

LIVING

How to Get Along with Your Teenager

CAN teenagers and parents live together in peace and dignity? Says Samir's mother: "All I want is for my son to be happy and secure." Says 14-year-old Samir: "I wish she'd stop talking about my happiness. It is she who makes my life miserable. Her whining and worrying drive me crazy."

It was always thus. As parents, our need is to be needed. As teenagers, their need is not to need us. We want to see our children happy, healthy and safe. Yet teenagers resent our unsolicited attention and advice. Help is perceived as interference: concern as babying.

Father demonstrated respect for his own feelings. Son was left free to continue with his unpleasant but harmless revolt. Had father sanctioned the hairedo, he would have destroyed its value as a symbol of autonomy and rebellion. Had he actively fought it, more obnoxious behavior might have been substituted by the young rebel.

Don't try to offer "instant" understanding. When troubled by conflicts, teenagers feel unique. No one else ever felt this way before. They are insulted when told, "I know how you feel. At your age I felt exactly the same." It distresses them to seem so transparent, so

precipitates a voice and a choice in matters that affect his life. Don't violate his privacy. By providing our teenager privacy, we demonstrate respect. We help him disengage himself from us and grow up. Some parents pry, read their teenager's mail and listen in on phone conversations. This enrages teenagers, makes them feel cheated. "I am going to sue my mother for malpractice of parenthood," said one girl. "She unlocked my desk and read my diary." Said another, "When I return from a date, I find my mother waiting for me, bursting with curiosity. She wants to know everything. What did he

prevent a bad choice, but Shaheen does not hear the hidden intention. What she hears is: "You are stupid. You have no taste." So, she hits back in anger.

Shaheen's mother might have said, "You like green, pink and purple." Or, "You prefer large designs." Then she could state her own preference: "I happen to like quiet patterns." Since her taste has not been attacked, Shaheen does not feel the need to defend it. She is free to reconsider her choice without loss of face.

Asif, age 16, is interested in political science. His facts are not always accurate, and his opinions are often overstated. "China will soon be the strongest nation in the world," he tells his father. "Now is the time to declare war on China." "Look at our 16-year-old military genius!" says his father. "What do you know about China? Let me tell you a few things." Hurt and angry, Asif cannot listen to his father. He learns very little about peace or politics. But he learns to resent his father.

Father could better have said, "I am interested in your ideas about war and peace. Tell me more." Father could have listened silently and then stated his own views. "I see we differ in our opinions on China. This is my view..." As the Hebrew sages said, "The beginning of wisdom is silence. The second stage is listening."

Set standards, demonstrate values. Our teenagers need to know what we respect, what we expect, what we live by. They need limits: not restrictions set but limits anchored in values. To be sure, they will often oppose our standards, resist our rules, test our limits. This is part of growing up. But a firm stand on values will have impact.

Shimu, age 13, invited ten girls to a slumber party. She was informed that many of the girls would not attend if one particular girl was also there. Torn between loyalty to that friend and a desire to be popular, Shimu was ready to yield. But her parents objected. "In our house," Father stated, "loyalty to a friend takes precedence over popularity."

Our teenagers don't always like such stands. But they do respect our strength and integrity. Our values give them the courage to stand alone when necessary: to go against the crowd in refusing a drink, drug, a drag race.

In summary, the cornerstone of our approach to teenagers is the distinction between feelings and acts. We are permissive when dealing with unacceptable behavior. We respect their opinions and attitudes; but we reserve the right to redirect some acts. And, always, our silent love is their main support. As one 17-year-old girl gratefully put to a helpful adult:

"You didn't seem to do a thin but be there. And yet a harbor doesn't do anything either, except to stand there with arms always outstretched, waiting for the traveler to come home."

Shaheen and her mother are shopping. Says Shaheen, age 15, "What a beautiful blouse!" "It's not beautiful," says her mother. "It's vulgar." Mother may have intended to

Happy with Life

by Sylvia Saleem

against disappointment.

LETS not beat about the bush. Happiness is what we all long for — only happiness has so many different meanings. It runs from rare moments of inexpressible joy to passive contentment, it embraces every instant of existence, all possible experience.

What most people mean when they say glibly that they "want to be happy" is that they want to like life, find it full and interesting and be secure in their own particular niche.

