

DEAR MEG



Meg Whitcomb

Battered neighbor won't seek help

By Meg Whitcomb

DEAR MEG — I know my neighbor's husband beats her. She admitted it a couple of months ago when she used our phone to call in sick from her volunteer work. One eye was swollen shut, her lip was split, and she had blood matted in her hair. They'd had a violent fight the night before. He

ripped the phone off the wall and started hitting her with it.

I told her she should have gone to the emergency room and then to our battered-women's shelter. But she said she didn't dare leave the children alone with their father, and she'd heard the shelter won't take teen-

agers. She also kept blaming herself for the fight, saying she provoked her husband when he was tired and had had too much to drink.

Since then, she acts as if the conversation never happened. She sometimes limps and always has bruises. But when I ask about them, she says she's accident-prone and took another tumble.

Why on earth would a woman stay with an abusive husband like that? Is there anything I can do? — CONCERNED, SAG HARBOR, N.Y.

DEAR CONCERNED — Most wives stick it out because they are too ashamed or terrified to take action. They often suffer from low self-es-

teem. Like your neighbor, they come to believe the abuse is their fault and if they just behaved, it would stop. Or they have nowhere to go.

Tragically, many don't seek help until they see their children threatened or hurt. You might try to talk to your neighbor about that danger, and help her call the shelter or accompany her there. The professionals there will give her advice and support.

DEAR MEG — My husband wants me to get my face lifted. We've been married 30 years, and he never criticized my looks. Now he's so hyped on the subject he's threatening to walk out if I don't get a face lift.

I'm 54 and unashamed of that fact. True, I have the usual wrinkles and laugh lines, but I'm not ugly. Furthermore, I happen to be morally opposed to cosmetic surgery, and Ted knows it. Even so, he keeps at me. I won't have my face lifted, but I don't want a divorce either. — HOLDING OUT, MO.

DEAR HOLDING — Something's tearing apart your marriage that no surgeon can stitch together. My guess is that if you agreed to a face lift, Ted's own face would fall.

He's clearly looking for a way out. If a nip-and-tuck job on your kisser weren't the excuse, something else would be. You two don't need a cosmetic surgeon; you need a marriage counselor.

DEAR MEG — Since my husband retired in 1978, he has spent his time playing possum to get out of helping me around the house. Everything is left to me, including the yardwork and maintenance of the car. Herb won't even go down to the gas station to fill the tank. He says he didn't retire to work.

Herb sleeps from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m., loafs until 2 p.m., then naps for a few hours. He has no hobbies. His major activity is sitting on the porch smoking cigarettes — and complaining. Herb was a good provider during working years, but he spent his days off the same way he's spending his retirement — doing zilch.

I'm sick of this rut and his lack of appreciation, and I'm actually thinking of divorce. I'm an active woman with a lot of good years left. — READY FOR A CHANGE.

DEAR READY — As Rep. Claude Pepper put it: "Life is like riding a bicycle. You don't fall off unless you stop pedaling." Sounds as if Herb wasn't much of a pedaler even when he was working. But the kind of total withdrawal he's embarked on could lead to more serious problems.

People who retire to do nothing survive only six years on average, even without Herb's increased risk from smoking. They are more prone to cancer, heart problems and strokes, as well as psychological disorders, than retirees who keep busy.

A good book to help Herb off his duff is "Success Over Sixty," by Albert Myers and Christopher P. Anderson (Summit Books). It's full of tips on how to enjoy a longer, more vigorous retirement.

As for you, give Herb an ultimatum on splitting the house and garden chores down the middle. If he won't pull his weight, you might be better off pedaling a bicycle built for one! Good luck.

DEAR MEG — Last year I met a really nice man and had dinner with him a few times. There was no sex involved because I was married. A few months later my husband died. After that I saw the gentleman again. He told me he is unhappily married and that he is in love with me. I'm 52 and he's 60. I know he is wealthy, and I've heard that his wife "looks like a horse."

I told him I would have to think about whether I would see him again, now that I know more than friendship is involved. I always felt more for him, but I never let on because my husband was still alive. Meg, do you think I have a chance to establish a genuine love relationship with him? — WONDERING, N.J.

DEAR WONDERING — Not as long as he has a wife, no matter what she looks like. Where are those high standards you applied to yourself when your husband was alive?

A genuine love relationship is best built between two unattached people. My guess is, this man sees you as available and wants to make the most of it. Beware.

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Home Post Scripts



By Glenda Hughes, Sales Rep.

873-0300

I always like to take advantage of every holiday and season there is, in promoting my properties for sale. Buyers are very sensitive to decorating and the little extras in a home, so why not try to feed into that little warm spot. By watching your calendar for special days, and following the seasons, you can add lovely little touches to make your home all the more saleable.

This Sunday is Valentine's Day, not a big holiday, but it could be a fun day for you, if you have your home on the market. Fill your house with flowers; establish a romantic setting around your fireplace (if you have one); set the table for two with a rose at each place setting; place a breakfast tray with flowers, pretty china cups and a card on the bed in the master bedroom and fill the house with soft music this weekend. Goodness knows, there are an awful lot of buyers out there and you might as well be one of the homes that gets full points for togetherness and love. I'll bet some of you are smiling as you read this and saying things like "what next?" Well, when you work hard in this business, you do learn what buyers like, and they do like homes that speak of family and fun. Put yourself in a buyer's shoes - wouldn't you remember a home you went through, that spoke "volumes", above a home that was just so-so. Sure you would and that is where the sale is made, right there in that home. I know it takes a little ingenuity and a little more time to do some extra things, but if the result is a fast sale, surely it is worth it!

I live for these special days, for it gives me new opportunities to help my clients and use my imagination... the fun part of this profession. Why not try and help your agent a little and do a few nice things to your home this weekend - it might get you that sale that you've been waiting for.

Wear your heart on your sleeve this weekend - love shows.

Homes Sold Creatively

THIS WEEK'S MORTGAGE RATES

AS OF FEBRUARY 11/88

	30 YR. FIXED	15 YR. FIXED	1 YR. OPEN	1 YR. ADJUSTABLE	2	3	4	5	7	10
Bank of Nova Scotia	9 1/4	8 1/4	10 1/4	9 1/4	10 1/4	11	11 1/4	11 1/4	—	—
Bank of Montreal	9 1/4	8 1/4	10 1/4	9 1/4	10 1/4	11	11 1/4	11 1/4	—	—
Canada Trust	—	9 1/4	—	9 1/4	10 1/4	11	11 1/4	11 1/4	—	12
C.I.B.C.	9 1/4	8 1/4	—	10 1/4	9 1/4	10 1/4	11	11 1/4	—	—
Halton Comm. Cr. Union	10 1/4	—	—	10 1/4	10	—	—	—	—	—
T.D. Bank	9 1/4	—	8 1/4	10 1/4	9 1/4	10 1/4	11	11 1/4	—	—
royal Bank	9 1/4	9 1/4	—	10 1/4	9 1/4	10 1/4	11	11 1/4	—	—

*New Mortgage up to Feb. 29 - 9%