

FIVE

Issue 18

Why Difficult Labors?	4
Pen Pals	6
Caffeine Busters	20
Ideas for Familiar Lovers	25





Name: Mercy (of Byron)

Age: 43

Nationality: Swiss

Location: Lithuania

Status: Married

How many children do you have? 9

How long have you been in the Family? 27 years

Q Tell us about one of the most memorable experiences in your life.

It was when I got filled with the Holy Spirit.—Here is how it happened. I was already saved when I met the Family; I became a catacomber at age 15. I had a sweet boyfriend with whom I visited the colony, but he was not saved.

One day I was trying to witness to him over the phone, but I just couldn't find the words. I asked him if I could call him back in a few minutes, and I put down the receiver. I prayed, "Lord, give me the power to witness to him."

Then I felt this power going through me, from my head down to my feet. I picked up the phone and witnessed to him with fire and boldness. (He got saved later on.) At that time I had never read Acts 1:8, but when I later found that verse, I realized that that day on the phone I had been filled with the Holy Spirit. Thank You Jesus!

Q How do you personally manage to get time with the Lord, both to read and hear from Him? Any tips that could help other readers?

For me, the best way to find time for anything is scheduling it. In addition to that, here are some places I try to fit it in.

- I try to redeem the little slots, such as reading one page of *To Jesus with Love* each time I go to the bathroom.

- Nursing is great for Word time.

- I often talk (silently) with the Lord while riding in the car, or I read to the driver, which gives us both Word time (though not while driving in town, which requires more eyes on the lookout on every side).

- Reading for a half-hour before going to sleep is a good way to unwind and relax, and helps me sleep better than if I try to go straight to sleep.

- Having talk time with the Lord when I first wake up is a great way to get some prayer and prophecy time.

- If I'm alone in my room doing JJT or other physical jobs, I talk to the Lord out loud and we have great conversations. Ha!

Well, those are all unscheduled times, so with my scheduled Word times (devotions, kids' devotions and personal quiet time), it adds up to quite a bit. TTL!

Q What three tips would you give to a mother pregnant with her first child?

□ #1: Prepare well for the delivery—doing the suggested exercises, and practicing breathing and pushing. Include your hubby in on it, so he'll be well prepared too. Prepare spiritually as well, claiming the Word and committing every detail of the delivery to the Lord.

#2: Take the time to find a place to have the baby and a midwife/doctor with whom you feel comfortable and at ease. The first birth can set how you view following deliveries and whether you'll look forward to them or dread them.

#3: If possible—either through provisioning or if you can afford a little shopping—try to get at least a few brand new clothes and things for your baby. Secondhand is good, but a few brand-new things add a little feeling of something “special” going on.

Q What were the best and worst things about your pregnancies or childbirths?

□ The best and strangest thing was a little incident that happened during the birth of my ninth child, three years ago. Being forty, I wasn't feeling so strong and asked the Lord for a super easy delivery, and especially an easy “pushing” time—as that's not my favorite part. The verse the Lord gave me for the delivery was: “When

you lie down, you will not be afraid. Yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.” I thought it was an odd verse to claim, because I certainly didn't think I'd sleep. I thought, “Oh, the Lord must want me to claim the first part.” But here's what happened.

As I was lying on the delivery table with the baby's head coming down, the doctor told me to push. I pushed and then felt as though I fell asleep. When I “woke up,” feeling refreshed as if I had woken up from a deep sleep, the baby's head was fully out; one more little push and the whole baby came out. I asked Byron: “What happened? Did I faint? It's like I blanked out for a couple minutes and then the head was completely out.”

“What do you mean?” he replied. “You were looking at me and the doctor told you to push again and you did and the head came out. You didn't faint or anything.”

I was so puzzled but felt great. I believe the Lord fulfilled the verse literally. I lay down and slept, and my sleep was sweet—I even had a very nice dream! But how He managed to make me sleep and dream while to everyone else I was awake and actively giving birth is still a mystery. Praise His name!

