

# LIVING

## Educated Mother: an Asset for Children

by Fayza Haq

WHO says education is wasted in women just because so many of them have to be satisfied with the preoccupations of a housewife? When a young child begins asking the mother why is the sky so blue or why do the bees buzz around the flower or even why it is cold when it rains in winter. It would be so helpful if she went into some details and informed the child about the nature of one thing or another from Nature Study and Health Science knowledge and later about history and geography too.

The child longs to know where the wool for the lovely pink or blue sweater has come from, where the brinjal or the cucumber grows and how they come to the lunch table every afternoon, along with the bread and the meat. It will undoubtedly make the child's life more full to know about the various matters that provoke his curiosity.

Similarly, if the mother is good at grammar, she need not bemoan the fact that she has given up teaching at the girls' college or abandoned the job at the publishing firm. It is surely wrong for her to lament the fact that she has also said farewell to her part-time job of preparing the "cultural" section of the local news for the radio. The female's flare for writing, composition, and a care for correct use of the language can all be neatly accommodated in the children's education.

### Learns Easily

It is surprising how readily and easily the child learns from the mother, specially when there is not the intermediary of the "aya" or "bearer" or even the helpful young sister-in-law, the ready to please "nanad" who wishes to ease the young housewife's responsibilities and so lends a helping hand.

One notices the readiness of the child to learn from the outpourings of the sharp and vigilant three-year-old who has been brought up by mother alone, in a place like England where it is near impossible to have hired hands

with rearing the child, except for the few hours in the school.

Staying with the mother the three-year-old will have the responses and intelligence of almost a nine-year-old and will show the coolness and presence of mind of even an older child. If such a child is to go out, to a tea-party or a coffee party of a handful of mothers or even the morning at the hairdresser's he or she is immediately the centre of attraction. And all this attention is not because the child is remarkably well dressed in his or her London-stitched clothes or because of the European accent but because of the unusual presence of mind and alertness he or she dominates over the conversation. One is indeed often puzzled

and bemused and even stunned at the vigilance and sharpness of young child's mind.

When the young mind is a receptacle of all things to learn, what other better audience or recipient does the mother have than the young child to adopt all her instructions and guidance in his/her behavioral pattern?

If the mother is good at languages and has even earned quite a name for herself as a translator and teacher of French or German, she can pass on her cultural attainments to her little ones who will be only too ready to learn.

One can never begin too soon and nothing can give a woman more pleasure than in having her little ones carry on

with her learning, training and knowledge. Yes, the young housewife can have the satisfaction of imparting her knowledge by setting up a small class of her own, which may operate at any hours that she wants, and which is suitable to her.

### Glad to Guide

When the children have wrong ideas about TV or radio programmes, about the capitals of places, their languages, clothes their historical past and such issues, the young mother who might once have hated having to give up her own textbooks for a rushed marriage and the consequential children will be only too glad to guide the young ones through nursery school and later high school and even college. A young student is only too happy to have anyone at home to take interest in his/her subjects, and nothing would be more delightful, or helpful or satisfactory than to have a mother tell about the details about a chapter in history or physics.

It is true that it is the mother who is often left to visit the child's school and college and find out about the deficiency or the progress of the child in one subject or another, his/her hangups and shortcomings. The mother's specified knowledge of education cannot come more handy than in prompting and coaxing and guiding the child in the problematic corners of politics or physics.

When there is the great drive to make people think on their own, have their own line of reasoning, and have mature ways of looking at life, it can never be too early for the mother to begin on the children, and make them alert early in life.

Often, despite the accumulated learning, the mother still has to read up and refer to encyclopaedias and reference books when the child asks questions about science and literature and what have you. Then begins an education of surely more than one person and for the benefit and enjoyment of both.



## On Getting to the Other Side of the Road in China

China's economic transformation is bringing huge numbers of cars on to the roads for the first time in a country where once the bicycle reigned supreme. The result, reports Gemini's Consultant Editor on his first visit to China since 1976, is that the big cities are becoming a nightmare for the pedestrian struggling to reach the other side of the road unscathed.

from Derek Ingram in Xi'an China

MY Chinese friend said, "When you cross the road in China," she said, "you must be bold. Be brave." It is sound advice. There seems little else to be if you are ever to reach the other side of the road in a big Chinese city.

