

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

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Vol 11 • Issue 10



OVERCOMING PAST HURTS

Strategies for a brighter future

The Rage Route

Not the way to go!

The Race

Never give up



PERSONALLY SPEAKING

We all get sick from time to time. When that happens, what we choose to do about it has a direct bearing on how quickly and fully we recover. If it's only a common cold, getting extra rest and waiting it out may be enough, but more serious illnesses generally require more from us. By the

time we are adults, we've learned to recognize when something isn't right in our bodies, and we pay attention to those warning signs. We may not know what they are symptoms of, but we know that our condition will likely worsen unless we get it diagnosed and do something about it. If we're too proud to admit we're sick and need help, or if we're lackadaisical and fail to take action, we inevitably suffer more in the long run. Pain has taught us to pay attention to our health, to do what we can to stay healthy, and to get help when we do get sick.

The same goes for our spiritual health and well-being. We all have experiences that have a negative effect and leave us spiritually sick—the hurtful deed that we can't forgive, the unkind remark that triggers negative thoughts and drives us into ourselves, the setback that sends us on a downward spiral. Like the symptoms that accompany physical illness, we need to learn to recognize the symptoms of spiritual problems, and we need to take action before they cause more pain or become harder to deal with.

The good news is that just as Jesus, the Great Physician, can cure our physical ailments, He has a cure for every spiritual malady. Nothing is more important to Him than your spiritual well-being, so go to Him when you need inner healing. He's ready, willing, and able to help, but you need to ask.

Keith Phillips
For *Activated*

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the

BY MARIA DOEHLER

spa

I REALIZED RECENTLY THAT I HAD BEEN GIVING MYSELF A “GROUCH ALLOWANCE” WHEN CERTAIN THINGS HAPPENED.

They were mostly trivial things like having to clean up a mess when I was tired or my husband being late—things that I could have easily gotten through if I hadn’t predetermined that I had the right to get grouchy in those circumstances.

Jesus tells us, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”¹ Grace, I realized, is a choice. I could choose to avail myself of the grace Jesus freely offers and plug into His infinite power, or I could gripe and try to muddle through on my own. As soon as I told myself that a particular situation was too much, it *was* too much. And if I allowed myself to gripe about it, the situation became even more difficult. But if I maintained the position that Jesus’ grace was sufficient, it was. He always came to my rescue and made the situation bearable or even enjoyable.

Sometimes the concept of relying on Jesus’ grace and strength—also known as “resting in the Lord”—seems quite abstract. How cool it would be, I have thought, if there were an actual couch that I could plop down on and, by virtue of simply being there, rest in the Lord.

Well, there is such a place where grouches like me can go—a nice little spa where I can get fixed up so nicely you would hardly know how awful I really am, if only I would visit it often enough. You women know what I mean. Think of how relaxed you feel in the hands of your favorite hairstylist. You know he can fix your worst hair day, and you hardly need to look in the mirror when he’s done, because you know you look your best. It’s like that.

What works best for me is before the day starts and again whenever one of those problem situations begins to unfold, I close my eyes and go to that spa. I say to the stylist, “Jesus, I’m a mess, but Your grace is sufficient. Fix me up with some of that!” Then I know it’s done, and I act like it.

Some days are better than others, of course, but I know where to go when things begin to go wrong. Jesus’ spa is always open.

MARIA DOEHLER IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN MEXICO. ■

1. 2 Corinthians 12:9

THE RAGE ROUTE

BY ABI F. MAY



ACCORDING TO RESEARCH, NINE OUT OF TEN MOTORISTS ADMIT TO HAVING EXPERIENCED ROAD RAGE TO ONE DEGREE OR ANOTHER, FROM EXCESSIVE HONKING AND ABUSIVE GESTURES TO PHYSICAL ATTACK. Aggressive driving contributes to a third of motor accidents. When the Old Testament prophet Nahum saw a vision—about 2,600 years ago—of “chariots raging in the streets, jostling one another in the broad roads,”¹ he could well have been seeing this modern phenomenon.

Anger is, of course, neither a new condition nor limited to driving. Everyone has experienced how a minor nuisance can easily grow into an irritation, then an annoyance, and finally cause us to erupt in fury. When that happens, the consequences are not usually very happy for us or for those around us.