The worst thing happened while I was giving

birth to my second child. I was 21, I had had a very good first delivery, and was over-confident and not casting myself fully on the Lord. I neglected my preparation and thought I knew just what to do. A few days before my delivery, I found out the baby was breech. The doctors still let me have her naturally, but the process was slow. Normally the head of the baby adds pressure on the cervix to help it open quicker, but with the baby coming bottom first, this was lacking.

Thus I got stuck at eight cm. dilated, and spent five hours in transition. It was quite painful and, leaning to my own understanding, I asked for a local anesthesia of my womb. When giving me the shot, the doctor missed and hit a nerve in my spine. The pain was horrible for 15 minutes. It was agony!—I was wracked with pain from the missed shot, while still trying to cope with transition contractions every minute. Because the shot had been given too low, I still felt the contractions but only when they peaked—which meant that I didn't feel them coming, but was hit with sudden bursts of pain which were harder to cope with than if I had not had the shot. Thank the Lord, finally the time of birth came.

I still managed to go

home the next day, but I was in pretty bad shape. Thank the Lord, a midwife came every day for 10 days to help with the baby. But the Lord wasn't through with me. I developed an infection due to a piece of placenta still being in my uterus. I got a high fever and fainted one day on the way to the bathroom. Thank God, there was a brother right there who caught me. The midwife put ice on my lower abdomen a few times daily and after a couple of days the piece came out and the infection cleared.

Why did I go through such a difficult time? The Lord showed me that in my case it was due to my self-confidence, not relying on the Lord or being desperate and definite in prayer for the

birth. I tell you, for the seven births after that I never made that mistake again—and they all were easy and without problems. PTL!

Q If you could live your life over again, what one thing would you do differently?

I wouldn't be so strict with my first kids. I feel I lost a lot of opportunities to have fun with them by being too strict and putting the standard too high, which wasn't the Lord's standard but my own misled expectations of them.

Q What is your all-time favorite home remedy?

Vinegar. With apple cider vinegar, I have fought against colds, coughs and bronchitis, stomachaches,

morning (or rather in my case evening) sickness, insect stings, and my daughter's asthma. The proportion to use is 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar and 1 teaspoon of honey in 1 cup of hot (but not boiling) water. *(Eve: If you are able to drink this without the honey, some books say this is preferred health-wise, as it doesn't give the additional sweetening.)* Sip slowly—or, for asthma, bronchitis and coughs, use a teaspoon and take one at a time to loosen phlegm.

With a stronger vinegar solution I got rid of athletes' foot and ringworm. Put it pure on the fungus 2-3 times per day until scaling disappears.

Q How do you fight discouragement or depression?

I don't know if I should share this because it's not

Why difficult labors?

(Jesus:) I have many reasons for allowing difficult and less-than-perfect deliveries. In Mercy's case, I allowed it to teach her a valuable and priceless lesson. She learned to lean and depend on Me and be more fervent in prayer. I did not allow it as a punishment, but in love and tenderness, for I knew that what she stood to gain through it would help to mold her and make her into the woman that she is today.

But not everyone is the same. Sometimes I use difficult labors and deliveries to teach faith and trust, patience and endurance, longsuffering toward others, tenderness of heart and spirit. Other times it is to help the mother appreciate to the full the beautiful reward of the baby I have given her—beauty for ashes, joy for sorrow! There are so many reasons; no two are identical.

So if you don't have a complication-free childbirth, and you wonder why, ask Me to show you the beauties in it. I allow difficult labors and easy labors, but through all of them I am with you, upholding you and strengthening you. I never leave your side or desert you. And through it all, even the difficulties, I bestow upon your life manifold blessings—both physical and spiritual.

very spiritual, but one thing that really helps me is to laugh. Sometimes I read jokes from the pubs or I watch a funny or heart-warming movie. Of course I pray and praise the Lord, but there were times when I felt so low that it was even hard to hear from the Lord, and I just had to get my mind on something else. Somehow laughing brings things into proper perspective again.

Another thing that helps a lot is to remind myself that despair often hits at night when we are tired, and so to remind myself that "joy comes in the morning" and "tomorrow things will be different" is very helpful.

Q What is the biggest thing you have learned in taking care of your children?

To establish good, open communication when they are young that will go on during the difficult teen years. To have fun with them!

Q Have you ever had a supernatural experience, or an encounter with a ghost, spirit or angel? Please describe.