The showpieces of old China were always built on a grand scale. The new China is being rebuilt on an even grander one. For the visiting pedestrian the prospect as you step from the pavement is daunting.

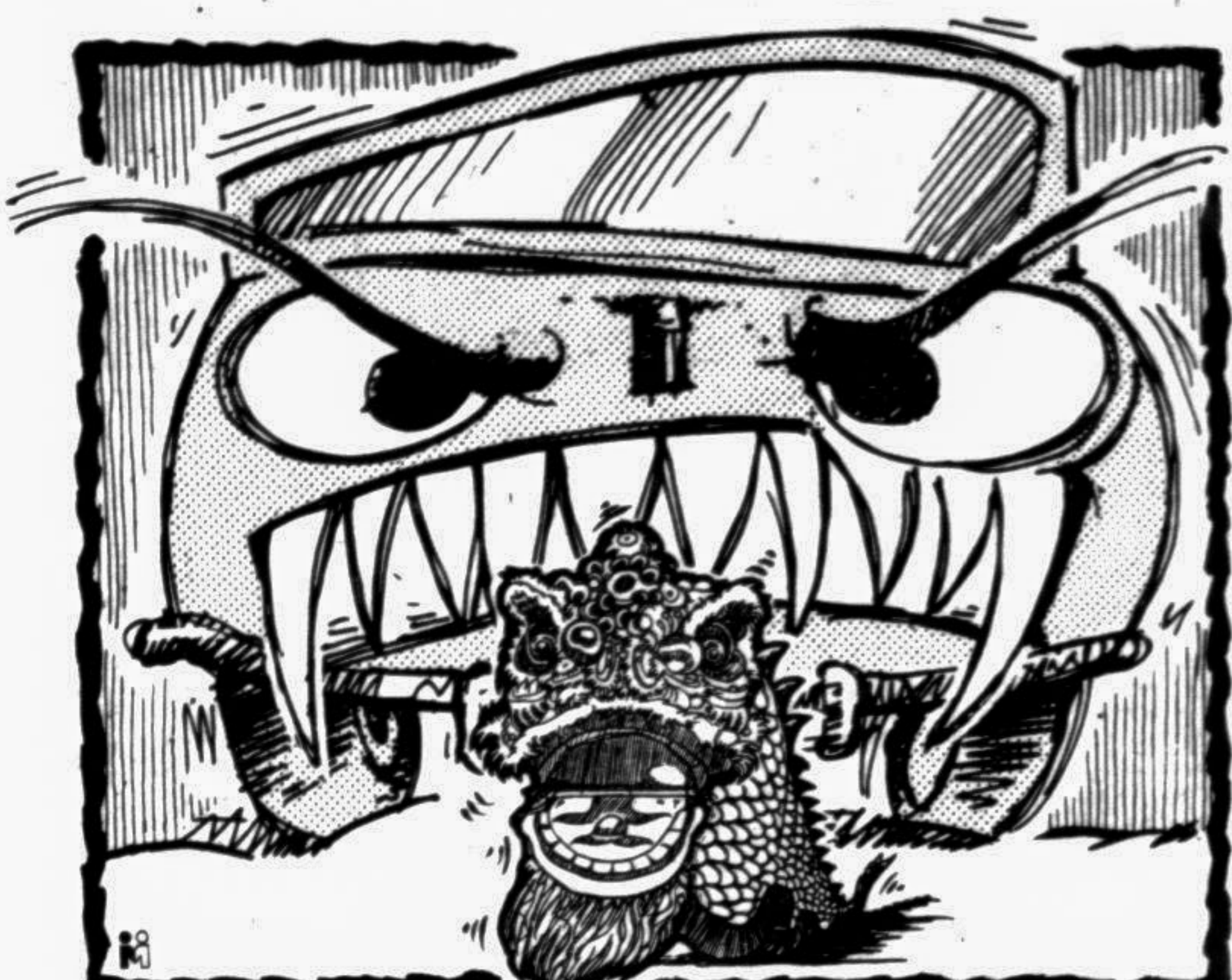
A great open space lies ahead, filled with every kind of hooting vehicle and great armies of bicycles moving about in no particular order.

Bicycles are relatively easy to avoid. They tend to move in huge bunches with a few strays in between. Sometimes they are provided with separate lanes.

