

The Family Council

Editor's Note: The Family Council consists of a Judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, a newspaper editor, a woman's editor and two writers. Each article is a summary of an actual case history. The Council reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Joan S.—I want Jim to give up traveling.
Jim S.—I can't stay stuck at home.

Joan S.—I have been married 12 years to a traveling salesman and I feel I can't tolerate this life any longer. We have two children, a boy of 10 and a girl of 5. I am grateful for their company—but it just isn't enough. I belong to the PTA and our church group, but that isn't enough either. Wherever I go, whatever I do, I'm always alone while other women are with their husbands.

I want Jim to quit this work and take a job in our community, even if it means less money. I could go to work part-time at least, if he was home. Jim refuses to even consider the idea.

Jim S.—When we married I warned Joan about this very thing. I have been in this racket since I was 20 and it's just second nature to me. I couldn't stand being in one store or office day after day.

Joan knows that even when I'm home I avoid the people around here. I couldn't go to all those community meetings and socials. I feel as though I'm in a strait jacket when I'm stuck in a room with all those stuffy people.

Joan talks as though it would be nothing for me to take a drop in income, but I'm 38 and that's no time of life to slip back.

The Council: There is no question but that it would be extremely difficult for Jim to make a change in his work and style of living after so many years. Yet it may be

well worth the effort for his own sake as well as his wife's. Jim sees his home town and its inhabitants as "stuffy," but he does not notice that he has perhaps become even more stuffy because of the rigidity of his routine. He protects himself against mental and emotional change by avoiding relationships with others. The contacts he enjoys in the course of his travels are brief and superficial and without consequences outside of the line of business.

Jim should realize that his relationship with his family has also been somewhat superficial. He is unlikely to have a deep understanding of his children if he doesn't keep up with them from day to day.

Many men are forced to travel to make a living, but a large percentage would gladly put down their bags for good if they had the opportunity. The fact that Jim seems to feel threatened by this opportunity indicates he is using his work as an excuse to avoid close contact with anyone.

It is possible that Jim would find life at home far more enjoyable than he imagines. Social fears now have him in a tight grip, but once he relaxes he may find home life has many pleasures and advantages. He may also discover that he can quickly make up for an initial loss of income involved in changing his work. If he can start a new job with some enthusiasm and bring it to the benefit of his many years of wider experience, he is likely to find far more success than he now sees in store.

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Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins



Wintergreen—It's Green in Winter, Of Course
Fresh, crisp and green even in the winter while the bare woods are covered with a blanket of snow, gives this member of the Heath family of plants its name—wintergreen.

Under the snow blanket the leaves of the wintergreen are fresh and green, even though its roots are firmly frozen in the cold forest floor.

The wild things, winterstarved for chlorophyll, somehow know where the wintergreen is hidden. The white-tailed deer paws away the snow. The grouse scratch and flutter until the fresh, green leaves are exposed. They find also many wintergreen berries that the quail and other wild things missed in the summer and fall.

Added Bonus
These are an added bonus greatly appreciated by animals who must survive for several months in a bare, leafless winter landscape.

During the summer, colonies of wintergreen plants nudged close around or near the evergreen trees, their finely-toothed leathery leaves developed at the top of the little plant. Later the delightfully fragrant, white, wax-like blossoms appear. Much later, just as fall spreads her colorful skirts across the woodlands, the berries, spicy, mealy and savory, turn bright red.

Rural children, who enjoy eating the aromatic leaves or the meaty fruit, affectionately known as "wintergreen berries" or "checker-berries," gobble down the spicy globes with gusto. Adults call the wintergreen "mountain tea" and for a very good reason.

Besides perfuming the breath, wintergreen tea, hot water in which the leaves have been boiled, impart a soothing warmth to upset stomachs. It is a hot, steamy brew but seemingly cool and refreshing. Oil of wintergreen, rubbed on a bruise or a pulled back or leg muscle seems to have a healing quality.

Potent Healer
Pioneer families believed wintergreen oil was a potent corrective for various stages of rheumatism. And, too, it was excellent for cuts, burns or insect bites. Used as a flavor, it imparted to various confections a pleasant taste and a lasting fragrance. The taste buds of children and adults alike respond delightfully to the wintergreen flavor.

There are several varieties of wintergreen plant. There are also various other plants of the forest that closely resemble it. The wild creatures of the forest and the field, as

well as all the humans who occasionally walk the woodland trails, name the plant by its association with familiar animals such as "deer berry" or "partridge berry." The strangely pleasant flavor of wintergreen appeals to most people. It has the tang and the spicy fragrance of the outdoors. And, too, the wintergreen seems sprightly and a little strange, for it stays always green even under the snow, its roots firmly frozen in the cold, forest floor.

(Released by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1959)

Noise Bothers Guinea Pigs in Laboratory Tests

University Park, Pa. (Science Service)—Noise can really upset a guinea pig.

Subjected to high intensity noise for a long period of time, laboratory rodents suffer breakdown of their normal endocrine defensive system, a team of researchers at the Pennsylvania State University here reports.

Weekly Exposure
The scientists found evidence of disease in the adrenals and other organs following weekly exposure of 20 to 40 hours of high intensity noise for 2 to 9 weeks. However, response to relatively low frequencies was very different.

The animals huddled together, Drs. Adam Anthony, Eugene Ackerman and James A. Lloyd report in the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America issued recently.

Rats and mice freeze into a rigid, motionless stance; increased washing and grooming was also observed in the rats and mice. The fact that guinea pigs did not resume their normal activities as quickly as the other animals indicates they are more sensitive to noise than either rats or mice.

Defense Mechanisms
"Intricate automatic endocrine mechanisms which constitute the defense reservoir of the animal are being mobilized" when noise reaches the stress level. In these studies, the scientists conclude, it is apparent that there is increased activity of the adrenal cortex following intense low-frequency noise.

Placed on a map of the United States, Ethiopia, the African kingdom, would stretch from Maine to South Carolina and from New York City to Iowa.

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