

## The Family Council

Editor's Note: The Family Council consists of a Judge, a psychiatrist, 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.

Sandra E.—I feel sick with love for him.

Mrs. L. E.—She will be a laughing stock.

Sandra E.—I am 16 and deeply in love with a boy a year older. He now has a summer job in the country and we haven't been able to see one another for nearly two months.

I write to Herb nearly every day, but he says he is working very hard and only has time to write once or twice a week. But I'm afraid he's not telling the truth. He may be meeting other girls there. His letters are not very affectionate.

My mother says I should stop writing to him, but I don't want him to forget me. I feel just sick with love for him. When I write to him I feel he is near me and I'm so lonely without. We went steady all last year.

Mrs. L. E.—I'm afraid Sandra is going to get very badly hurt. She spends most of her days writing passionate love letters to Herb and then goes into the deep blues when she gets a funny post card in answer.

I never discouraged her going out with Herb because I felt the friendship wasn't serious and Sandra showed no signs of being in love. In fact, she was often inconsiderate and even cruel to the boy.

But the minute Herb went away, Sandra started this letter-writing campaign. I have warned her that he may show the letters to other boys and girls and she will be a laughing stock. That doesn't stop her.

The Council: Sandra shows a degree of insight into her

situation when she says she feels "sick."

But, like most patients, she can't diagnose the disease. It is boredom, rather than love, that is plaguing her.

We are fairly certain that if Sandra had a summer job herself, she would not feel about Herb for days at a time. She would probably meet another boy or two who would interest her and would hardly find the time to send Herb funny post cards.

No mother can talk a 16-year-old who wants to be in love out of her feelings. But she can try to direct her attention elsewhere. A teenager should have some definite project for the summer months. A girl of Sandra's age should be able to get a job as a babysitter for a few hours a day. She might also work at a day camp or take a summer course.

There are other wonderful absorbing projects. The girl who learns to sew over the summer and whip up a beautiful fall wardrobe. Or she might become the family cook for the summer. She could be thrilled to see the family enjoy dinners for which she has been completely responsible.

Of course, it is foolish for her to write passionate love letters. Even if her boyfriend is too nice to reveal these personal messages to others, Sandra herself will eventually be extremely embarrassed at the thought that he has them.

Sandra needs to be encouraged to get busy doing something better with the hours that now hang heavily on her hands.

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## Velvet Fabric Aids In Overcoming Fear Of Cats for Woman

London — (Science Service) — If you are "scared to death" of cats, it may help to wear velvet gloves.

Dr. H. L. Freeman of Littlemore hospital, Oxford, and Dr. D. C. Kendrick, lecturer in psychology at the University of London's Institute of Psychiatry, have reported a case in which a patient was cured of cat phobia by forcing herself to handle velvet until she got used to it.

The patient, a 37-year-old married woman with two children, had had a fear of cats as long as she could remember. It had intensified in the two years before she consulted a psychologist. The interview revealed that the situations that produced fear were, in order of importance: the sight of a real live cat; the thought of a cat that might attack her as she walked down the street; the thought of meeting a cat in the dark; cats in pictures and on television; cat-like toys

and cat-like fur.

She was not afraid of a cat's meowing and could easily touch the hair of a dog. On two occasions as a child she had been very disturbed in situations involving cats. One was when her father drowned a kitten in her presence and the second was when her parents put a fur in her bed.

The patient was eager to overcome her fear and agreed to undergo learning and behavior therapy, more specifically "reciprocal inhibition," a technique derived from experimental psychology.

The therapist began by trying to teach the patient to accept what she felt was the least objectionable idea associated with cats — their fur. To do this, a number of materials were prepared. The first was velvet, which has some of the texture of cat fur. Gradually the patient progressed until she could be comfortable with a rabbit-fur glove, a toy kitten and pictures of cats.

The psychologist then picked out a live kitten with a mild disposition and gave it to the patient who laughed and cried as she accepted it. She explained later that she wept because of the relief of having done something she thought impossible for her. Acceptance of the kitten occurred one month after therapy began.

Became Less Afraid  
The patient took the kitten home to keep and as it grew she became less and less afraid of full grown cats. Eventually the patient was able to pet her mother's black cat, which had seemed particularly frightening to her.

"Whereas previously all cats had an almost uniformly sinister aspect," the psychologists report in the British Medical Journal, "she could now see individual differences."

Dr. Freeman was at Bethlem Royal and Maudsley hospital, London, while conducting the investigation.

Man Drove Before, Not After, Drinking  
Jackson, Miss. — A 37-year-old motorist won acquittal on a drunk driving charge with this explanation in Municipal Court:

After he was involved, cold sober, in a two-car collision, he went into a nearby tavern to talk to the other driver. They got along so well they drank for 45 minutes before phoning police.

## Soviet Officials Plan To Wipe Out Malaria This Year

Washington — (Science Service) — Soviet health officials seek to completely eradicate malaria in Russia this year and to reduce diphtheria, rabies, hookworm disease, and Taeniarhynchus (a beef tapeworm) infestation to the point of sporadic occurrence by 1965, according to a translation by the Central Intelligence Agency here.

At the present time, malaria as well as tularemia have almost been wiped out, according to L. A. Sakvarelidze, deputy chief of the State Sanitation Inspection of the Ministry of Health in the USSR, whose report appeared originally in Meditsinskaya Sestra. Cholera, plague, black smallpox and parasitic typhus infections have been completely eradicated, he reports.

In January, a conference called by the Ministry of Health and other medical groups evaluated health services at regional and local levels and found them to be considerably improved, but they are still concerned over communicable diseases and the use of vaccines to curb them.

To ease the burden on doctors, the Ministry plans to train subprofessional personnel, such as midwives, in immunization and epidemiology. By 1965, health agencies should have made a sizable reduction in the incidence of polio, typhoid fever, whooping cough, tetanus, brucellosis and other infections.

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