

# Family Living

## Get over it and get on with your life

BY JUNIUS RICARDO STANTON

Life presents its' share of disappointments, setbacks, adversity and pain. No one is exempt from hurt, misfortune or situations over which we have absolutely no control. If you haven't experienced any of these yet rest assured, in due time you will. It is all part of being alive.

No matter what happens to us, we can make the decision to control our responses. I am not suggesting we deny or minimize our pain, heartache or disappointment. Certainly we should acknowledge we are grieving, upset or frustrated. However, at some point we have to decide to get over whatever happened and get on with our lives. Hosting a perpetual pity party benefits no one.

Our emotions are the result of conscious and unconscious thought processes that precipitate emotional responses. I say unconscious because many times we attempt to stuff our memories and feelings below our conscious awareness of them. But because we have attached so much mental and emotional energy to them, they pop up from our subconscious when we least expect them. We see something that reminds us of a loved one who has passed on, or we hear a song on the radio and start crying or become resentful. We may find ourselves unable to sleep or notice we are grinding our teeth or we've developed a nervous twitch. We may turn to food, alcohol, drugs or sex for comfort, solace or relief. This only exacerbates the problem and leads us down a road we really didn't intend to

travel.

What is the best solution to ease our pain and angst? Wisdom often is really simple, offering uncomplicated solutions to human problems. The answer is to get over whatever it is that's troubling you and get on with your life! how do you get over disappointment and pain? By forgiving and moving on. It is essential for a healthy mind, heart and soul. What is forgiveness, you ask? forgiveness is a mental and emotional exchange. You substitute feelings of understanding and acceptance for your pain, anger or depression. Why should you do this? Because your vexation, sorrow and resentment will eat you up. When you become angry your blood pressure goes up, your heart rate increases and your body's fight-flight physiological functions kick in. All this is fine if there is a real crisis or life threatening situation, but if it is merely a mental replay of events that happened days, weeks, months or years ago, it's counter productive and unhealthy. Why get in a tether over something that is long over and done? Get over it and get on with your life. The world doesn't care if you are angry or whether or not it is justified. It does care however if your anger is preventing you from doing your job or making you ill.

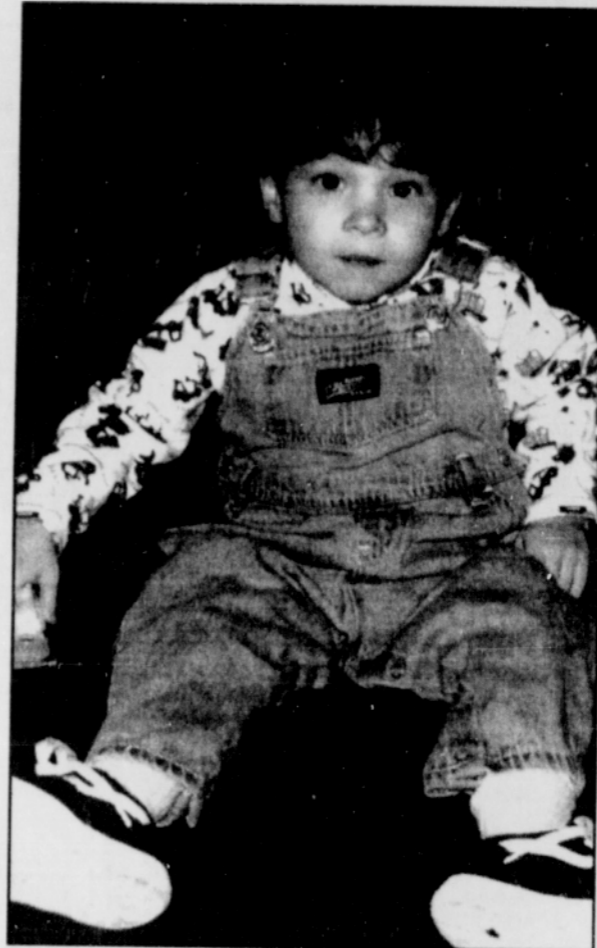
Forgiveness doesn't mean you have to forget what happened or even like what happened. Forgiveness means you have to accept that it happened and decide you will no longer resent the fact that it happened. Forgiveness means changing your attitude

and reaction to what happened. Learn from it. Look for the message in the mess, the lesson in the loss and the ordination in the ordeal. Determine to look for ways to emerge from the experience stronger, wiser and more confident. Someone once said, "when bad things happen you can either be bitter or you can be better." Choose to be better.

I am not suggesting that you can alter your perspective or feelings overnight. Getting over a painful or traumatic experience takes time and a personal commitment to getting better. Time alone is not enough! You have to be determined to bounce back and get well. You have to realize that change is an integral part of life, even when the changes are uncomfortable, distressing or disturbing. Accepting this puts you in control mentally and emotionally. Knowing you can control your responses and reactions to whatever happens to you will help you regain your emotional equilibrium and focus. If you feel in control of yourself, you cannot feel hopeless or helpless.

