

OP ED

"Op Ed" — old time newspaper term meaning the page opposite the editorial page. This page has traditionally been held open for opinion pieces, letters, and comment from various sources.

Family Violence

Abandonment: being left all alone

By Jacie B. Palmer

Lately I've been thinking a lot about abandonment. To me that means being left, being all alone and not having anyone to support you when you need support. Being abandoned can be physical or emotional and usually involves feelings of guilt, a sense of loss and a hopeless feeling.

I have come to grips with the fact that I've always been alone. I've always felt abandoned. Even when I physically lived with other people I never felt they loved me or that I could depend on them to be there for me. I felt they needed me and that their needs had to come before my own. I drowned myself in other things. If I needed help I not only didn't have someone to ask — I found myself unable to ask. Help just wasn't a part of my vocabulary. That's the reality for lots of people but many never take the time to assess their backgrounds in depth. I'm glad I have.

Even as a child I felt abandoned emotionally. My mother never loved me and, although I always felt my father cared, he was an austere domineering man. Both parents only seemed to care about what others thought and were never there for me. Finally when we were becoming friends and I felt hopeful, my father up and died — thus abandoning me. That, compounded with the deaths of some other relationships left me devastated, yet I just kept on trucking and left all that grief buried in the back of my mind to resurface many years later. Hence my soul searching today. I'd been wondering if it is worse to be alone within a relationship or to simply be alone. I've come to the conclusion that I'd rather be alone-alone. For many years I lived with a man I did not wish to be with. I stayed for all the usual reasons — security, the kids, fear of change, fear of my future, fear of survival, concern for making the right decision and fear about what others would think. I realize now it was an

attempt at not allowing that abandonment to resurface — yet I was abandoned anyhow. I feel regret. I regret those lost years because I could have had many happier and more productive years doing other things. I regret that I lost those years for him, too. He would have been happier somewhere anywhere else. I can't change the past — but I can change the present and the future. Today I try to spend my time wisely with quality people who are fundamentally my equals and with whom I have many common interests.

One afternoon last Spring a friend and I went to Niagara Falls where we shared great conversation and a great lunch. She wanted us to go to a movie that evening but all I wanted to do was to go home. I needed to be alone. It was time for me to have my space. I'm not sure she understood. Often people assume that because one chooses to be alone they are withdrawing when it may simply be a "time-out" — a respite from the world. A fundamental need!

Sometimes people need to be alone to meditate. I've found that it is just those times when I feel like running hither and yon that I should be sitting quietly and listening to the thoughts in my mind. I like to believe I'm talking to God and that he is listening to my every word and responding. It's comforting because it reminds me that I'm not really alone — that He is with me.

Creativity has been running rampant at my home. I'm always so obsessed when I start these tasks. I can't wait to see the finished product, whether it be the painting and wallpapering, the knitting or the refinishing. The creativity is a source of warmth that fills my soul with joy and gives me a time to meditate on thoughts, problems and circumstances. It allows me time to grow and examine my needs, wants and desires. It is time alone.

Sometimes I think I spend too

much time alone but now I quickly realize that when I need people they somehow appear or I call them. When I need space, dates get miraculously canceled.

As I finish each day I ponder on the events which have passed and note what I have learned about me. I know that I don't want to spend the rest of my years in an emotionally abandoned state so I'm taking stock of what I need to do to be capable of developing a deep and intimate relationship with other human beings. I have built up relationships with half a dozen friends with whom I share an intimacy. What amazes me is that each friend is so unique and special and successful in her own chosen areas of expertise. They are diverse individuals who share the need to grow and develop as human beings. I treasure them because they have allowed me to be their loyal and trusted friend and confidant. Oh, we don't agree on many things and we're all at different stages as we march through life. And, I'm certain that if I placed all of us in the same room, at the same time a lively and controversial discussion would take place — on everything from world affairs, the economy to parenting techniques. It is these women to whom I must give much credit for my progress as I deal with each new challenge life offers and to whom I look to find what I need to enable me to develop an intimate relationship with a man.