Many of us make the initial mistake of believing happiness is something that comes from without, like manna from heaven. We wait for a kind of magic lightning to strike and make us happy. When this doesn't happen we are resentful and feel we are being cheated. This is the wrong attitude.

Accepting Realities

The capacity for happiness is inside ourselves — often in a tiny unexplored cocoon. Before you can get anywhere at all you have to find it. Only from that instant are you taking the positive steps that can lead to happiness. Hope of obtaining it in any other way is an illusion. You have to learn to use the capacity to be happy — and to deserve it — before happiness becomes a tangible state.

Perhaps the fundamental secret of happiness is an ability to come to terms with one's own life as it really is — not as one imagines it ought to be: of finding the best in it, of knowing when to give things a push forward, when to accept them as they are and how to build cheerfully round what can't for the moment be altered. This is the best recipe for making a success of the little bit of life that has been put into one's hands. Getting all you can out of life doesn't — and mustn't — mean for yourself alone. Take what is offered by those around you, but give at least as much



as you receive.

Encourage Change

Make the most of what you have. Enjoy it while it lasts. But never be afraid of change. A life that doesn't alter and expand is not developing naturally. Life is full of surprises...and surprises can give us some of our happiest moments.

Show initiative. Never refuse an opportunity (particularly when young) simply because you can't see where it is leading. It will probably land you somewhere very pleasant. Even some apparent dead-end — like a job you have to leave, training which is never completed — can provide a fund of valuable knowledge on which to draw later. The wonderful thing about life is that nothing is ever wasted or finished. Odd ends seem to tie up.

Patience

Don't rush your fences. It would be perfect if we could make a wonderful place for ourselves and have everybody lov-

ing us in five minutes. This just isn't possible. You have to build gradually. Be patient. Bide your time. Persevere. Be firm, clear and constructive. Then you will find that you can be happy anywhere...at any time.

Disappointments

Perhaps you are disappointed about some small thing — or maybe it is more important — in business or over a man. If you can't make yourself see beyond this awful moment you miss a lot of happiness.

"But I'm not made that way," we hear some people say: "I can't help feeling disappointed about things." Admittedly, some of us are less capable of ignoring setbacks which stronger natures would take in their stride. There is nothing wrong with feeling deeply — it can be a source of great happiness...but don't let it get out of control. We all have to learn self-discipline.

It is the only thing that makes us mistress of a situation, a woman's strongest defence

Moods
The best of us get out of bed on the wrong side sometimes. But must everybody suffer? Certainly not, if we are wise. Moods have to be governed like feelings. You can't afford to be temperamental. This is frustrating, and he poison accumulates until it becomes a raging inferiority complex. An inferiority complex is often only a form of self-pity — the deep-down cause of which is vanity. You see yourself shining and when you don't you go to the other extreme and think you have no glitter at all.

This state of mind is a drawback, particularly if you are earning your living. It leads nowhere because life always takes its revenge. If you are in a bad mood when opportunity knocks you won't be able to take advantage of it.

Success

Most of us long to be successful...and in imagination we usually are. Whether the dream ever becomes a reality depends on yourself (a great deal of hard work and a bit of luck often do the trick). But first of all you must define your aims. Decide just what you want. Discover your own particular bent. Find the occupation that suits you. Whether your sphere is large or small is immaterial; the important thing is to be interested in what you are doing. Never make the mistake of thinking that life would be marvellous if you were doing something different. This leads to the square-peg-in-a-round-hole mentality, and to useless resentment because things are not going your way.

There are all kinds of success — when you have chosen the kind you intend to attain, go ahead. Remember that one small, hard won, success is often sufficient to set you on the right track. It gives you a sense of personal value, and is a spur to greater effort.



A teenager with her world of music

admonition as bossing. Says the father of a 15-year-old boy: "Our relationship is a tragedy of errors. I am his friend. He considers me his enemy. I want his respect. I get his contempt." Accept his restlessness and discontent. Adolescence is often a time of personal agony. It is a time of uncertainty and self-doubt. It is an age of inconsistency and ambivalence. It is not helpful to ask a teenager, "What's the matter with you? What has suddenly got into you?" These questions are unanswerable. He cannot say, "Look, Mother, I am torn by conflicting emotions. I am burning with unfamiliar urges." Parents can help most by tolerating this restlessness, respecting this loneliness and accepting this discontent.

