

The Family Council

Editor's note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, a newspaper editor, a women's editor and two writers. Each article is a summary of an actual report. The Family Council does not give advice; it merely reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Bernice F.—Marjorie must find friends of her own age.

Marjorie K.—I don't enjoy myself with others.

Bernice F.—I am a widow in my 50s trying very hard to help a woman some 15 years younger.

I met Marjorie in the office where I work. I felt sorry for her because she seemed so left out of things. I took to going out to lunch with her and soon found that she depended upon me for these lunches. I missed some of the other girls I used to dote with, but I didn't want to disappoint Marjorie.

Then I invited her to my home for dinner. This became a weekly habit. Now Marjorie wants us to have dinner together several times a week. I tell her she must find friends of her own age. I am much too old for her and I can't introduce her to people she'd enjoy being with. Marjorie lives alone and has no family. I don't know how to help her.

Marjorie K.—Bernice does not like to admit it, but she is just as lonely as I am. She doesn't want to be a burden on her children, so she doesn't spend much time at their homes. She has friends, but they are not really as good friends to her as I am. I sincerely love her and would do anything in the world for her.

I don't see what difference our ages make. I am always happy and comfortable with Bernice and I don't have a good time with others. It isn't often you find someone with whom you can be so congenial.

I know that I'm too shy with others. That has always been a problem with me, but there are other reasons too. Most women my age are married and have families. They can't go around with me. The single women are all much younger than I am.

The Council—Bernice is correct in her belief that Marjorie must find friends of her own age. She has become dependent upon Bernice as she would like to be on a mother, and has given up all effort to create a life of her own.

Marjorie must recognize that if she plans to go on being single she will need many friends and many activities and really stimulating interests.

If she does not find these she runs a serious risk of falling into mental illness or a state of deterioration. The mind and the emotions must be fed and must exercise just like the body.

Marjorie should try to realize what would happen if she now took to her bed and refused all food, except the

Washington—(UPI)—The American Newspaper Guild has asked the Justice Department to investigate whether the recent consolidation of the United Press and International News Service involved an agreement to suspend publication of certain newspapers.

Kennewick, Wash.—UPI—Ivan A. Hays, 30, was killed Thursday when his loaded truck-trailer overturned south of Washtucna.

barest necessities. She might be able to live for several years that way, but what a life! The more she remained in bed the harder it would be for her to get up.

This is what is happening to Marjorie on a mental level as a result of her giving in to her shyness. Because she makes no effort to meet people she loses the ability to interest them. Her few contacts result in failure and she sinks deeper into the morass. Her friendship with Bernice may save her from complete deterioration at present, but if Bernice gave in to all her demands, she would pull the older woman into the morass with her.

It is true that a single woman of Marjorie's age has a problem in finding a congenial social set. But there are more men and women in the same boat than she realizes. It takes a little effort to find anything worthwhile, but there is everything to gain and nothing to lose in making such an effort.

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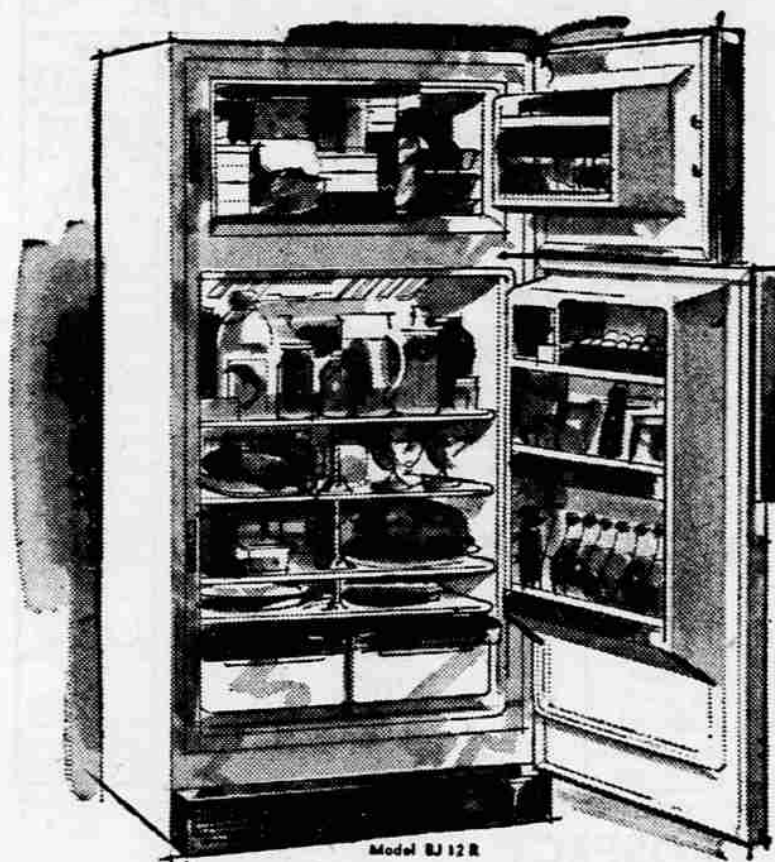
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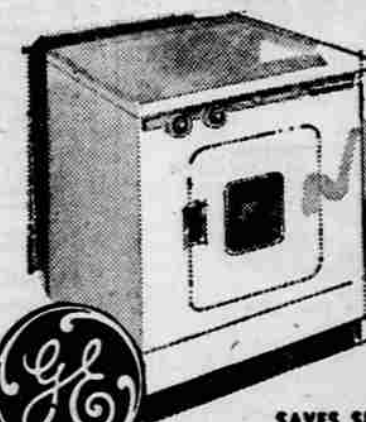


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