There is an interesting example in the Bible of a man who lost a lot through anger. After Moses had led the Israelites out of Egypt, they were forced to survive for years in the wilderness. On one occasion when they were desperately in need of water, God instructed Moses to speak to a rock, promising him that water would come out. However, Moses had lost patience with the people’s incessant complaining, despite all the miracles God had already done to protect and supply for them, so instead of simply saying the words that he had been instructed to, Moses struck the rock in frustration. Water came gushing out, as God had said it would, and everyone’s thirst was quenched. However, this display of temper cost Moses dearly. God told him, “Because you did not believe Me”—Moses’ impatience showed that he didn’t believe things would work out

if he simply did what God had told him to do—“therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”² In the end, Moses was only allowed to see the Promised Land from a nearby mountain-top before he died. As Roman emperor and philosopher Marcus Aurelius wrote, “Our anger and impatience often prove much more mischievous than the things about which we are angry or impatient.” Besides the strain on our relationships with others, medical research shows that negative emotions can damage our blood vessels, increase the likelihood of heart attacks, and reduce our resistance to infections, among other problems.

The good news is that we don’t have to keep traveling on the rage route. Peace of mind is within our reach if we will only pause, pray, and remain positive.

1. Nahum 2:4

2. Numbers 20:7–8,10–12;
Psalm 106:32

3. 1 Peter 5:7

Reflections on the route back from rage

1. Pause and put things in perspective.

We've all experienced the feeling of being rejected or hurt by someone's words or actions. Depending on how close you are to that person, there are varying degrees of how painful it is or how much it affects you. When it's a pretty serious hurt, it's often hard to think rationally. It's natural to become hardened or bitter or resentful, or to be overwhelmingly discouraged or despondent, or to get angry with the person, or to retaliate. The problem is, because you're hurt, you often don't have a very clear perspective on the situation, yet the way you handle it at the time has a great bearing on the long-term outcome.—*Maria Fontaine*

When you have been pushed to the point that you're about to scream, step back from the situation for a few minutes. Breathe deeply. Try to see things in perspective. Then face the world again.—*Mottos for Success*

Put time into proper perspective. Every difficult experience you may be dealing with now, circumstances that tend to make you angry and bitter, will in time pass away.—*Jim Henry*

The greatest remedy for anger is delay.—*Seneca the Younger*

2. Ask God for help.

At the end of every day, take stock. If anger or any other negative emotion is in your heart, ask God to take it away. He will.
—*Mottos for Success*

It's important not to let your heart become closed off to others, or closed off to life, but rather to give your cares to Jesus.³ Tell Him all about them. Unburden your heart. Let Him carry the load—the problems, the sins, the mistakes of others, everything. You can't walk around with the weight of the world on your shoulders. You have to give it all to Jesus and ask Him to help you to overcome your natural, negative reactions to negative circumstances. Once you do that, He will heal your heart and strengthen your spirit.
—*David Brandt Berg*

Do you sometimes feel that you are in a deep hole? And what's more, do you feel that somebody just keeps throwing dirt on you? You can turn the bad to good by looking up and seeing that Jesus is there through it all. Take His hand. Ask Him to pull you up and to help you see His purpose in it all. He can help you see the events around you from His perspective. He can give you His calm and stop the panic. And then He can help you find solutions that will enable you to step triumphantly out of

that deep well and onto the path of a brighter tomorrow.
—*Chloe West*

Relax and let go of everything as you enter into God's presence. You can relax and let go of everything, precisely because God *is* present. In His presence nothing [else] really matters; all things are in His hands. Tension, anxiety, worry, frustration all melt away before Him, as snow before the sun.
—*James Borst*

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.—*Isaiah 26:3*

3. Make an effort to adopt a positive thought pattern.

May I forget what ought to be forgotten; and recall, unailing, all that ought to be recalled, each kindly thing, forgetting what might sting.
—*Mary Carolyn Davies*

When I forgive, I am not to carry any bullets forward on the journey. I am to empty out all my explosives, all my ammunition of anger and revenge. I am not to “bear any grudge.”⁴

4. Leviticus 19:17–18

5. Psalm 51:10

6. Proverbs 23:7

7. Romans 12:2

8. 2 Corinthians 5:17

I cannot meet this demand. It is altogether beyond me. I might utter words of forgiveness, but I cannot reveal a clear, bright, blue sky without a touch of storm brewing anywhere.