I believe that the abandonment will soon be a part of my past.

Feel free to contact Jacie in confidence by directing letters to her attention at Halton Hills This Week. All correspondence will remain confidential. Jacie can be reached in person through the Distress Centre at 877-1211. Leave a message and Jacie will get back to you. If you are in crisis, call the Distress Centre or 911.

Activity Line

Fat consumption

By Laurie Burns

You've probably heard some discussion of the three kinds of fat — saturated, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated. When it comes to heart disease, it is important to be careful about the type of fat you eat — most particularly, limiting the amount of saturated fats.

But when your goal is losing weight, keep in mind that all fats are equally loaded with calories (there are nine calories in every gram of fat — no matter what the type.)

We'll use a pat of butter to help you visualize the amount of fat in common food items — one pat of butter (1 teaspoon) contains 4 grams of fat and 36 calories.

In a typical week:

— By substituting seven 8-ounce glasses of skim milk for seven 8-ounce glasses of whole milk, you will be eliminating the equivalent amount of fat in 13.3 pats of butter.

— By substituting 2 cups of air-



popped popcorn for two slices of apple pie, you will be eliminating the fat in 9.5 pats of butter.

— By substituting two 3-ounce servings of halibut for two 3-ounce servings of pork spare-ribs, you will be eliminating the amount of fat found in 12 pats of butter.

Eliminating all fat from your diet is not necessary, but, exchanging types of food which have less fat in them is highly recommended.

Feel free to contact Laurie Burns at 877-0771.

Tree cutting law: left wing insanity

The following is an Open letter to Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller. A copy was sent to Halton Hills This Week for publication.

Dear Mayor Miller,

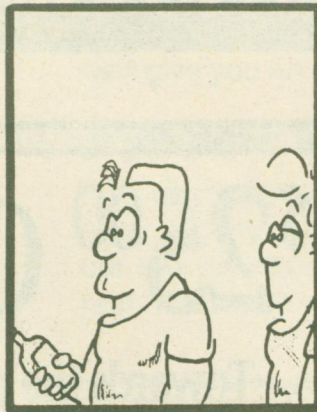
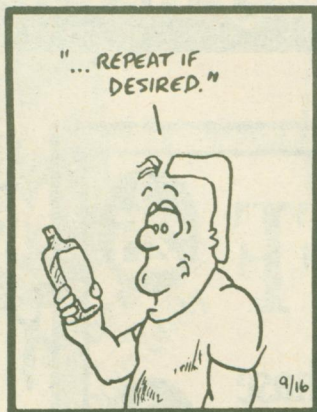
The NDP provincial government is proposing a new tree cutting law that must surely represent the final limit to the left wing insanity that has befallen our province. The temptation to scream communism is real but it no longer adequately describes the negative impact these misguided mental midgets are having on the socio/economic well being of Ontario. Ten years ago my brother felt that if Marx and Lenin, the fathers of modern socialism, were somehow brought back from the purgatory reserved for communists and members of the Ontario NDP, they would look around at the levels of state control over Ontario life and would surely conclude that

they were in heaven. I would contend that if they were resurrected in the province today, they would swear they were in an over regulated, over taxed, over controlled bureaucratic hell that would stagnate, constipate and totally smother economic activity.

I strongly urge you to oppose this law and to promote some degree of protection respecting the rights of private land ownership in this province. I believe I speak for many businessmen and private citizens who are fed up to the eye balls with paying more and more taxes to more and more governments in order to hire more and more staff to tell us what to do, how to do it, when to do it, where to do it and ultimately why we can't do it. We have long gone past the point of providing adequate protection to members of our society and are now attempting to reduce life to the point where we abide by an endless list of government "how to" laws that control every aspect of our existence. This tree cutting law is a classic example of the type of government over indulgence that provides little, if any, real benefit to society, substantially increases the cost of government and directly discourages productive private sector investment. It deserves to be completely trashed as much or more than any proposed legislation in recent times.

Sincerely,
Don Dawkins
Acton

For Pete's Sake



by Roe

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