

by **Bill Smiley****Great — just great**

I think probably the most difficult relationship to maintain, at any reasonable level, is that between teen-age children and their parents.

Marriage is tough enough, as you all know. But at least the partners, in most cases, are prepared to bend a little, to give an inch, or even two if necessary, to compromise when there's no other way out.

Married people do communicate, even though the form ranges from grunts and sighs to language that would sear the earlobes of a saint. They're usually from the same generation and, at worst, can spend hours running down the government, the boss, the neighbors, or each other's families.

I know couples, including us, who have been amicably bickering for anything from two to six decades. It becomes almost a game, in which you know every ploy or gambit of the opponent. (A ploy is when she has you dead to rights. A gambit is when you just might get away with the story.)

But with teen-agers, you're fighting a losing battle. First of all, there is the language barrier. Theoretically, you're both speaking the same tongue, but when it comes to interpretation, there's no relation whatever.

You say, "Now, I want you home at midnight, right on the dot." This, to the teen, gyrating in that weird, trance-like state they call dancing, means "Well, I don't have to leave until midnight." A scene ensues.

And at scenes, you haven't a look-in. You're all set to raise hell. Hackles are properly erect. And five minutes after the kid gets in, you're on the defensive, trying to prove that you're not "an old grump," or completely irrational, or "the strictest parent in town," or an out-and-out liar who said twelve o'clock was the deadline for leaving the dance, not for being home.

Teen-agers are like women. You can't discuss anything with them, in a logical way. You are completely baffled by a series of irrelevances, non-sequiturs and such things as, "You don't trust me. That's what's wrong with you. You

don't trust me!" And they're right.

It's sad to see a family breaking up. I suppose it's inevitable and right. But it's sad. Ours is. We had a swim the other day, the four of us. As we were leaving the beach, I said to the old girl, "Do you realize that's probably the last time we'll all have a swim together?" She agreed.

Kids don't want to go swimming with their parents. They want to lurch around with their own age group. They used to practically destroy me, when they were little, making me play with them when we went swimming. Duck dives, underwater endurance tests, races. And now it's transistor radios, squabbling and cheeky remarks for which there is no real answer except a swat on the ear. And you can't do that, or they'll run off and start smoking pot.

Enjoy them when they're little. You can blow on their bellies, kiss their little soft bums, rock them when they're sick, and tell bedtime stories till you're blue in the face. There's communication then.

But don't expect too much when they get past 13. For the next six years, it will be sun and showers, cold fronts moving in, a lot of low pressure areas, with the occasional high, and such suggestions as I've heard recently: "Dad's just not with it. He's out to lunch."

It's nothing new, of course. When I recall how utterly selfish I was as a youth, how little I cared about my parents' hopes and fears, I understand. It's been going on since Cain clobbered Abel and broke up that nice little family group.

It's a time of life when the whole earth revolves around ME, and parents are merely another awkward, sometimes obnoxious circumstance that is preventing ME from being what I want to be and becoming whatever I will be.

Oh, well, there's an excellent invention called grandchildren. I can hardly wait to get at spoiling mine rotten so that their parents will be totally unable to cope with them.

N.B.: Winner of guest column announced next week for sure. Isn't it exciting?

## SCHREIBER NEWS

Mrs. Ethel Smitheman has received word that piano students were successful in recent examinations:

Grade Three - Holly Brown, Terrace Bay; and Doug. Chisholm. Grade Four - June Sisson (honors) Sharon Scott and Anne Needham (honors) Grade 5 - Roberta Milani and Catherine McGrath (honors) Barbara Stefurak. Grade 8 - Nola Fummerton (honors).

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Hewson had the former's brother George and wife and family of Kingston visiting them.

Mr. & Mrs. W.G. Furlonger hosted a dinner party in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Fergus Kelly of Toronto, with members of the East Thunder Bay TB Association. Mr. Kelly who is Seal Sales director for the OTA was here for an informal meeting with the Association discussing the coming seal campaign.

Mrs. Ethel Gooderham has returned to Toronto after visiting her cousin Mrs. Jack Corbett.

Winners in the Walkathon held by teenagers for Expo funds were Barry Gilmore, Claude Courtemanche and Bon Hiller first, Mary Speziale, Joyce Richardson and Cathy McGrath second.

Dr. Jack Gordon, Mrs. Gordon and family of Minneapolis will spend a week visiting and camping with the former's brothers Alex and George and families at Celim.

Mr. & Mrs. Steve Pomer, with Mr. & Mrs. Russell Partridge and family of Winnipeg have returned home after visiting the Gordons - Mrs. Pomer the former Mima Gordon. Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Firman of Fort William also enjoyed the family gathering.

Mrs. Tom Bryant is visiting her brother and sister and other relatives in North Bay, and Arnstein, Ontario.

Mr. & Mrs. Harry Nevins (Ruth Phillips) and son David of Toronto have gone to visit friends in Davidson, Saskatchewan after being the guests of Mr. & Mrs. Jack Phillips.

Mrs. Hugh Stewart is visiting Mr. & Mrs. Joe Sloan (her sister Betty) in Mitchell, Ontario and her son Bob Stewart, and brother Ray Caidwell in Ottawa.

Ray Cote, of the local high school staff, is marking papers in Toronto after which he and his wife will holiday at the west coast.

Mr. & Mrs. Alex Power have the latter's sister, Rev. Sister St. Fidelis of Pembroke visiting.

Mr. & Mrs. Dick Needham have had the former's sister, Rev. Sister St. John of Barry Bay with them.

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