

Outlook on Lifestyle

DEAR MEG



Meg Whitcomb

Dad breaks dates with daughter

By Meg Whitcomb

DEAR MEG — Bick and I have been separated for two years. We're still battling over the divorce. Bick does things on purpose to give me a hard time. For example, he's living with his family and he has them say he's not there when legal papers are delivered.

We're also fighting over custody. Bick doesn't really want Marla — he told me so — but he's still fighting. He has only visited Marla four times in two years and he never calls her. He makes dates and doesn't show, and he doesn't call to cancel. It breaks Marla's heart, and it breaks mine to see

her hurt this way. I've been to court many times. I was there again today and, once again, Bick didn't show. (He has been to one hearing out of six.) Well, the judge is getting tired of this. He told me the next time Bick makes a date to see Marla and doesn't show, I can terminate all visitation rights. Should I do this and deprive Marla entirely of her father? It would be no loss to Bick, but the idea bothers me. — UPSET IN UNION CITY

DEAR UPSET — Stop feeling guilty. Judges are charged with making divorce-related decisions about custody, financial support and visitation rights based on the best interests of the child.

Bick's obvious lack of emotional commitment to Marla and his erratic performance as a parent are more damaging to her right now than not having him in her life at all. Later, if he matures and shows some genuine concern for his daughter, you can revise your arrangement.

DEAR MEG — Every time I turn on the TV, I see another case of wife-beating, child abuse or a family shootout. Why isn't more being done to stop this dangerous trend in American homes?

I retired after 40 years as a school-

teacher and would like to get involved on a volunteer basis either in helping victims in abusive families or trying to prevent domestic violence from escalating.

Any ideas? — APPALLED, RACINE, WISC.

DEAR APPALLED — New efforts are currently underway to address the crisis we face in this area. October is National Violence Awareness Month. All interested individuals are urged to support shelters for battered women and their children. Call your local shelter and offer your services. Many are starting training programs right now.

The Shelter Aid program, with corporate support, has provided funds for the first national, toll-free domestic-violence hot line. The 24-hour hot line (1-800-333-SAFE) will be fully operational on Oct. 1, 1987, and will be staffed by trained personnel who can respond to women requesting information and referrals to local shelters.

Write to Meg care of this newspaper. Meg can only answer letters that contain a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Questions of general interest will be discussed in future columns.

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BRIDGE

James Jacoby

Blue-moon special

The type of play depicted here is seen only a little more frequently than Halley's comet. Still, readers of this column and those less enlightened need to be ready for it. Although North's jump overall of two no-trump showed length in both minors and only minimum high-card strength, South knew his aces would minimize his major-suit losers. With four cards in diamonds facing known five-card support, and the club queen to solidify North's holding, he was right to go to game in diamonds. The next task was to make the contract.

With two diamonds and possibly a spade for losers, declarer had to hope that clubs were 3-3 so he could rid himself of his spade loser before attacking trumps. So he won the spade ace and played Q-K-A of clubs. East ruffed the final high club with the diamond five, overruffed by South. Now declarer played the heart ace, ruffed a heart and ruffed another club. Another heart was ruffed in dummy, and then the last club, now a winner, was played. East could not gain by ruffing with the ace of trumps, so discarded. Declarer let his remaining spade go,

and West ruffed with the diamond three. West could do nothing better than try to cash the spade queen. Declarer ruffed and a diamond lead brought down the defenders' king and ace together.

A new book by James Jacoby and his father, the late Oswald Jacoby, is now available at bookstores. It is "Jacoby on Card Games," published by Pharos Books.

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DR. GOTT



Peter Gott, M.D.

Red flushing can be controlled

By Peter H. Gott, M.D.

DEAR DR. GOTT — I develop red blotches all over my neck and face whenever I am a little nervous, physically active or drink alcohol. What causes this and how can I control it?

DEAR READER — You seem to be describing capillary flushing, an automatic opening of the small blood vessels in your skin. When you are nervous or physically active, your body's glands secrete chemicals, such as epinephrine (adrenaline), into your system. These compounds can cause flushing, as can alcohol and other drugs. I suggest that you avoid the offending substances, like alcohol, and try to relax during times of stress. Although your blush reaction may be normal for your particular personality type, with time you may be able to control it more successfully.

DEAR DR. GOTT — Is there any proof that a waterbed is better or worse for you than a conventional mattress?

DEAR READER — There is no sound scientific evidence that proves the superiority of a waterbed over a firm mattress, or vice versa. This is simply a question of personal prefer-

ence and which sleeping surface feels best to you.

DEAR DR. GOTT — My doctor says that I have histoplasmosis. I have periodic bouts with bad bronchitis. Are they related?

DEAR READER — Histoplasmosis is a lung infection caused by inhaling the spores of the fungus *Histoplasma capsulatum*. Ordinarily, the lung infection is self-limited; after an initial period of fever, cough and swollen glands, the patient recovers. Hard lumps may remain in the lungs and lymph glands.

Once a person has been infected with histoplasmosis, his or her skin test will turn positive, enabling doctors to use this test for diagnosis. More than half a million Americans develop positive skin reactions each year. Up to 95 percent of residents in the Ohio, Mississippi and Missouri River valleys are skin-test positive, because these are areas where the spores of the fungus are prevalent in the soil.

Although most patients with histoplasmosis seem to have a mild flu-like upper-respiratory illness, some children and elderly patients develop disseminated infection, a more serious form of the disease. This causes

weight loss, weakness, enlarged liver, ulcerations in the mouth and gastrointestinal tract, infection of the adrenal glands, inflammation of the heart lining and impaired bone-marrow function. Such patients need treatment. At present, the anti-fungal drug amphotericin B is the preferred therapy.

Your repeated attacks of bronchitis could be due to a condition called "re-infection histoplasmosis," the effects of cyclic re-exposure to large doses of spores. Unless you are unfortunate enough to develop disseminated disease, you will not need treatment. However, you should stop smoking (if you are a smoker) and avoid air pollution, to enhance your lungs' healing properties.

What is **HYPOGLYCEMIA** and how is it treated? You can find out in Dr. Gott's new Health Report on the subject. Send \$1 and your name and address to P.O. Box 91369, Cleveland, OH 44101-3369. Be sure to ask for the Health Report on **HYPOGLYCEMIA**.

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