

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.

Mr. O. L. — It's her first year at college, and it's getting her down.

Harriet L. — I have problems I can't explain or discuss with anyone.

Mr. O. L. — Harriet's mother died two years ago. Harriet was 16 then, still in high school, and with the aid of her older sister and brother, plus her teacher and friends, she seemed to have made her peace with the cruel fate that deprived her of a mother, and me of a devoted wife.

Now, however, I feel helpless to cope with her new depression over courses which are too hard, friends who are too scarce, and dates which are too few and far between. My other children didn't go to college, so she won't listen to their advice. I want the Dean or someone on the campus to take her in hand. But she says no one can possibly understand her feelings. She does nothing but sulk and cry.

Harriet L. — There are certain problems a person simply must work out alone. I can't discuss boy-girl worries with Dad. He shouldn't feel bad about that because the truth is I couldn't even open up with Mother in that department, sweet and patient as she was. And my brother and sister can't help me keep up with the other girls scholastically and socially.

I'm coming to feel I don't belong in college at all. It's a sacrifice for Dad to send me. We decided this is what Mother had hoped for for me. But Mother wouldn't want me to stay where I'm headed straight for the booby-prize. I must decide whether to change courses, change colleges, or quit faking and go to work. This is all wrong.

The Council: Harriet has been through some giant size leaps and her head is still swimming. Most colleges have special personnel, called Dean of Girls, house mother, guidance counselor, etc. who are trained to bolster the wobbly newcomer until she regains her sea legs and attains equilibrium.

Singly-handedly, Harriet is trying to absorb crucial dislocations in her life which call for the aid, through supportive counseling, of experts. The loss of her mother, the transplant from home and family to a strange town, the sudden "aloneness" as a young adult — these are hard to adjust to without the right sort of talk-it-over help.

Her reluctance to seek help suggests that she may have something to hide, some guilt feelings. All the more reason to hurry to the Guidance Office. There, a wise, non-judging, straight-thinking advisor can sort things out — even tangles with boy friends, term papers, and handbooks.

Last Harriet thinks she's unique in having serious problems, we cite a report from the University of Michigan that hundreds of students consult their Mental Health Clinic each year, exploding the "myth" of the happy, care-free collegian. Mental disturbances on the campus are often "under-diagnosed" and their seriousness "under-rated," it is claimed.

We urge Harriet to "sign up" for aid, even if there's a waiting list. The very act of registering is therapeutic. Mr. L. will be relieved to know help is on the way, and Harriet will not be left with a Herculean do-it-yourself task. There is help in those ivied halls — help toward self-understanding and self-approbation.

Shriver On Mission For Peace Corps

New York—UPI—Peace corps director R. Sargent Shriver left on his first mission overseas Saturday declaring that he was not out to try to "sell" the corps to any nation.

Shriver set out on an official scouting mission of African and Asian projects for his young volunteers. He said that it is not a "selling trip."

The main objective of his trip, he said, is to try to learn the specific needs of the countries who have invited the peace corps to help them.

ENDORSES APPEAL

Portland — UPI — A Multnomah County Medical society resolution endorsing the appeal by Portland Public School Supt. J. W. Edwards for reinstatement of the school health program was handed to the city council Friday.

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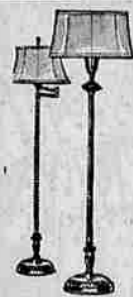
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