But the Lord of grace can do it for me. He can change my weather. He can create a new climate. He can “renew a right spirit within me,”⁵ and in that new atmosphere nothing shall live which seeks to poison and destroy. Grudges shall die and revenge shall give place to goodwill, the strong genial presence which makes its home in the new heart.—*J. H. Jowett*

The battlefield is the mind. The Bible says, “As [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he.”⁶ People who emphasize positive thinking or the power of the mind can go a long way with that, but they won't go as far as they could unless they also ask God to change them within through His miracle-working power. “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”⁷ “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”⁸
—*Maria Fontaine*

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.—*Ephesians 4:31–32*

4. Turn good thoughts into good actions.

There is a strong connection between thinking the right thoughts and doing the right things. You must act on the victory, live the victory, and let the change be manifested in your actions, not just your thoughts. If you've prayed against anger, for example, then you have to accept the victory by not only entertaining positive thoughts, but also by acting on those thoughts. Even if it would have been impossible to do such things before, if you'll exercise your faith by trying, you'll see Jesus come through for you. What you weren't able to do before will be possible, because He will have changed you. As you do what He shows you day by day to live your victory, you'll see it manifested more and more in your reactions, actions, and daily life.

Positive thoughts are not enough. They must become action. They must translate into positive deeds. As you combine your new thought patterns and reactions with behavior that reflects the victory Jesus has given you, you will go from strength to strength.—*Maria Fontaine*

If you know all this, blessed are you if you act accordingly.
—*John 13:17 WEY*

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WHEN I LOSE MY TEMPER

When I have lost my temper
I have lost my reason too.
I'm never proud of anything
Which angrily I do.

When I have talked in anger
And my cheeks were flaming red
I have always uttered something
Which I wish I had not said.

In anger I have never
Done a kindly deed or wise,
But many things for which I felt
I should apologize.

In looking back across my life,
And all I've lost or made,
I can't recall a single time
When fury ever paid.

So I struggle to be patient,
For I've reached a wiser age;
I do not want to do a thing
Or speak a word in rage.
I have learned by sad experience
That when my temper flies
I never do a worthy deed,
A decent deed or wise.

—*Author unknown*

OVERCOMING PAST HURTS

BY MARIA FONTAINE

MOST OF THE UNPLEASANT THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO US ARE LIKE BRUISES OR MINOR SCRAPES TO OUR SPIRITS.

Like minor injuries to our bodies that only leave a mark or hurt for a short while, those hurtful incidents may temporarily make us “black” with negative thoughts or “blue” with discouragement but are usually forgotten fairly quickly. At some time or another, however, many of us experience deep wounds to our spirits. How can we be healed of those?

When we suffer a serious physical injury, we consult a physician who can properly tend to it. We have the wound cleansed and dressed, and sometimes have

it checked regularly to make sure it's healing properly. Even then it may take some time to heal. This is an illustration of how our inner wounds can heal with faith, prayer, and proper care. But if we don't allow them to be cleansed and heal in the proper way, if we try to hide our wounds, they can become infected with bitterness and resentment that can poison our whole being.

Bitterness doesn't usually develop into a serious problem immediately; it festers and grows over time, like an infection in a wound, quietly destroying healthy areas it comes in contact with, if it's not purged from the body.

The Bible teaches that we should empty our hearts of things that bother us: “Watch out that no bitterness takes root among you, for as it springs up it causes deep trouble, hurting many.”¹

Past circumstances do not have to dictate your present outlook, because God has made a way for you to overcome the negative in your life. In fact, He intends for you to! “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”² In other words, as we immerse ourselves in Jesus and His Word and learn to do things His way, old things will pass away and everything will become new.

It's human nature for people to blame their problems on others or on events from their past. A lot of people go along with this way of thinking, because it is easier than forgiving and putting those incidents in the past and leaving them there. It's easier than accepting that they are wrong in being bitter. However, if they stay stuck in this frame of mind, it will hinder their ability to move forward in life.

1. Hebrews 12:15 TLB

2. 2 Corinthians 5:17

3. Romans 12:2

4. 1 Peter 4:12–13; 5:10

5. 2 Corinthians 1:4

6. John 15:11



Some of our problems may indeed be the result of things that happened in our past. We are all products of our environment to some extent; we have been influenced positively in some respects and negatively in others. No one in this world has had only positive experiences, but the negative ones don't have to control or permanently influence us emotionally, mentally, or spiritually.

