

Recognize guilt as a form of abuse

By JACIE B. PALMER
Herald Special

Guilt is a form of abuse that often goes without being recognized as an underlying problem within relationships. Guilt is part of daily living. At one time or another, both parents and children use guilt as a form of control. We need to have approval from others for whom we hold respect and care and our conscience stops us from crossing over boundaries and behaving in inappropriate ways. Whether right or wrong, we develop our own set of morals and ethics.

A doctor recently told me that a large percentage of his patients who have emotional problems, have the root of their problems in the link to guilt that has been placed on them by their mothers. I can easily relate to that.

Often mothers, but also fathers, may say: "It hurt me when you did that. Why didn't you remember...? Last time you forgot, I thought you'd remember... You know how disappointed I'd be, why did you...? How could you...? All are lines to pass along a shovelful of guilt. If they occur too often, the child may hold inside feelings of guilt for many years.

Although I wouldn't have put it in quite the same context as my doctor, I know I've definitely

made changes in my own life to relieve the load of guilt I carry around. To ensure I don't saddle my kids with guilt, I sometimes take decisions out of their hands and make the choices for them. I don't want them to cart around unwarranted and unneeded conflict.

I don't want them to feel badly about being a kid. I don't want them to see themselves as guilty of causing problems for others. I want them to recognize they must feel responsible for only those issues over which they have control and the ability to make proper responses.

How many times do we say: "It is my fault!" when it's not? A victim of abuse may readily accept blame and feel enormous guilt and remorse over something over which he/she had no control. The feelings of guilt - the root "WHY?" - has to be answered before this person can lead a healthy and normal lifestyle.

I can feel unworthy as a mother. That may cause guilt to



the point where I abuse myself with all kinds of negative thinking and punishments. I may say: "I'm no good. I shouldn't have done that. I shouldn't have said

that. If only I'd been home when...". If I don't get out of or somehow end that guilt trip and negative mindset, I'm on a downhill course heading straight for depression.

Often friends/neighbors can reinforce a negative self-image in a victim of family violence by not accepting a lifestyle different from their own or values which are not in tune with theirs. God made us to be individuals and that means that some of us will be unconventional. Being more sensitive to the needs of others is critical to ensuring those around us remain healthy.

Christmas is a terrible time of year for many families. Often there is dissension, conflict or members missing from family events and dinners. Too easily we can say: "Why did this happen to me? It is my fault! I deserve it! I'm only worthy of unhappiness! Nothing works out for me!" When circumstances are out of our control, this self-blame can give us an inappropriate sense of

control over the events which have passed.

We need to accept ourselves and not feel guilty. We need to realize our imperfections - take responsibility when we can - accept that we can't change all circumstances and LET IT GO - without harnessing all that GUILT.

Feel free to contact Jacie by directing letters to her attention at the Herald. All correspondence will remain confidential. Should you wish to speak to Jacie, call the Distress Centre at 877-1211 and your call will be returned. If you are a woman or child in crisis or an abusive male wanting help call the Distress Centre or dial 911.

A networking group is available for abused women seeking help and advice. The group meets every Wednesday evening, 7:30 p.m. at Georgetown Hospital.

For further information on the group please contact Pam Johnston at 877-8877.

Support Plan is now law

Toronto - Attorney General Howard Hampton announced Monday that the new Family Support Plan will come into effect on March 1, 1992. The new plan will allow for the automatic deduction of support payments from income, and will be an important part in the fight against the poverty of women and children in Ontario.