As most of the population moves by bicycles the riders seem to feel they have the right to break all the rules, ignoring traffic lights and sometimes moving in the opposite direction in the wrong lanes.

Traffic lights, where they exist, are often ignored by cars as well. In some places in Xi'an, in addition to lights, a policeman stands on a pedestal in the middle of a crossroads while at each corner an old man (or sometimes a woman) stands with a long red-and-white pole dangling a tiny red flag which he thrusts out rather hopelessly in front of the traffic when the light turns red.

Simultaneously, he blows a whistle, producing a rather mellow sound that is virtually inaudible against the constant car-hooting. Some cars and bicycles pull up; others sail past the little flag, which the man then re-wiggles in half-hearted disgust.



When the light turns green the man rests on his little stool. Each hour he jumps up and down 30 or 40 times.

None of this traffic control, by lights, policeman and man with a pole, seems to much avail as cars, lorries, buses motorbikes, overloaded motor carts, rickshaws and bicycles tend to move about the crossing oblivious of it all.

Not so long ago the scene in the big Chinese cities was very different, almost a pedestrian's paradise. Main roads had always been wide but cars were rare.

Almost eerily to the visitor, the only noise was the pleasant tinkle of bicycle bells, the whirr of a hundred wheels and the odd hooting from an official car or lorry. In those days private cars were not allowed. Only official cars were to be seen.

In a few years the roads have filled at rush hour times to traffic-jam level. Beijing's wide roads, massive flyovers and overpasses are already unable to cope with the heavy lorry traffic, high numbers of buses, fleets of yellow-and-red taxis, and every kind of private car from stretched

limousine to string-tied cobble-together vehicle.

Sometimes there are pedestrian bridges, but usually there is none and pedestrians must make their dash into the unknown. The art is to let the traffic weave around you, stand firm when all is swishing around — and hope. Fortunately, cars move quite slowly, except on the flyovers.

Near-misses happen all around, but as the private cars increase fiascos of bad temper between cyclists and car drivers are becoming more commonplace. As they weave about, cyclists are forever scraping shiny new private cars.

Proud owners jump out and pour abuse at the cyclist while hooting traffic piles up behind. Drivers are livid that they face an exorbitant bill for repainting.

Private cars are still small in numbers for a country of 1.2 billion: according to official figures only two million. But staggering rises are likely, even though high taxation must deter all but the richest from buying. China is on the way to becoming the world's

largest car market.

By the year 2000 the Chinese car industry will be making three million cars a year and Chinese economists say it is vital to step up this output to stop the flood of foreign imports which have swallowed huge amounts of foreign exchange since the beginning of the 1980s.

Joint ventures are mushrooming. A Sino-German project, Shanghai-Volkswagen Automobile Corporation, alone will be producing 300,000 Santana cars by 1997.

So the prospect is that crossing the road will not get any easier. China's cities will soon be as jammed and suffocating as Bangkok, Jakarta, New Delhi, Manila and others in Asia.

And the poor pedestrians in their tens of millions, my Chinese friend advises me, will need to be ever bolder, ever braver. — Gemini News

About the Author: DEREK INGRAM, Editor of Gemini News Service from 1967-93 and now its Consultant Editor, is on an extended tour of the Asia Pacific region.

## In Search of Vitality

by Sylvia Salim

with those who have super-energy — people who were born with an unusual zest which has played a big part in their success. But by knowing a few simple things about your body and its energy supply you can, with very little trouble, feel more vital two months from now than you do today.

Normally, the rate at which the food substances are turned into energy is determined by the thyroid, a tiny gland in the neck. In a sense, this gland is like the thermostat on a furnace. If it is set too high, there is raging activity, a condition known, as hyperthyroidism, usually found in thin, tense people. When thyroid activity is too low (hypothyroidism), life proceeds at a limping pace. The victim is usually fat, has a puffy, sleepy face, dry, brittle hair and, because the body isn't producing sufficient heat to provide warmth, she is abnormally sensitive to cold. Both these types have thyroid abnormalities and need medical treatment. But most people (probably more than ninety-five per cent) fall within the normal basal metabolic rate. Your basal metabolic rate can vary slightly at certain times — during menstruation, for instance, or when you are nursing a child. Then the rate goes up and it takes more energy to keep you functioning. As a result, your supply of extra energy for your daily tasks goes down.