The Christian life is all about overcoming obstacles, rising above our circumstances, and not letting things get us down. It's about letting Jesus resolve and override problems by the renewing and transforming of our mind.³ God puts the responsibility on each of us for how we react to whatever situations we find ourselves in. He has given us free will and free choice, and He is constantly asking us to make the right decisions and to take the right steps. When we do, He is right there to see us through.

The fact that we have some control over the way we are is obvious when we look at different individuals who experience similar setbacks in life. Some react in one way and some in another, and as a result, turn out to be very different types of people leading very different lives. Despite the adverse circumstances in their past, some are happy, healthy, successful, and well adjusted, while others are just the opposite—depressed, unhappy, discontented, or disturbed.

Sadly, many people blame God for things that have gone wrong. Somehow, they think God is not responsible for all the good in their life; He's only responsible for the bad. Their relationship with Him is completely contrary to how it should be. They don't give Him praise and credit for the good times, but they complain and blame Him in bad times.

According to God's Word, trials are designed to strengthen us.⁴ If your life were problem free, you might never build the strength of character that comes from fighting to overcome problems. You also probably wouldn't be able to relate to or have compassion on others who have gone through similar things.⁵ You might miss the beautiful transformation that takes place when you discover that you really need Jesus in your life. You might never experience the thrill of Him coming through for you and equipping you to carry on.

Jesus wants "your joy to be full."⁶ The secret to that joy lies in forgiving those who have wronged you, letting go of bitterness and resentment, and forgetting the past. It *is* possible for you to overcome!

MARIA FONTAINE AND
HER HUSBAND, PETER
AMSTERDAM, HEAD THE FAMILY
INTERNATIONAL. ■

coffee and forgiveness

BY DIANA FLORES

A BLANKET OF FOG ON THE RUNWAY HAD CAUSED A THREE-HOUR DELAY. I BOARDED THE PLANE AND SETTLED WEARILY INTO MY SEAT. How good it would be to get back to home and loved ones!

Midway through the flight, I was engrossed in conversation with a fellow passenger named Robert, when a young woman passed by in the aisle, swinging her purse behind her. It knocked my cup of coffee right into my lap, splashing my jacket and running down the legs of my jeans. I grabbed as many tissues and napkins as I could find, mopped up what I could, and resigned myself to the fact that the rest of the mess would remain until I got home. Only then did I glance down the aisle at the girl responsible for the mishap.

She was waiting outside the toilet, oblivious to the minor catastrophe she had caused in seat 25C.

Robert had been telling me about how hard it was for him to forgive someone who had hurt his family. His account was laced with anger and bitterness, and I searched for words that would help him.

“You know, that girl who spilled my coffee all over me didn’t see what she did,” I said, “so I guess I can’t expect an apology. But now I have the choice to let this incident ruin the rest of my trip, or move on and not let it dominate my thoughts and emotions. Either way, it’s not going to be easy living with the ramifications of what happened until I get home, shower, and change clothes, but God can help me rise above these circumstances if I ask Him to. So that’s what I’ll do.”

Robert nodded. “That’s a fitting illustration,” he said sheepishly.

The happy ending of this story is that Robert prayed and accepted Jesus as his Savior. Now he has Jesus’ presence in his life, and Jesus will help him have more love, mercy, and understanding for others. For Robert, the road to freedom from bitterness began with one step—receiving Jesus. The wonderful truth is that Jesus offers the same to anyone who asks.

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If you haven’t yet experienced Jesus’ love, you can right now by simply praying the following:

Jesus, please come into my life and give me Your gift of eternal life. Forgive all the wrongs I have ever committed, and teach me to forgive others as You have forgiven me.

Q: WHY SHOULD I FORGIVE OTHERS WHO HAVE DONE THINGS THAT HURT ME? WOULDN'T THAT ABSOLVE THEM FROM GUILT? WHY SHOULD I LET THEM OFF THE HOOK LIKE THAT?

A: No matter how hard it may be to forgive, your situation can't improve until you take that all-important step.

It begins with understanding that forgiveness isn't entirely or even primarily for the sake of the other party. You also need to forgive the person who hurt you for the sake of your own emotional and spiritual well-being; it's a necessary part of the healing process. Here are three reasons why that is so:

First, it helps you avoid the poisoning effect that an unforgiving attitude invariably has on those who hold on to it. If you refuse to forgive those who have wronged you, your mind and spirit become fertile ground for all sorts of negative and destructive attitudes, such as hatred, bitterness, anger, and a desire for revenge. You will never be happy in that state of mind. Forgiveness is the antidote, an agent of positive change that can, over time, reverse the damage that was done.