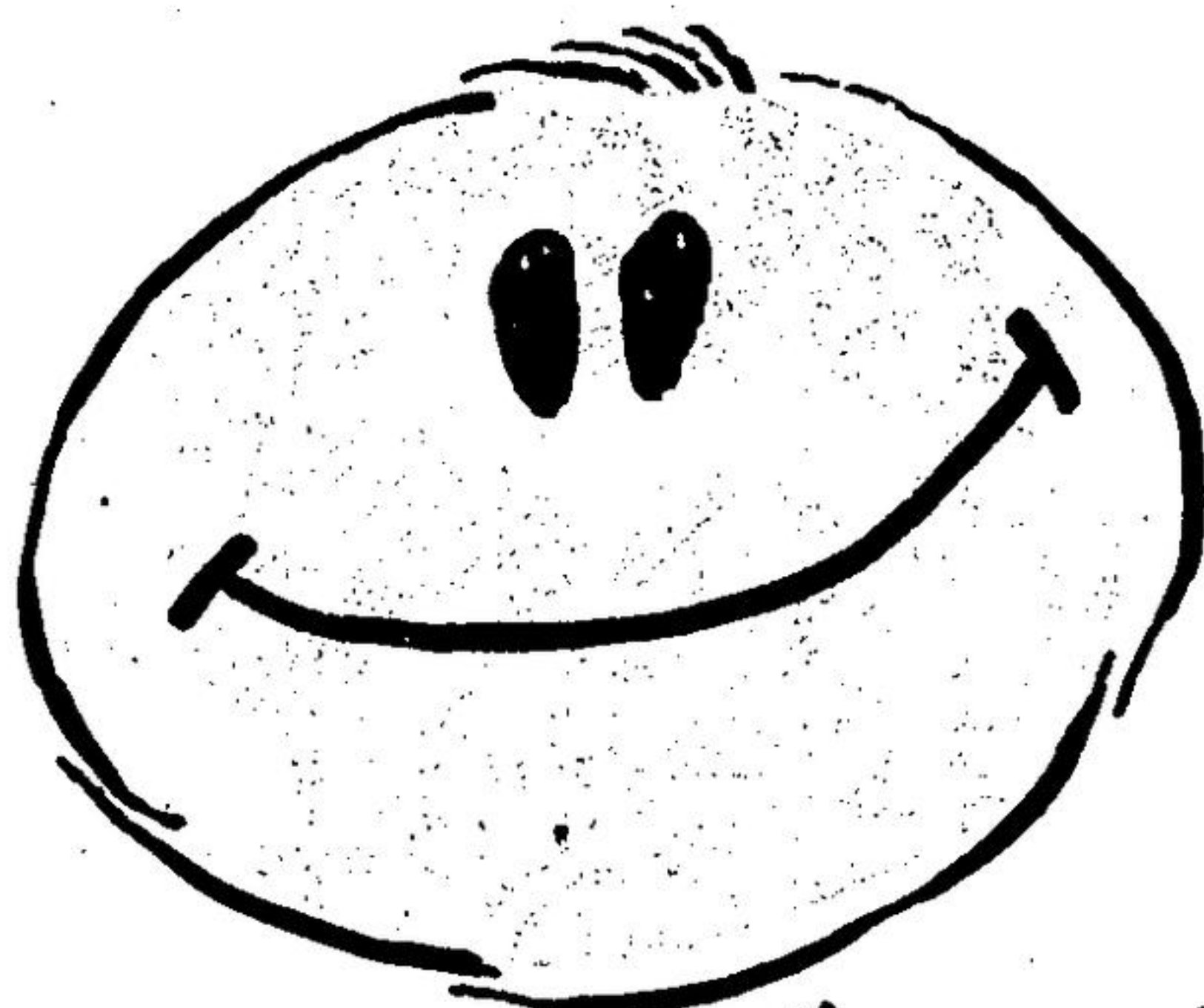
"Part of our efforts to fight poverty and the abuse and neglect of women and children must be to highlight these injustices in our society and how they occur," said Mr. Hampton. "To that end the Government of Ontario is launching a public awareness campaign which outlines the social and economic costs of unpaid family support."

"The reality is that men compose 97 per cent of all payors who have support orders filed with the Family Support Plan," said Mr. Hampton. "Three-quarters of support orders filed with the program are in default to some extent. More than 80,000 children are not receiving family support. These figure are intolerable. There is no good reason for not paying family support, and that is the message we want to get out."

