

You'll find a lot more company among the also-rans in life

By MARGARET FOTH
When I was a child, I remember teachers talking about "being a good loser." I figured it was a way of saying we should act nice, pretend not to be jealous and forego the usual accusation, "he cheated." However, after learning the amenities of polite society, I still didn't like losing. It made me feel 'second rate'.

Years later, I was at a family picnic, proudly holding my first baby. I was pleased he was smiling and cooing. I didn't realize how proud I was until a sister-in-law remarked that she thought her baby had smiled earlier. I bristled inside. From then on, I was aware that children are continually being compared—who walks first, talks first and so on.

No wonder we learn to be competitive. We're in competition from birth, through grade school, high school and beyond. As adults, we compete for jobs and promotions; in bowling leagues and through our children. We compare ourselves by the homes we buy and by the cars we drive.

But coming in second isn't being a loser. While a second place finish isn't usually recognized by others, I for one, have often learned more by being second, third and fourth.

There's a lot more company in second place and among the also-

rans; a lot of others who share the experiences of not winning. In fact, this is a bond of friendship as we share our disappointments and failures.

This whole thing of competition, of losing or being second, generates mixed feelings toward the person who wins. In childhood, we see the evidences of sibling rivalry; and in our teens, we try to learn to give genuine praise to the winner. Adults have rituals like winners and losers shaking hands, and congratulating the person who receives the promotion we wanted.

These are ways of trying to cope with the mixture of love and hate within.

I used to wonder at the words, "be angry and sin not." But I now believe Jesus understood the angry feelings and cautioned us against them to become controlling. I don't have to hurt someone else if I own my anger and choose not to be a loser.

As an adult, I've learned to be glad for the things I can do well and to work towards a degree of competence rather than trying to be the best.

Most of the time, I tend to look around and observe signs of others' success. Sometimes it's advancement at work. Other times it's public recognition. I admire those who make it in whatever field they're in. And I think

I'm fairly normal in wanting to be a 'winner' too.

The disillusionment comes when I learn to know some of the things behind that success. As the poet said, "what ugliness the paint of success hides."

I've come up with a few ideas that I try to look at when envying someone else's success. First, I remind myself that real success takes discipline and hard work. How willing was I to work and reach that goal?

Second, the values I prize most are usually not measurable and often hidden. Few will recognize someone who chooses to live simply; giving so others may have enough. There are no prizes given to those who daily care for someone who is dependent.

Third, winning or wanting to be successful can become such a need that it prevents me from trying something new.

For instance, this word processor that moved into my office this year. Technological gadgets seem like more work than they're worth; other people are much more successful with them than I.

Emmanuel International of Canada

Emmanuel International, located on Stouffville Road east of Kennedy, is presenting a film on Friday Nov. 27 on suicide, called *The Question*. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. and also features Mr. John Hisey, a bass soloist.

I'd rather not work so hard and still be second-rate. However, I have chosen to learn and I'm finding it worthwhile. (I've named it "the monster" as a way of getting even).

Fourth, I believe Jesus taught us that success is usually a false security. In many stories, he illustrated that riches may disappear over night, and that fame often vanishes like vapor in the air.

What lasts is loving God and loving our neighbors.

In today's jargon, we might say that a bank account isn't as important as our relationships with others. We don't always live this out, but I think it's a guideline I'd like to keep, a reminder that success may be "a loser."

This column is sponsored by The Care and Share Shoppe, 39 Main Street West, Stouffville.

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Well water pumps may leak PCBs

An estimated 4,000 domestic well water pumps of the 460,000 in use in Ontario likely contain PCB-contaminated oil which could leak and pollute the water, according to a report released recently.

A Ministry of the Environment investigation found two abandoned wells polluted with PCBs by leaking submersible pumps. Levels as high as 0.6 parts per billion (ppb) were found in the well water. The interim Ontario drinking water objective for PCBs is three ppb.

The ministry launched an investigation of discarded submersible pumps, and found the motor oil in some pumps had PCB levels as high as one per cent.

The report titled "Investigation of PCBs in Domestic Submersible Water Well Pumps" is available on request.

"We have initiated a program designed to help homeowners determine what type of pump they have in their well and whether it is leaking oil containing PCBs into their water supply," Environment Minister Jim Bradley said.

The local ministry will mail, on request, an information kit to help the homeowner identify the type of pump used, and give information on how to determine if the pump is leaking. A questionnaire will be in the kit to be returned to the ministry for further investigation to determine if the pump's motor could contain PCB's.

Oil leaking from pumps with oil-filled motors could result in a petroleum-like taste and odor in drinking water, or a film of oil on water and fixtures. However, petroleum-like taste and odors may also be caused by other water problems such as iron bacteria.

Any suspected oil leak from a submersible pump with an oil-filled motor will be investigated by an environmental officer from the nearest ministry district office.

The officer will check the well

and may take a water sample for PCB analysis. The ministry will also pay for drinking water while the investigation is underway, after PCB contamination has been confirmed and the test results have been explained to the well owner.

Any pump containing PCB-contaminated oil that has been removed from a water well should be transferred to an approved PCB storage site in accordance with provincial regulations. Ministry staff will make arrangements for the transfer.

The ministry recommends replacement where it has been confirmed a submersible pump has an oil-filled motor manufactured prior to 1980.

All Medical Officers of Health have been advised of the situation. The ministry recommends questions relating to the health effects of PCB's should be referred to the local MOH.

Submersible pumps with oil-filled motors manufactured between 1964 and 1980 are suspected of containing PCBs. Submersible pumps with water-filled motors and pumps located outside of the well are not at risk.

Domestic submersible water well pumps manufactured between 1964 and 1980 with oil-filled motors that could contain PCBs include: F.E. Myers (before 7/78), Peabody Barnes, Pumphron, Red Jacket, REDA, Sta-Rite (U.S.), Standard, Tait.

Four submersible pumps, Aero-motor, Berkeley, Sears and Web-trol used two different types of motors in the pumps — the water-filled PCB-free Franklin Electric motors and oil-filled motors that could contain PCBs. Homeowners with submersible pumps should verify the make of the motor installed in the pump.

For more information, contact the Ontario Ministry of the Environment Water Resources Branch at 323-4882.

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As of December 5th, 1987, the installation of sewage disposal systems will not be permitted until weather conditions are satisfactory in the spring of 1988.
W.H. Burns, C.S.I. (C) Director
Dr. J.O. Slingerland Medical Officer of Health

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