Idle, the body engine gives off approximately the same heat as a seventy-watt bulb and its fuel requirements are surprisingly low. Two lumps of sugar keep things going for an hour; a pat of butter for two hours; a doughnut for three.

Even the slightest activity shoots the energy requirement upward. Sitting up in bed increases it twenty-five per cent; standing doubles it; chopping wood increases it eight times. But heavy thinking, contrary to popular belief, requires hardly any energy. Half a peanut an hour would keep the brain of a nuclear physicist going. Worry and tension, on the other hand, send energy requirements sky-rocketing.

### The Right Foods

It's automatic with most of us when we're feeling lifeless to think that our diet is at fault — so automatic, in fact, that there's a danger of building up health fetishes and expecting nutritional miracles.

The important thing is to eat sensible good meals regularly — and never to eat too much. Different foods affect your energy rate in different ways. The protein foods (meat, eggs, fish, and so on) provide energy at an even rate and for a long period. The carbohydrates, because they are readily absorbed and converted to glucose, are a source of quick energy. You can get an instant lift from such an enemy of the balanced diet as the chocolate bar — but you'll have just as quick a let-down.

Fat is the most concentrated source of energy but because it can't be digested quickly, you don't feel its benefit immediately.

The fast-burning rate of carbohydrates explains why a toast-and-coffee breakfast is not adequate. You may feel fine

for an hour after it, but by mid-morning you will be flagging.

Just as important as getting the right food is when you eat it. You should never have a small breakfast and lunch and hope to make up with a huge dinner. For your general health and energy, have a big breakfast, a light but nourishing lunch, and a moderate dinner.

### Exercise

No matter how carefully controlled your diet, if your general fitness level is low, you can't possibly feel full of vitality. You need to exercise regularly, even if only by walking to the shops instead of taking the bus. You should try to stand straight and wear comfortable shoes.

Pain, even slight, can irritate and depress, completely draining off your vitality.

If you get used to moving quickly and often, your circulation is quickened and you automatically feel better. The whole thing is cumulative — having exercised, you feel more energetic and more optimistic about being able to work hard. In other words, the more you do, the more you can do.

Exercise also relieves tension, depression and boredom, all of which sap your energy alarmingly. Tension causes you to contract the muscles in your shoulders and back, and burns energy this way. When you're feeling browned-off sometimes the best thing you can do is to grab a cloth and clean a window, or walk upstairs briskly. Even stretching long and hard can help.

### Mid-Winter Blues

The need for physical exercise and a lively mental attitude is greatest in mid-winter.

Then the whole dreary hardship of living looms up on us and we become less energetic as the winter weeks wear on. We may have enough stored energy from eating well, but not enough emotional or physical stimulation to get us going.

To help beat these mid-winter blues, try making for the bus at a brisk trot. Emotionally, you can stimulate your energy by attending a concert series, planning your holidays or even redecorating a room.

These suggestions are all vitality-rousers, but if your lack of energy is constant and your body does not respond to these straightforward remedies you should consult your doctor.

### Energy Supply

Your supply of energy may depend on many different things, such as when you eat and how much you exercise, whether you are at odds with your husband or not interested in your job, whether you work hard enough or weigh too much, slump when you walk or wear very high-heeled shoes.

You may never be able to compete in the vitality stakes

## COOKERY

garine and brown under grill.

### Cauliflower au Gratin

- 1 cauliflower
  - 3 oz. grated cheese
  - A little margarine
  - White sauce
  - Browned bread crumbs
- Wash the cauliflower well, cutting away most of the stalk, and soak in cold water. Cook until tender, drain well (keeping the water for the sauce), break up the flowers into fair-sized pieces and put them in a fire-proof dish. Make the sauce.

Pour sauce over cauliflower, sprinkle remainder of cheese on top, cover with browned breadcrumbs, dot with mar-

gine, place in a pan of hot water and oven-poach in a moderate oven for about 40 minutes.