Some years ago we watched "Dances with Wolves," and I felt something moving me in the spirit on behalf of the

American Indians. Then for several days after that, I felt like speaking in tongues and it was very difficult not to. It was an Indian language.

Another time, a young man came to talk to me in the spirit. He told me a lot about himself. I asked who he was and he said: "James Dean." (It was before the Letter "Who Said They're Dead?") I had a hard time believing it and so I prayed that the Lord would confirm it by making me come across an article or documentary about James Dean.

A few days after that, my husband and kids were gone for the afternoon and I thought, "Let's see what's on TV!" (That in itself was very unusual, because I hardly ever watch TV.) When I turned it on, it was the beginning of a documentary about James Dean, confirming the various things he had told me. Wow, it really amazed me! Since then, we talk often and have a lot of fun.

Q What do you most look forward to about Heaven?

Well, like everyone, I want to meet Jesus face to face, but besides that I'm really looking forward to meeting my spirit helper. We have gotten closer over the past couple years and I think it'll be so much fun to meet him There.

Q Do you have a natural beauty, fitness, or nutrition tip you'd like to share with all?

If you want to weigh yourself regularly, once a month is better than weekly. Your weight fluctuates quite a bit during the course of a month due to body changes such as fluid retention during the last days before your period, etc. The best time to weigh yourself is right at the end of your period when the fluid retention is over. During the days just before the period starts, you can weigh up to 1 kg. more, and yet not really have gained anything. So it's best to weigh yourself monthly and always at the same time of your menstrual cycle.

Q How do you get your weekly exercise quota?

My preschooler is a very deep sleeper. So after he falls asleep for his nap, and I take a little quiet time, I put on some fast music and do some aerobics for about 45 minutes. That's in winter. In summer I go swimming in the nearby lake, or take walks.

Q What Letter has had the biggest impact in your life, and why?

No.1 was "Family Discipline Guidelines." I was

so thankful for the specifics of how many swats a child of each age could receive and how discipline should be administered.

No.2 was "Go for the Gold." By giving me the majesty of choice in an area that I always thought was strictly His, the Lord showed me how much love He has and that He would not enforce His will on me, even in the matter of how many children I would have. So instead of begrudgingly yielding to my fate, feeling it was imposed on me, I decided to yield to His choice in the matter. It made a world of difference in my outlook on pregnancies and in my relationship with Him.

Q What things have been an encouragement or source of inspiration for you as a mother or a wife?

The most encouraging thing to me as a mother is my children's gratitude. And as a wife, my husband's

appreciation for the care I give to our children and to him.

Q Do you have anything special you would like to say to your fellow Family mothers?

Dad is right—motherhood is the greatest calling in life and worth giving your very best to. I've done many different things in the Family, from litnessing to FFing, personal witnessing to teaching JETTs, shepherding and more—but I found the greatest fulfillment in being a mother. "There is no greater joy," as John says, "than to see my children walk in truth." (III John 4)

Q For mothers who have a lot of children, or a number of young ones close together: Do you have any lessons, tips, experiences, battles and victories along these lines that might help and encourage others?

When the Lord gives you a lot of kids, you don't have to worry about your life's ministry. *That's your ministry.* If you accept motherhood as your lifelong calling and drop other aspirations, you'll find fulfillment and joy.

Look at it as a career! With that attitude, you'll see how challenging motherhood can be.—And far from being a chore and a bore, it's a fascinating job. You are a teacher, educator, counselor, dietician, Bible teacher, and much more—all rolled in one. You have the ability to have the most outstanding impact in some people's lives (your kids), but also as a sample mom to many others—both in and out of the Family. When I decided that motherhood was my career, then I really went all the way for it. I centered my life around it, read all about it and try to continually improve in any aspects connected to it. And I tell you, I'm thrilled with it. I wouldn't trade it for any other career.

Darlene: Age 53/Aries/married/mother of 6. Interests: reading, dancing, outreach and photography.