Over \$400 million in support payments are currently unpaid. Families who should have received support payments have turned to social assistance at a cost of \$140 million to the province since 1987.

The new Family Support Plan will require employers to deduct support payments from an employee's income and forward those payments to the Family Support office for distribution to support recipients and their children. The deduction of support will be similar to the way income tax is collected through payroll deduction. It removes the social stigma of garnishment, and reinforces that this method is both the normal and optimum way for support payors to honor their court-ordered obligations.

Mr. Hampton cautioned that automatic deduction of support from income, on its own, will not solve the massive social problem of unpaid family support. "We believe that by informing the public about the extent of the problem and the social and economic costs, we can spread the message that it is simply unacceptable not to live up to your responsibilities to your children.



Good News!



TEMPO GL & TOPAZ GS THE COMPLETE VALUE STORY

FULLY EQUIPPED TEMPO GL AND TOPAZ GS COME WITH

- AIR CONDITIONING
- AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION
- 2.3 LITRE EFI ENGINE
- POWER STEERING/BRAKES
- AM/FM STEREO
- INTERVAL WIPERS
- REAR WINDOW DEFROSTER
- TINTED GLASS
- DUAL POWER MIRRORS
- BLOCK HEATER
- SOUND INSULATION PACKAGE

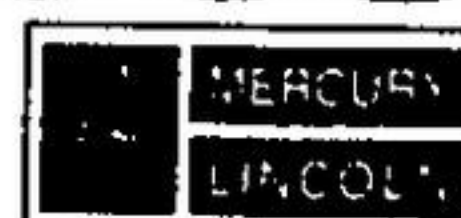
PLUS NOW GET ADDED PROTECTION NEW 36 MONTH/60,000 KM. BUMPER-TO-BUMPER NO-Deductible WARRANTY

\$219
PER MONTH-48 MONTH RCL LEASE
WITH NO DOWN PAYMENT

OR CHOOSE
1.9% FINANCING* FOR 12 MONTHS
OR
6.9% FINANCING* FOR UPTO 48 MONTHS
OR CHOOSE
\$1,000 CASH BACK FOR A PURCHASE PRICE OF **\$10,960**



FOR MORE GOOD NEWS SEE YOUR ONTARIO FORD AND MERCURY DEALERS!



† Monthly lease payment of \$219.00 based on 48 month net Red Carpet Leasing (RCL) from Ford Credit to qualified retail lessees of 1992 4-door Tempo GL or Topaz GS with air-conditioning, automatic transmission, Preferred Equipment Package (P.E.P.) 106A/336A. Security deposit and credit approval required. Freight, license, insurance and applicable taxes to be paid at time of delivery or by an increased lease payment. Some lease conditions apply. Limited time offer. See dealer for details.
* Financing, cashback and leasing offers may not be combined. Financing available on approved credit. Financing examples assuming \$10,000 financed: (1) 1.9% annual percentage rate (a.p.r.) over 12 months, monthly payment is \$841.93, cost of borrowing (c.o.b.) is \$103.16, total to be repaid is \$10,103.16. If financing chosen instead of cashback, effective interest rate is 19.77% and c.o.b., including \$1,000 not taken, is \$1,103.16. (2) 6.9% a.p.r. over 48 months, monthly payment is \$239.00, c.o.b. is \$1,472.00, total to be repaid is \$11,472.00. If financing chosen instead of cashback, effective rate is 11.28% and c.o.b., including \$1,000 not taken, is \$2,472.00. Cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount financed and term of loan. Limited time offer on in-stock 1992 Ford Tempo and Mercury Topaz. See dealer for details.
** MSRP with \$1,000 cashback applied for 1992 4-door Ford Tempo GL with Preferred Equipment Package (P.E.P.) 106A or Mercury Topaz GS with P.E.P. 336A; air-conditioning and automatic transmission included. Excludes freight and applicable taxes. Ontario FMDA, P.O. Box 2000, Oakville, ON L4J 5E4
Dealer may sell for less.