Differentiate between acceptance and approval. You can tolerate unlikable behavior without sanctioning it. One father, irritated by his son's long hair, said "I'm sorry, son. I can stand it after breakfast, but not before. So please have your breakfast elsewhere."

The comment was sound.

naive, so simple, when they feel complex, mysterious and inscrutable. They are helped more by our attentive silence, and active listening, than by instant advice.

Don't try to be like them. Says Suriya, age 16, "My mother tries hard to be a teenager. She dresses in modern clothes, wears beads and talks hip. It's sickening. My friends pretend she is one of us, but they laugh at her behind her back—and they make fun of me." Children are childish; adults must be adultish. Teenagers deliberately adopt a style of life that is different from ours. When we imitate their style, we only force them into further opposition.

Don't invite dependence. Dependence invites resentment. A wise parent makes himself increasingly dispensable to his teenagers. Whenever possible, he allows them to make their own choices and use their own powers. His language is deliberately sprinkled with sympathetic statements that encourage independence: "The choice is yours." "If you want to." "It's your decision." A teenager ap-

say? What did I answer? did I feel? How much did he spend? She's trying to be a pal. But I don't need a 40-year-old pal. I need privacy."

Don't belabor the future. In prodding a son or daughter to grow up, many parents loudly lament the youngster's future fate. "You'll never be able to hold a job unless you learn to get up on time." "No one will want to hire you unless you learn to spell. You're practically illiterate." This "reversal psychology" approach usually leads to spiteful behavior and bad relations. Besides, children tend to live up to roles cast for them by their parents. Instead of predicting doom, merely indicate what needs to be done in a given situation.

Don't judge opinions and taste. Parents usually react to their teenager's statements with approval or disapproval. Yet, the most helpful response is often non-judgmental.

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Cookery

Cheese Biscuits
4 oz. sieved flour
3 oz. butter
2 oz. grated cheese
salt and pepper to taste

Sieve the flour, salt, and pepper together, and mix in the cheese. Cream the butter, stir in the dry ingredients, and work together into a smooth, stiff paste, which should form into a ball and leave the sides of the basin clear. Turn on to a floured slab or board, knead lightly, adding flour as required to prevent stickiness.

Roll the paste out to little less than quarter-inch thick, and cut into rounds with a one-inch fluted pastry cutter. Place on a greased and floured tin, and bake in a fairly quick oven until tinged with colour and quite firm to the touch. Leave in the tin to cool for a few minutes, then lift carefully on to a wire rack. As soon as the biscuits are quite cold, pack in an airtight tin. They will then keep fresh and crisp for at least ten days. They are, however, very

brittle, especially when still warm, so they must be handled gently.

Chocolate Biscuits
1 lb. icing sugar or powdered sugar

Rub the butter into the flour, add the other dry ingredients to it and mix all well together. Then add the yolks of eggs, flavoured, and a little milk, if necessary. Mix up to a nice stiff paste, divide into pieces and roll out in little long sticks. Place them on a floured baking tin and bake in a moderate oven from 15 to 20 minutes.



Cary Grant and Leslie Caron in "Mother Goose"

3 oz. dripping
about 3 tablespoonfuls golden syrup
2 teaspoonfuls powdered dry ginger
almonds

Sieve the flour and ginger into a basin, add the sugar, rub in the dripping and mix well together. Add enough golden syrup to make a very stiff paste and knead with the hands until smooth. Flour a rolling pin, roll out the paste and cut into rounds. Place them on a greased baking tin, put one or two split almonds on the top of each and bake in a moderate oven for about 20 minutes or until nicely browned.

Cinnamon Sticks

1 lb. flour
1 lb. soft sugar
2 oz. butter
3 yolks of eggs
1 teaspoonful very finely powdered and sifted cinnamon
a few drops of lemon flavoured
a little milk, if necessary

Rub the butter into the flour, add the other dry ingredients to it and mix all well together. Then add the yolks of eggs, flavoured, and a little milk, if necessary. Mix up to a nice stiff paste, divide into pieces and roll out in little long sticks. Place them on a floured baking tin and bake in a moderate oven from 15 to 20 minutes.

Ginger Snaps

1 lb. flour
3 oz. soft sugar

1 lb. grated chocolate
1 dessertspoon flour
white of egg
vanilla essence

Sift the sugar and mix it with the chocolate and flour, then add the flavoured and enough beaten white of egg to form into a paste. Take small portions of the mixture, form into balls, and arrange on a floured baking tin, keeping them some little distance apart. Bake in a moderate oven for about 15 minutes.