• I'd like to be in touch with people near my age. Contact me through e-mail or snail mail at: jeandarlene2@yahoo.com or Darlene Belanger/1282 Louis-Morin/Prevost, Qc/Canada J0R-1T0

Paloma: Age 19

• I'm interested in corresponding with anyone who enjoys dancing, drawing and inventing new things. I'm a Capricorn, Brazilian and I really like dancing. I have a natural talent for art, so you could say I really enjoy that also. Please write in if you are interested. E-mail: guaribe@uol.com.br

Rick: Age 20/Cancer. Interests: future + intellectual and/or spiritual stuff.

• I always wanted to write someone I didn't know and exchange ideas. I like upfront honesty and I'm terribly interested in people. I prefer the opposite sex, but if you can think, write sorta regularly and just be casual.... E-mail: pricklymongoose@yahoo.com

My Weight Loss Victories



seem caught in a vicious cycle from which you see no escape.

I want to share with you how after having three children—my youngest being two years old—I finally lost my “extra” weight. I have yo-yoed from being overweight to mildly chubby during the last seven years. Today, for the first time I weigh as much as I did a decade ago, at 17. I do not look thin; I have a medium curvy build and do not have long limbs. But I actually feel good about myself for the first time in years.

I lost a total of 13 kilos in six months, and have remained at this weight for seven months, and check this out:

1) I eat normally, when I’m hungry.

2) I exercise about 2-3 times a week (busy, busy me).

3) I feel great!

I want to let you in on the secret, pure and simple. I walked for 45 minutes to an hour a day, an average of five times a week. I ate no in-between-meal snacks other than fruit. Third, absolutely no evening nibbling—only the occasional special activity snack. And, last but not least, I made a decision to change my mindset, that it could be

done; I stopped making excuses for myself. These points, along with desperate tears with my personal Trainer (the Lord Himself) is what gave me this chance to evolve into a happier, healthier and thinner me.

One of the side benefits, besides feeling healthier and lighter, is that sex has been much better too, as I’m not constantly thinking about my “fat” this or that. Instead I’ve channeled that energy into something a lot more fun.—You get the general idea, right?

Please don’t give up on the steady yet simple methods; they take a little longer, but they yield lasting and satisfying results. To all of you beautiful mothers: take good care of yourself too, because then you can take even better care of those you love.

- On days when you don’t do any toning or aerobic exercise, take a five-minute walk and follow it with five minutes of stretching. You’ll be amazed at how much better you feel with so little time and effort.

From “Kathy Smith’s Fitness Makeover”

□ Have you had a child, or maybe a few? Maybe some of your children are quite close in age? You love the joy they have brought into your life—and let’s not forget the “challenge” part as well.

But you find you’re the kind of woman that has to deal with gaining a little extra weight during pregnancy, then having a very hard time losing it, even after many months have gone by. Slowly you realize that this has become quite a point of discouragement. You don’t feel good about your body anymore. Maybe you have even tried different diets or sporadic exercise routines that yielded temporary results. But no matter what you try, you

Ringworm Remedies

Question

Do you know any good remedies for ringworm?—Or does the Lord have any counsel about it? My ringworm comes and goes but I never get totally healed. I have it around my tummy so it's not very nice, and I have to wear T-shirts most of the time.

—From Joanna, Brazil

Natural tips for ridding yourself of ringworm

(*Dr. Koger:*) There are many different types of ringworm. There's ringworm of the body, ringworm of the scalp, ringworm of the nails, ringworm of the feet (also called athlete's foot) and ringworm of the groin (also called jock itch, since it mainly affects men). Ringworm is a fungus of the skin, and depending on which part of your body you have the fungus, the specifics of treatment are a little different.

For example, if you have groin ringworm (jock itch), you need to be a little more careful about the treatments you use, because that area is a little more sensitive. If you

have ringworm of the scalp or nails, your treatment can be stronger, because it's a little harder to get rid of these strains of ringworm. But most importantly, you have to ask the Lord for His instruction for you personally, as in all health-related matters.

There are two main courses of action you can take for the cure of ringworm. You can go the medical route, by using anti-fungal creams and powders. There are a lot of these on the market today, and they can be helpful. Or you can choose a more natural route, by using things like tea tree oil or garlic, etc. The natural route may take a little longer. So it really depends on what you have the faith for and what the Lord shows you to do in your particular situation. You can also use a combination of "medical" products and "natural" products.

