

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 case history. The Council reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Linda T.—I am so lonely.
Mrs. E. T.—She resents my help.

Linda T.—My problem is loneliness. I am 13 and have no real friends. I often cry myself to sleep and I take long, long walks by myself, trying to figure out how I can become more popular.

Recently I was crying myself to sleep when my mother came into my room. She asked why I was crying and I told her. Since then she has been trying to help me with the problem, but I wish she wouldn't. She only embarrasses me by trying to get some of the girls in the neighborhood to take me into their crowd.

I am considered quite pretty and intelligent. Is it possible that the girls don't like me because I'm too pretty and the boys don't because I'm too smart?

Mrs. E. T.—It breaks my heart to see Linda so unhappy. I know what she is going through because I, too, had a very lonely youth. I had few friends or dates until my mid-20s. I never formed a pleasant friendship with any male until I met my husband and I didn't have good friends among women until after I was married.

I expected different things of Linda because she was friendly and outgoing as a child. It's only in the past year that she has become so moody. I do believe the girls are jealous of her because she is exceptionally pretty. Her high grades in school may well put off the boys.

I only want to help her, yet she resents anything I try to do.

The Council: Parents of teen-agers are put to some rugged tests. It is important for them to be very alert to what is going on with their youngsters, yet they should also use enough diplomacy to avoid probing or lending a hand when a policy or non-interference is needed.

Mrs. E. T. displays far too much anxiety about her daughter and has succeeded in convincing Linda that things are quite bad indeed. Actually, a feeling of loneliness is quite common in adolescence. It is the time when the child first sees himself emerging as an individual in the world. There is both joy and sadness in this recognition and most youngsters fight to preserve this sense of "aloneness" they also become. Many boys and girls with fairly active social lives feel very lonely at heart.

Teen-agers often cry themselves to sleep for many vague reasons. A little parental comforting is certainly not amiss, but it is poor policy to encourage this self-pity by giving it more status than it deserves. It would be far better for the parent to take a cool, good-humored look at the situation and get the child to recognize that if he has a real problem, he must take some active measures to solve it himself.

In the realm of social relationships, it is quite futile for an adult to attempt to solve a child's problems. Children and adolescents deeply resent adult encroachments into this territory and will give a hard time to the child whose parents try to push into the crowd.

Every teen-ager can win acceptance into some group. It is mainly a matter of learning that they must contribute something and go out to others—not stand on the sidelines waiting to be asked. Pretentiousness and smartness have little to do with popularity. In social relationships it's the ability to like others that counts most. This knack eliminates self-consciousness and concern about being liked.

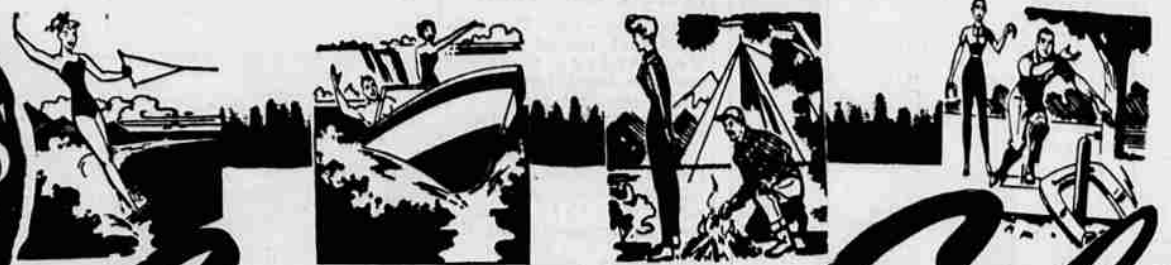
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Philadelphia—Princess Grace and Prince Rainier of Monaco arrived here Wednesday to attend the funeral of the princess' father.

The bereaved princess, dressed in a black sleeveless dress, black hat and black shoes, entered her family's home in the fashionable East Falls section of the city after a motor trip from New York. Her father, John B. Kelly Sr., 70, died of cancer at his home Monday.

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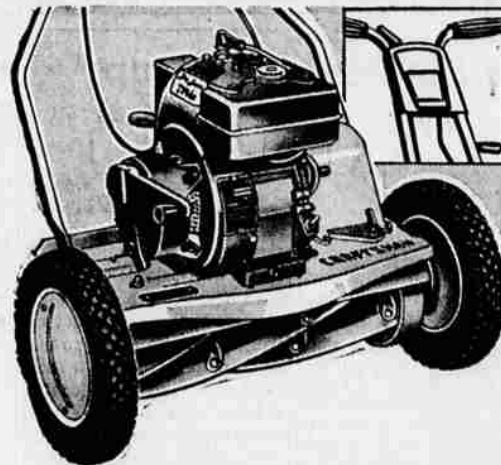
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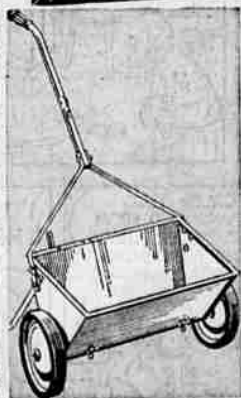
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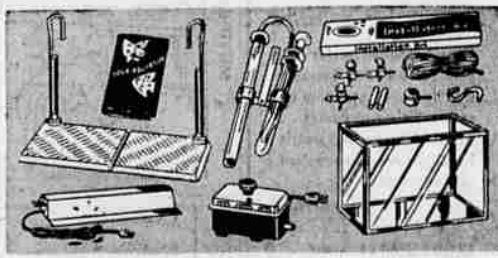
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