400 people and on information they supplied about their occupations, incomes, leisure activities, and travel experiences. "Those people who didn't have very stimulating lives showed a marked decline," said Warner Schaie, a professor of human development and psychology who is regarded as an authority on aging. The study acknowledged the role of genetic and physiological factors in determining an elderly person's mental performance. But it refutes the notion that people have no control over declining mental abilities as they age, says Schaie.

Marriage Tempers Habits

• "In the first years after high school graduation, young people who got married showed the greatest decline in alcohol and drug use [over those who remained single and those who lived together without marriage]," says the *New York Daily News* in assessing the current findings of an ongoing study by the University of Michigan. The

study compared 17,000 high school graduates who were questioned in regard to their habits in their senior year and in the three years following. "We don't know yet what exactly there is about marriage that has this effect," says Jerald G. Bachman, one of the researchers. "But it may have something to do with how these young people spend their spare time. Young married couples report they still go out as much as before—but on 'dates' with each other instead of 'out with the boys' or 'out with the girls.'" Incidentally, the use of alcohol and drugs did not change after high school for young people living together without marrying. But it increased substantially for single people who moved away from home.

Nixed Surgery

● "Overall, the number of operations performed in the United States is increasing five times faster than the population," reports the *New York Daily News*. Dr. Eugene G. McCarthy of New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center believes the increase is due to the burgeoning number of surgeons coming out of medical schools. More surgeons mean more surgery, he says. How can you avoid the surgeon's knife? It could be by getting a second opinion before making a decision. In a nationwide survey, 14 percent of 5,000 patients did not have a previously recommended operation after getting a second opinion. In New York State, a mandatory second-opinion program cut down hysterectomies by 17 percent, knee surgery by 36 percent, and prostate removals by 19 percent.

Falls on Escalators

● "Grid patterns on escalators in North America create a visual depth illusion which is chiefly

responsible for an estimated 60,000 falls each year," reports *The Medical Post* of Toronto, Canada. Falls while going up an escalator occur slightly more frequently than while going down, "whereas on stairs, people rarely fall going up," says Dr. Theodore Cohn, associate professor of physiological optics at the University of California in Berkeley. He offers some simple solutions to prevent falls: "Closing one eye while viewing an escalator turns off the depth illusion and disorientation does not occur. Another way is to approach the escalator diagonally."

Fishing by Satellite

● The fishing industry is turning to weather satellites to find the best fishing spots, reports the *Asahi Evening News* of Japan. How is it done? The U.S. satellite NOAA, which covers all the world's oceans, sends data for infrared pictures to the earth once every several hours for any given place. A receiving device on specially equipped fishing boats breaks down the data so that fishermen can determine ocean temperatures by using 16 different colors on a video monitor. From the display they can tell where junctions between ocean currents lie, which are often good fishing areas. In an early test, several fishing boats hauled in ten tons of bonitos using this technique. So far, 20 boats are equipped with the device.

Crime Comparison

● Most people take it for granted that crime is rampant in all big cities. But not so, says *The Express* of Easton, Pennsylvania. It calls Tokyo, one of the world's largest cities, "one of the safest cities in the world." According to the latest figures, in

Tokyo 1.6 murders, 5.6 robberies, and 3.8 rapes occur per 100,000 persons, presumably annual figures. But in New York City there are 22.8 murders, 1,183.7 robberies, and 51.6 rapes per 100,000 persons over the same time period. "Tokyo's metropolitan police claim an arrest record of 95 percent for violent crimes," adds the report.

Endangered Animals

● Forty-six native and foreign species of plants and animals have been added to or proposed for the list of endangered species of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Interior Department. Among the latest animals listed were the wood stork, the woodland caribou, and the giant panda of China. But, says *The New York Times*, "there is still a large backlog of over 1,000 'candidates' for protection" not yet on the list. Interestingly, the brown pelican was proposed for removal from the endangered list. If the proposal is carried out, "it would be the first time a creature had been delisted because . . . [it] was no longer in danger of extinction," says the report. "Usually a species is removed from the listed after it has become extinct."

Cordless Phone Warning

● "The Food and Drug Administration says that it has 120 complaints on file from consumers who say their hearing was damaged by . . . battery-powered portable phones," reports *The Express* of Easton, Pennsylvania. Why this problem? Because cordless phones, which usually have ringing mechanisms right by the earpiece, do not stop ringing when they are picked up. Unlike conventional phones, users must move a switch to stop the noise. If the user forgets, the

high-decibel ringing can cause permanent hearing damage. Consumers should exercise care when using these phones and keep them away from children, says the FDA. Many manufacturers are redesigning these troublesome phones.

Treeless Christmas

● "Every tree cut down, including Christmas firs, adds to the problem of dying forests." So claimed Greens politician Jutta Ditfurth in the Frankfurt *Abendpost*. The Greens, an environmentally active political party in the Federal Republic of Germany, were joined by some ecologists in urging the public not to buy Christmas trees last year. But foresters and agricultural officials in the Federal Republic of Germany took issue with their charge. "No one must

fear hurting pollution-damaged forests by purchasing a Christmas tree," proclaimed the Association of German Forest Owners. It claimed that about 90 percent of the 17 million Christmas trees sold annually are cut from stands of firs grown especially for the holiday season or thinned from forests as part of tree-cultivation techniques. Nevertheless, early sales lagged in 1984. "The Greens' campaign has had an obvious effect," said tree-seller Horst Mueller.

Shocking Tigers

● Wearing body armor and helmets and using fireworks are among the standard defenses against tiger attack in the Sundarbans, the 3,000-square-mile (7,800 sq km) delta of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers that straddle India and Bangla-

desh. Nevertheless, even though this is a sparsely populated area, "fishermen, woodcutters and honey collectors visit regularly and are picked off by the tigers at the rate of about 50 a year," says *The Times* of London in a sum-up of a recent report by Earthscan, part of the London-based International Institute for Environment and Development. Lately field workers have been trying a new technique to cut down fatalities—wiring human dummies to car batteries through a transformer. The 240-volt shock seems to teach individual tigers a lesson, but whether the dummies will make any long-term difference in the casualty toll remains to be seen. The Sundarbans is the home of 600 to 700 tigers, thought to be the largest tiger population in the world.