It's important to keep the area very clean and dry, but be careful not to use harsh soaps. In fact, you may not even need to use soap—just warm water. But if you do use soap, make sure that you wash off the soap residue very carefully. Bacteria and fungi thrive in warm and wet environ-

ments, so try to stay as clean and dry as possible. After having a shower you can even use a hair dryer to dry the affected area of skin, to make sure it's as dry as it can be. Exposing the area—if appropriate—to a little bit of sunlight (but not too much) may also help.

For jock itch—ringworm of the groin—it's best to sleep naked if you can. It's preferable to wear cotton boxer shorts as opposed to briefs (but if you don't have boxers, make sure your briefs are cotton), because they allow more air circulation and keep the area drier. You may want to wash your undergarments separately too, to prevent it from spreading to other parts of your body. No matter where on your body you have ringworm—body, feet, groin or scalp—you should wash your clothes separately from others in the Home, because it's highly contagious.

For the prevention of any type of ringworm, a major key is cleanliness. Washing your hands regularly is a must—especially after playing with pets or doing anything outside where soil or dirt comes in contact with your hands. Changing

your clothes and socks regularly, especially after exercising, is also very important. Keeping your shower clean can help prevent athlete's foot. And avoid sharing towels, hairbrushes and other personal items, because it's not very hygienic, and these types of skin disorders can spread easily.

Ringworm of the body commonly has an incubation period of 4-10 days. Even after the rash or rings disappear, it's best to continue whatever treatment you're using for at least 10 to 14 days, because it helps to prevent it from coming back again, and ensures that your skin will be totally cleansed.

With the exception of ringworm of the scalp and nails, which are a little more tough to get rid of and require more persistence, if you treat this skin fungus faithfully, at least twice a day, you should see the rash or rings disappear within two to three weeks. If it doesn't, you may need to

Ringworm can also be acquired from towels that have not been aired out frequently—for example, those kept in a bathroom without much air circulation and with constant steam from the shower. Airing out articles such as towels is essential, and sunlight is also excellent for killing bacteria.

pray about a different avenue of treatment.

There are stronger medications that are taken orally, some of which have side effects. I wouldn't suggest using these unless you have already tried other methods, and have of course prayed and asked the Lord for His advice on it. If you have a stubborn case, and the remedies you've tried haven't worked, you might want to pray about going to see a health professional. Again, in everything, be sure to ask the Lord what His will is for you, and He won't fail. *(End of message.)*

Ringworm FAQ

From the Association of State and Territorial Directors of Health Promotion and Public Health Education web site

What is ringworm?

Ringworm is a contagious fungus infection that can affect the scalp, the body (particularly the groin), the feet, and the nails. Despite its name, it has nothing to do with worms. The name comes from the characteristic red ring that can appear on an infected person's skin. Other names for ringworm include tinea, dermatophytosis, athlete's foot (ringworm of the feet), and jock itch (ringworm of the groin).

How do people get ringworm? Ringworm is

spread by either direct or indirect contact. People can get ringworm by direct skin-to-skin contact with an infected person or pet. People can also get ringworm indirectly by contact with objects or surfaces that an infected person or pet has touched, such as hats, combs, brushes, bed linens, stuffed animals, telephones, gym mats, and shower stalls. In rare cases, ringworm can be spread by contact with soil.

What are the signs and symptoms of ringworm?

Ringworm of the scalp usually begins as a small pimple that becomes larger, leaving scaly patches of temporary baldness. Infected hairs become brittle and break off easily. Yellowish, crusty areas sometimes develop.

Ringworm of the body shows up as a flat, round patch anywhere on the skin except for the scalp and feet. The groin is a common area of infection (jock itch). As the rash gradually expands, its center clears to produce a ring. More than one patch might appear, and the patches can overlap. The area is sometimes itchy.

Ringworm of the foot is also called athlete's foot. It appears as a scaling or cracking of the skin, especially between the toes.

Ringworm of the nails causes the affected nails to become thicker, discolored,

and brittle, or to become chalky and disintegrate.