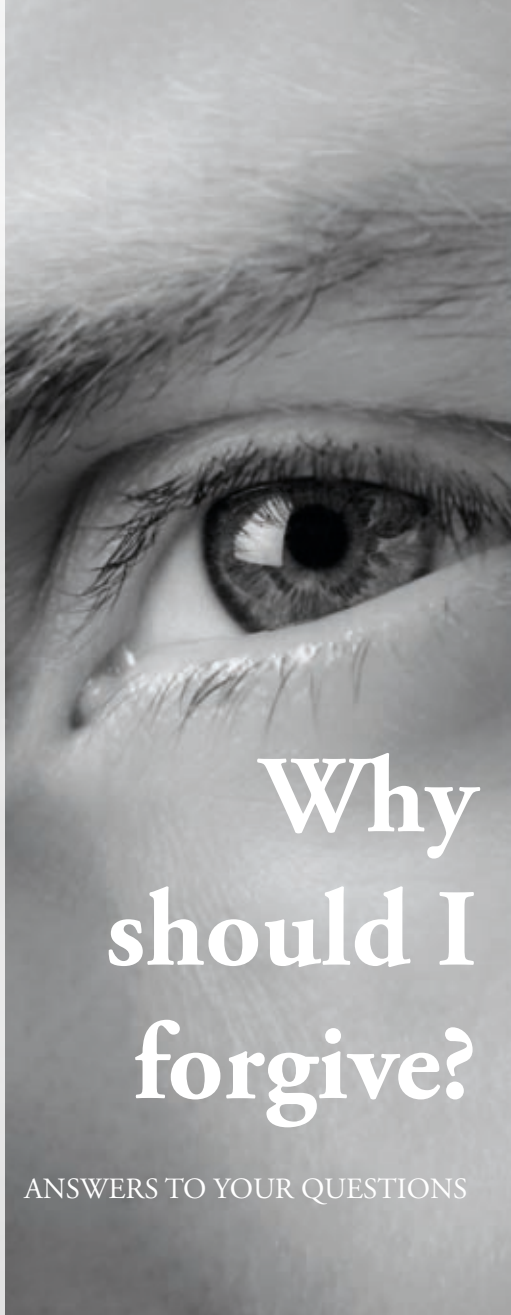
Second, even though those feelings may seem justifiable considering the circumstances, if you act on or even entertain them, you become guilty along with the one who wronged you. Two wrongs never make a right.

Third, in what has become known as The Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught us to both seek and extend forgiveness. "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. . . . For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."¹ Forgiveness doesn't change the past, but it does make for a much brighter future. ■

1. Matthew 6:12,14–15

SELF-INFLICTED DAMAGE

If a rattlesnake is cornered, it can become so frenzied that it will accidentally bite itself with its deadly fangs. In the same way, when a person harbors hatred and resentment in his heart, he is often hurt by the poison of his own malice. He thinks he is injuring his enemies by displaying his wrath, but the real harm is inflicted deep within his own soul. Nothing is ever gained by giving way to the dark passion of bitterness and anger.



Why should I forgive?

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

When someone wrongs us, we must learn to forgive and ask God to let His love fill our heart. It's the only way to keep from being hurt by bitterness, wrath, and anger.—Henry G. Bosch



EXTINGUISH THE ANGER

A SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

IMAGINE THREE LARGE VOLCANOES. The first is extinct. Where once magma and molten rock hurtled down, now grass, trees, and all manner of fauna and flora flourish on its serene slopes.

The second volcano is dormant. Like the first one, it is also covered with lush vegetation and teeming with wildlife, but within it the magma has not cooled and solidified. Seemingly peaceful on the outside, one day it will erupt again with force and power, spewing out rocks and ash and destroying all that grows and lives nearby.

Vegetation and wildlife can't be found on the third volcano, because it is active, constantly spewing sulfuric gasses and churning out hot lava that destroys everything in its path.

Anger is like a volcano. Heated frustration seethes

within, and when let loose it will cause hurt and pain. Sometimes we let it show, like the active volcano, when we're frustrated, annoyed, or feeling misunderstood. Hot, angry words spew from our mouths, hurting those we direct them at.

Other times we hold anger in, hesitating to communicate honestly about the things that frustrate or irritate us. Slowly the anger builds up, like the magma gradually building pressure within the belly of the dormant volcano, until one day we explode in anger, spouting off angry, hurtful words and acting in an unloving manner.