Being aware and in control is the first step. Being proactive is the next. Start thinking positively and optimistically and act in congruence with your thinking. Take the initiative to do those things you know are in your best interests. If you don't know, ask; seek help or counseling. Live in the now by learning from your mistakes and painful experiences. Focus on the lessons you've learned and accentuate the positive aspects of them. Then get over them and get on with your life.

## Adoptive home sought



Riley, age 3

This pleasant and interactive toddler loves to play with the children and adults he is close to. Riley is one of over 350 Oregon children looking for an adoptive home. Despite an initial shyness, Riley readily shows excitement and warmth for people he cares about. Riley's special needs include early prenatal drug exposure and Klinefelter's Syndrome which have left him with Various delays. He has made great progress already and would assuredly be gratifying to parent.

The unknowns facing his future are outweighed by the rewards of sharing in the small, progressive steps he takes daily. A stable, nurturing family could help this precious child to stretch and explore his potential. Oregon agencies waive or reduce fees for the adoption of Oregon's children in state care, and preadoption trainings are offered statewide. To learn more about adoption and the children awaiting homes, contact The Special Needs Adoption Coalition at The Boys and Girls Aid Society, (503) 222-9661.

## Espy speaks on the USDA, Clinton

On America's Black Forum, former Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy discusses his term in office at the USDA and his attempts to cultivate Black participation within the bureaucracy. When asked if the USDA is currently operating in a "racist manner" concerning loans to Black farmers, Espy says, "there's no question about that... There was a study done, and they (the USDA) admitted that they have a long way to go before they can reach satisfaction in the selection and placement of African-American men and women in the bureaucracy."

From Whitewater to Donorgate, and the resignations of various top-level officials, the Clinton administration has seemingly been plagued by disgrace.

But Espy, who currently works for a Mississippi law firm, says he thinks the President will overcome all of the charges. "I don't see any paralysis. I see the President moving right along."

In the area of affirmative action and civil rights, though, Espy gives the President a grade of B-minus "I think there are many, many qualified African-American men and women who deserve appointment to this cabinet and administration, particularly in his inner circle."

Espy was among the casualties during

## Women show strength as caregivers

African American Women who are raising their grandchildren report feeling less burdened in their caregiving role, even though they have fewer resources than White grandmothers. These women show amazing strength in even the most difficult situations.

While to date 64 African Americans have participated in Bradley University's Grandparent Study, researchers at the Center on Aging are seeking additional African American grandmothers, age 50 or older, living with a grandchild in homes that do not include the grandchild's parents, to participate in this ground-breaking national study.

The goal of the study is to identify areas in which grandparents raising grandchild find satisfaction and fulfillment, as well as those areas where greater support is needed. Results from this study would be used to develop programs and policies that could support grandparents in this vital role.

Participation in the study is free. Information received from participants during the interview session is completely private and confidential.

Grandparents interested in participating or leaning more about the Grandparent Study can contact Erin Driscoll at 1-800-695-5927.

Clinton's first term. In 1994, he left his post at the USDA amidst allegations of misconduct. "These things that I'm, accused to have done are trivial and I really don't think that they're criminal whatsoever," he says, adding that the process for choosing special prosecutors needs to be reformed. "These people are from the opposite party, so they have an agenda and they are very vigorous about promoting their agenda."

The difference in focus between the Democratic and Republican parties is one reason why many African-Americans continue to vote for the Democratic Party, according to Espy, who cites the example of the recently discussed balanced budget package. "The Democrats wanted more spending on lifestyle programs such as education, health care, and housing and the Republican Party incessantly clamored for cuts in taxes, principally on capital gains and state taxes."

America's Black Forum, a half-hour weekly syndicated television show, airs on 71 television station nationwide. Host Juan Williams leads this week's discussion, along with commentators Julian Bond and Armstrong Williams. Please check your local listing for air time and station.

## Birth Announcements

**Ka'Vantae La'Rome Cornelius Powell**

May 29, 1997; Male

7lbs 13oz; 20 1/2"

Mother: Latonia Crain

Father: Kevin Powell

**La'Nasha Nashay Annette Delia Baker**

May 28, 1997; Female

7lbs 7oz; 20 inches

Mother: Carmen Rivera

Father: Deon Baker

## BEGINNING EXPERIENCE OF OREGON

Beginning Experience is announcing their next grief recovery retreat for the Divorced, Separated, and Widowed. This unique, copyrighted weekend program was developed with the assistance of the founder of Marriage Encounter, and is designed to help the formally married work through their grief and experience renewal. Beginning Experience is an international non-profit organization and ecumenical peer-ministry--open to those of all faiths. Date: June 27-29, 1997; Location: Triangle Lake Retreat Center, West of Eugene. For cost and more information, call Frank (503) 649-5676, Jeanette (503) 399-6923 or Lydia (541) 485-7216.



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