Jumbles

1 lb. flour
1 oz. paisley flour
3 oz. soft sugar
2 oz. butter
2 eggs
a little grated lime-rind
milk

Beat the butter and sugar together and add the lime rind, then add the eggs well beaten. Mix the paisley flour with the flour and stir them lightly into the other ingredients. Then add enough milk to make a stiffish dough. Turn out on a floured board and divide it into small equal sized pieces. Roll each piece out with the hands to the length of a stick of lead pencil and twist them to form the letter "S" or figure "8". Place the jumbles on a greased tin and bake in a moderate oven from 15 to 20 minutes.



A scene from a Malaysian cultural show — Courtesy Photo Concern

Ideals in Celluloid and on Paper

by Fayza Haq

TANVIR Mokammel, who is one of the pioneer of short film movement in Bangladesh, is the founder president of the Bangladesh Short Film Forum, the general secretary of the RITWIK Film Society and is the vice chairman of the International Short Film Festival.

He has written a number of books such as "Syed Wajullah, Sisyphus and the Quest for Tradition in the Novel" (a literary criticism); "Gramscism, Lukacs and Western Marxism"; "Landless Peasant Movement: Class and Political Perspectives"; "Pakistan: Autocracy and Politics of Conflict"; "Pakistan, Politics and Religion and 'Marxism and Literature'" (a collection of essays). He reviews films and plays and is now completing a book on Brecht. He has written a book about film aesthetics in which has been dealt with 12 directors including Eisenstein, Pukovkin, Flaherty, Cocteau, Kuleshev, Renoir and Satyajit Ray. His other books on films are "Charlie Chaplin, the Triumph of the Tramp" and "Chalchitra", which was a collection of essays printed by the Bangla Academy, in which he dealt with directors who had made concrete contributions to the twentieth century films in. He has also been editing "Montage".

Tanvir's first film was "Hooliya", which was about the day in the life of a wanted political activists, based on a poem

was made with money that he obtained from his mother. "Krishna Nagar", his second film in which he was a co-director, was about fishmongers for which the financial backing came from the Goethe Institut. His "Sriti Ekattor" is a documentary on the murder of the intellectuals, a topic which has been written about and printed by the Bangla Academy.

It was teaching film aesthetics to the students of Mass Communication. The D.G. there at that time made an offer to help make a film of 10 minutes. He later agreed to provide the raw materials for a 60 minutes film. During the filming there was some measure of maladjustment between FDC and

NIMCO. The present authorities of NIMCO were not so keen about the film and I had to look elsewhere for financial and moral support. It took two years to clear the bureaucratic steps. The shooting itself took only five months although we had to go to Chittagong and Rajshahi. By this time the election took place by which BNP government came into power and took an insular and partisan approach to '71. They feel anything to do with '71 is pro Awami League. They would have liked me to mention Ziaur Rahman instead of showing Sheikh Mujibur Rahman giving a speech. This film is not the total picture of Liberation and the focus is narrow. There is no room for fo-

cusing on Ziaur Rahman, Khaled Mosharraf and others," Tanvir elaborated on his film.

In the film individuals like Panna Kaiser, Lily Chowdhury, Mrs Anwar Pasha, Mrs Altaf Mahmud, Mrs Alim Chowdhury, Mrs Nizamuddin Ahmed, Kaliranjan Sheel and Bhashanti Guhthakurta were interviewed. The Censor Board most likely did not like the mention of Maulana Mannan and Fazlul Huq Chowdhury who were both involved in the manhunt, as the widows explained. If the Censor Board refuses to give a certificate the next step is to go to the Appeal Board and then to go to the court. So far the film has been shown only to the people actually interviewed and to the press. Public opinion has to be formed and pressure has to be put on the Censor Board so that a harmless film is not stopped. "Tanvir informed.

"Many good films have been made about the Liberation War like 'Stop Genocide' by Zahir Raihan and 'Liberation Fighters' by Alamgir Kabir. I hope to make film on communalism Chitra Nadir Parry about the reasons of a Hindu family's migration from Bangladesh and also 'Lal Shalu' of Syed Wajullah, for which I have bought the copyrights," he added.

"Due to mass literacy films and video have immense potency, yet the mainstream cinema of the country has managed to remain as philistine as ever," he concluded.

Tanvir in action