### Cheese Fondue (for 6)

- 1 1/2 cupfuls fresh breadcrumbs
  - 1 1/2 cupfuls grated cheese
  - 2 eggs (separated)
  - 1 1/2 cupfuls milk
  - 1 tablespoonful butter, melted
  - 1/2 teaspoonful salt
- Soak breadcrumbs in milk. Add cheese, beaten egg-yolks, salt and melted butter. Fold in stiffly beaten egg-whites. Pour into a greased baking

### Cheese Pudding (for 3-4)

- 1 oz. butter
  - 1 oz. breadcrumbs
  - 1/2 pint milk
  - Pinch of mustard and salt
  - 2 oz. grated cheese
  - 1 egg (separated)
- Heat the milk, stir in the butter, breadcrumbs, mustard and salt, and add the cheese and beaten egg-yolk. Whip the egg-white to a stiff froth and fold in lightly. Pour the mixture into a well-greased pie dish and bake for 15-20 minutes.



Pretty and poised despite the summer heat

## When Faced With Grief

by Max Wylie

Though everyone suffers loss, few have suffered it more utterly than Max Wylie, writer and television executive. In 1963, Wylie was happily married, the father of two bright young women. Then tragedy struck. His younger daughter, Janice, just 21, and her roommate were brutally murdered by an intruder in their New York City apartment. In 1968, Wylie's wife died of cancer after a lingering illness. A few months later, his surviving daughter, 30-year-old Pamela, died of pneumonia. Wylie tells here what he has learned about coping with overwhelming misfortune.

"WHEN you come to the end of your rope," someone once advised, "tie a knot in it and hang on."

His suggestion is another way of saying that life must be lived. Morally, you have no choice but to go on, no matter what your circumstances. Socially, your obligation is stronger still. Even if there seems to be no reason to go on living, you cannot repudiate your connection to those about you. Call it love, sympathy, concern or involvement, your tie to the rest of man can never be cut.

To retreat into oneself is a common response in the face of misfortune. But the more a man is preoccupied with himself, the more he diminishes himself. If he becomes totally self-immersed, he becomes totally reduced and is nothing. He is roadblocking his own way to any form of happiness, to any plane of sanity.

Immediately after a loss, when the shock is not acute, there isn't much one can do. No one, when stranded by sudden loss, will believe that time heals. All you can do is stand still and hurt, insensitive to all pain but your own.

But if you want to get your nerve back after any disabling catastrophe — whether it's job loss, crippling illness, death in

the family, an agonizing divorce, betrayal, rejection or sudden loss of normal powers — there are certain affirmatives to remember. However formidable your situation, you are not alone in it. You are not the first to go through it. Many others are in it with you, right this minute. Misfortune is the only true international currency the world has ever had.

The day after we lost our younger daughter, so far away in New York City, I learned by cable that my oldest friend had suddenly died in London, that his widow was returning with his ashes and wished me to serve as a pallbearer. For some hours, the meaning of the cable didn't even register. But before the day was over I began dimly to see the widow's hurt bewilderment, perhaps some of the intense confusion running through the family. Though hardly at a conscious level, I answered the cable, "Yes" — but I did not truly believe I could manage the ordeal of those two funeral services in the space of two days.

Now, in retrospect, I know that I learned something of value. Some of your own grief departs when you take on that of another. It becomes a bit more bearable. Your own pain will never entirely go away, but a true sharing of the perplexities of someone else will do

much to push aside the monopolizing and suffocating fog of great personal loss.

In the course of months, I found that the more you can be concerned with the harsh condition of another, the less you will be concerned about your own. Today I find myself involved once again with other people. My focus on life began to clear as soon as I turned my back, not on memory, but on despair. The tide of grief turned when I began thinking not about the matter and manner of death, but about the matter and manner of life.

Our family was so intensely alive during the days we were together that my mind is today flooded with a thousand recollected triumphs my daughters secured for themselves as they grow toward maturity. I refer to the invisible, quiet triumphs of development, the tiny but tremendous victories that came to them after long practice, or hard study; conquest of fear; conquest of algebra; discovery of poetry, rhythm, natural beauty, and of the world's variety, fascination and torment. And I think it is equally important to remember the fun. Few families ever had more spontaneous laughter than the Wylies.

It is imperative to keep busy, to give your best to your work and friendships. It is important, to keep expanding the range and variety of your acquaintances. A passage in Paul Tillich's book *The Courage to Be* illustrates the point: "When the Roman Stoic experienced catastrophes, he took them with the courage of resignation. But the typical American, after he has lost the foundations of his existence, works for new foundations."

There is one thing more forget about the day's small accidents. I've read some useful advice about this: "Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in. Forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day. Condensed from *Prudent Health*