A verse in Proverbs says, "A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle."¹ In the end, our

anger places barriers between us and our loved ones, and we hurt ourselves most of all.

But the good news is that anger can be dispelled by letting God's Spirit work in us, helping us to see things from His perspective and cooling the hot, magma-like spirit of anger.

The next time you feel anger rising, determine to neither hold it in or to explode. Take a deep breath. Wait before putting your grievance into words. Pray. Ask God to bring peace to your spirit. Eventually you may need to speak with the person who has upset you, but wait until you've calmed down and you can choose your words with care. Treat others as you would have them treat you,² and you'll be much happier. ■

1. Proverbs 18:19

2. Matthew 7:12



BY SCOTT MONTROSE

AS I STROLLED ALONG THE RIVER, SWANS AND OTHER BIRDS ADDED TO THE BEAUTY OF A SUNNY SUNDAY AFTERNOON THAT WAS WASTED ON ME.

The past few years had been a nightmare. Alcoholism was taking its toll. Guilt, negativity, and discouragement hung over me like dark clouds. I was separated from my wife and had lost my job. I had also lost the respect of all my friends and coworkers. I felt like a worthless failure.

A few joggers passed me up. A group of young people raced by on bicycles. I hardly noticed them either, as my mind relived the events of the past few years, trying to figure out where I had taken the wrong turn that had led me to this awful place.

Then a young voice called out. “Don’t give up! Keep going! Don’t give up!” The words rang in my ears.

I turned to see a boy of about seven, running my way. As he passed, he yelled again over his shoulder to his younger sister, probably five, who seemed about to give up in what was apparently a race between them.

“Don’t stop now! You have to get to the finish line!”

It reminded me of a scene from the film *Chariots of Fire* (1981), where Eric Liddell,

one of the runners in a 440-yard race leading up to the 1924 Olympics, was bumped by another runner and fell to the infield. As all of the other runners passed him, I imagined what must have gone through his mind in that moment. *Give up! You have lost! Don’t bother to finish the race!* Instead, Liddell picked himself up, got back on the track, and ran as though he was destined to win—and he did!

I smiled for the first time in a long while. A beam of light had broken through my darkness. So what if I had fallen into the depths? The only way out for me now was up! I could get up, I told myself. I could get back on track and run. I might not win in dramatic fashion like Liddell, but I could finish the course, the great race of life.

Time has passed. I’m still running and have gained some important ground. I am now a recovering alcoholic, and have found renewed purpose and fulfillment in a life rededicated to sharing God’s love and hope with others.

It’s never too late to get up and try again.

SCOTT MONTROSE IS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ■

teaching children to control negative feelings

BY NATALIA NAZAROVA



RAISING CHILDREN IS NO EASY TASK, AND THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS. The ever-shifting ocean of emotions that children go through at various ages and stages poses one of the greatest challenges to parents. Here are a few things that I have found helpful in teaching my children to deal with the negative emotions they experience.

Encouraging positive traits such as kindness, appreciation, gratefulness, integrity, and unselfishness at an early age will help prepare them to deal with negative situations they will encounter later.

Reading or watching classics that show the rewards of being positive and solution oriented—*Pollyanna* and *Heidi*, for example—impart important life lessons in an enjoyable, memorable way.

Being a friend and confidante in good times makes it easier

to discuss and find solutions together when problems arise.

Older children can be shown the futility of giving in to negative emotions. Balance reasoning with lots of encouragement, as well as humor when appropriate.

When I notice negative trends in my children, I first ask myself if they are a reflection of what they see in me. If so, we talk about it from that angle and agree to work on it together. For instance, I'm prone to stress and the negativity it can lead to, but explaining that has helped us avoid problem situations. They understand now that it triggers a negative reaction when they stay up too late or don't clean their rooms, so they give me more cooperation at those critical times.

When I feel overwhelmed, I stop and pray. That has at least four good effects: It releases frustration, puts things in perspective, gives God an opportunity to

straighten out my mess, and serves as a lesson to my children on crisis management.

My husband and I try to not be too quick to provide our children with solutions to the problems and frustrations that cause them to get negative, but rather to help them define the problem and find their own solutions. Games that teach problem solving are also helpful.

