

Relationships demand ego-strength

By ED MEADE

When you burn your finger, you feel pain. You run cold water over it, blow on it a few times and even, maybe, say a nasty word. But when you feel pain in the relationship of a marriage there is something else to be considered: There is another person involved. Separation and divorce inevit-

ably brings pain. No way to avoid the pain.

It's like two people burning their fingers at the same time. Each must be responsible for his and her part in that pain. It does not help to say "look, what you made me do." If you say that and keep saying it, there is a very good chance you will end up burn-

ing your finger again. No, now is the time to say: "What is my part in this pain, what have I done to contribute to this breakdown in our relationship?"

This can be painful in itself. It leads us to take responsibility in accepting that we have not made a wise choice in life, that we must look at our own strength, at what we want as an individual, that perhaps we have been treating ourselves like we were a doormat or an incomplete person, or a no-

thing. Two people have self-worth and have achieved autonomy from their parents.

Separations and divorces are proliferating at an alarming rate. Perhaps it is our changing roles, our increased mobility, our changing values that are affording more choices in life. One of which is to break a marriage bond that is no longer meaningful. At any rate, separation and divorce brings about crisis, where the help of an objective third party is called for.

Relationships demand ego-strength. They demand that the

Editor's note: Ed Meade is Director of Markham Family Life Centre.

House sparrows take note

By ART BRIGGS-JUDE

Here's a note addressed especially to a certain family of birds living and breeding in our area, so if you're not a chirper don't bother to read any further.

However if you're an alien English sparrow, commonly called a house sparrow, but in reality a weaver finch by way of Europe and Africa, bend your ear a little in this direction. You must understand before you fly off the handle that there's not too much we humans don't know about you, my feathered friend.

For instance your bird-brained forefathers were brought over here in the mid-1850's and initially released in Brooklyn, New York by one Mr. Nicolas Pike. It was quite obvious there was something fishy about this whole idea right from the very start.

For though your benefactor was in reality a director of the Brooklyn Institute, he somehow missed his calling. He should have been a professional con artist because he convinced a lot of other well-meaning but short-sighted individuals to record, Release Me became a favorite past-time throughout many parts of Canada and the United States.

In some ways old N.P. was out to set a few records and make a name for himself using you guys as, (I hate to say this), stool pigeons. Well Mr. Pike succeeded. For you house sparrow birds he'd introduced took off at such a fast rate they completely occupied all of the North American continent in about 40 years.

Faster than a speeding pullet, your house sparrow clan made the occupation of this country by that other intruder, the starling, a relatively slow process. Then in a twist of irony, you showed your true flight colors and pulled the proverbial stool right out from under the man whose hand had fed you.

When the other feathered friends headed south for the winter months, you eager weavers told them you were staying put. In that way you'd be all set when the first housing opened up in the spring and have the best choice of family units.

Not only that, a little bird told us the other day you were a hard boiled lot when it came time for egg-laying. While other birds were doing their thing, you'd slip in and bust up their homes and throw their youngsters out on the street. Not a very nice gesture towards the host country I'd say, looking down on things from an eagle's perspective.

However even in the depths of despair there is a ray of hope. You house sparrows could redeem yourselves if you would only listen. Pause under the nearest oak or poplar tree and feel the rain of pellets coming down. Then in true chirper tradition, rise above all this, fly amongst those chewing Gypsy moth larvae and cut a killing swath through their teeming ranks.

After all, caterpillars were supposed to be your bag, so let's see you do something good for a change and go out and get your limit.

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