There are upsides to most negative situations. When children are discouraged or become negative over something that has happened, try to steer their thinking toward the positive aspects. Again, if they can reach these conclusions themselves, it's usually more effective than you providing the answers for them.

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POINTS TO PONDER

Forgiveness

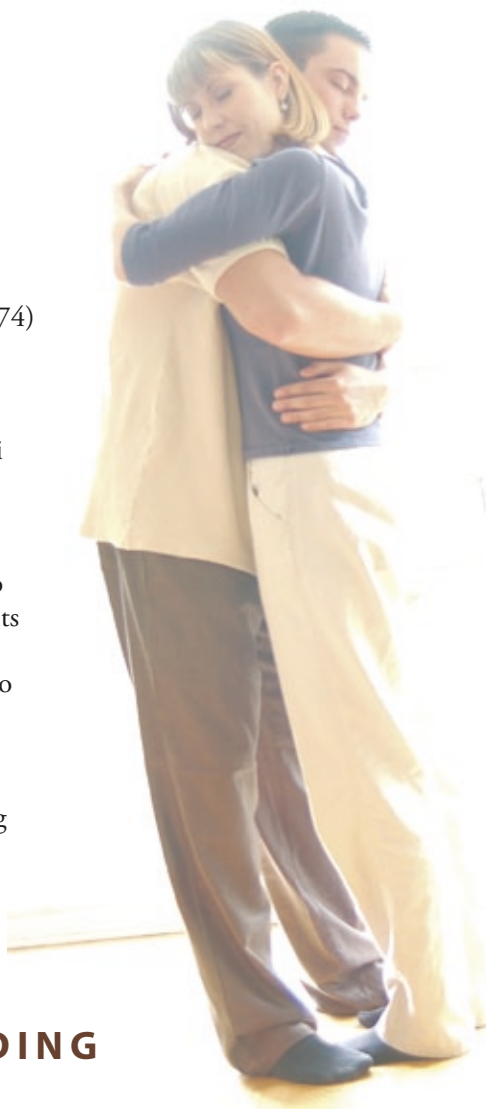
FORGIVENESS DOES NOT CHANGE THE PAST, BUT IT DOES ENLARGE THE FUTURE.—PAUL BOESE (1668–1738)

Without forgiveness life is governed by an endless cycle of resentment and retaliation.—Roberto Assagioli (1888–1974)

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.—Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948)

Love's power does not make fussy historians. Love prefers to tuck the loose ends of past rights and wrongs in the bosom of forgiveness—and pushes us into a new start.—Lewis B. Smedes (1921–2002)

My idea of forgiveness is letting go of resentment, ... ridding yourself of negative thoughts.



All they do is make you miserable. Believe me, you can fret and fume all you want, but whoever it was that wronged you is not suffering from your anguish whatsoever.—Della Reese (b.1931)

Anger makes you smaller, while forgiveness forces you to grow beyond what you were.—Cherie Carter-Scott (b.1949)

Forgiveness is almost a selfish act because of its immense benefits to the one who forgives.—Lawana Blackwell (b. 1952)

The one attitude which gives rise to hope amidst misunderstanding and ill-will is a forgiving spirit. Where forgiveness becomes the atmosphere, there hope and healing are possible.—C. Neil Strait (1934–2003) ■

FEEDING READING

Restoring peace of mind

Share your problems with Jesus, and let Him carry them.


Job 22:21
Psalm 55:22
John 14:27
Philippians 4:6–7
1 Peter 5:7

Keep your eyes on Jesus and His goodness.

Psalm 94:19
Isaiah 26:3
Philippians 4:8
Hebrews 12:1–2

Draw peace from God's Word.

Psalm 119:165
Proverbs 3:1–2
John 16:33



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

Forgive and forget

My heart aches for you. I feel your pain, the anger, the regret, the remorse, the feelings of being hurt and angered by the faults and mistakes and sins of others. I also know that it's human nature to want to retaliate, to want revenge, and to resist that inner voice that tells you to forgive and bury your differences. To truly forgive and forget is difficult.

Only through love and forgiveness can you be freed from these roots of bitterness that entangle your heart, and you get that love and forgiveness from Me. I *am* love, I *am* forgiveness, and I am here for you, waiting to lift this load that you've been carrying around. Take it off and give it to Me. Just say, "Jesus, take this. I don't want it anymore." Together we will bury it in My love. Then you will feel light as a feather and the future will look bright once again, for you will experience the joy of My Spirit and know that I have made you whole again.