Prevention:

- Do not share clothing, towels, hairbrushes or other personal items.
- Keep common-use areas clean.
- Use a floor-and-bath cleaner that contains a fungus-killing (called fungicidal) agent, e.g. common household bleach or cresol.
- Any used or second-hand clothing items should be washed before wearing.

Common sense care and handling tips for ringworm

From the Allina Health System web site

Herbal medicine offers remedies such as goldenseal

• Oatmeal bath for itch relief

Crumble 1 cup of uncooked oatmeal into a bath of lukewarm water as the bath is filling. Soak 15-20 minutes and gently pat the affected area dry so that a thin coating of the oatmeal remains on your skin. (Be careful getting in and out of the tub, as the oatmeal will make the bathtub very slippery.)

Variation: Place the 2 cups of oats in a clean nylon stocking, with the open end closed in a knot. Hang this stocking under the faucet as the bath is filling.

or tea tree oil for topical application. These remedies have anti-fungal properties. (Do not use goldenseal for children under 2.)

Nutrition:

Beta carotene, Vitamins E and C with bioflavonoids promote healing of damaged tissues. Vitamin B complex strengthens the immune system. Include yogurt and other cultured dairy foods. These products contain “good bacteria” which may help control an overgrowth of fungus. Lactobacillus acidophilus and lactobacillus bifidus (supplements) may also be taken. Encourage a low sugar and low fat diet. These substances promote fungal overgrowth.

Taking care:

- Keep your skin moisturized. Avoid harsh, drying soaps. Avoid hot

baths. Apply a hypo-allergenic moisturizing lotion after bathing.

- Try an oatmeal bath to help relieve the itching.

- Try to keep from scratching the lesions—they may become infected. Keep nails short and clean. (If a young child has ringworm and you are concerned that he may scratch the lesions while sleeping—have him wear mittens or socks on his hands to bed.)

- Wash hands regularly so the disease will not spread or become infected.

- Clothes should be washed before the next time they are worn. Avoid constrictive clothing in the area of lesions.

- Don’t share hats, combs, pillows or sheets with anyone else.

- Avoid animals that have this condition. Symptoms are the same.

- Ringworm should be treated as soon as possible. If not treated, ringworm can lead to hair loss, skin infection or deformed nails.
- Ringworm is infectious, so avoid using the same towel or face flannel as someone with the condition.
- Use an antifungal cream, powder or shampoo—available from your pharmacist.
- Don’t scratch the area and keep it dry. Expose the affected area to air as much as possible.

• **Dear Ones**

If you are going to try any of these natural remedies, please make sure to check in with the Lord first, as only He knows what will work best for you. We love you!

Suggested home remedies for ringworm

- Mix one part tea tree oil with one part thyme oil. Apply it twice daily for about 4 weeks and see if the fungal infection improves.

- Try to avoid excess sugar, which seems to allow the fungus to proliferate.

- Cut open a lemon and rub the area with the juice. Repeat several times daily.

- Grind some black cumin seeds with a little vinegar to a smooth paste. Apply on affected parts.

- Rub a couple of crushed garlic cloves on the affected areas several times a day. (This process is further helped by taking garlic regularly in the diet.)

- Make a paste from ground nutmeg and a little water. Apply on affected parts.

- Express fresh papaya leaf juice and apply frequently on the affected areas.

- Applied apple cider vinegar can also help to cure ringworm.

Tea tree oil

This Australian plant may have some anti-fungal action. At the University of Rochester School of Medicine in New York, researchers studied 117 people with fungal toenail infections,



a condition related to jock itch and athlete's foot, but more difficult to treat. The participants applied either a standard drug (clotrimazole) or tea tree oil at 100% strength twice a day for six months. Both treatments produced equally good results. Be aware though, as there is increasing incidence (about 10%-20%) of sensitivity (contact allergy) to tea tree oil.

• Tea tree oil is 11 to 13 times more powerful than Carbolic acid (Phenol) for killing bacteria and fungi, yet non-caustic (not burning or stinging) to the skin.

Garlic



Contains anti-fungal compounds. Several studies show that its juice is effective against fungal infections. Crush several cloves into a small amount of water or vegetable oil and let the mixture sit overnight. Apply with a cotton swab once or twice a day. The drawback with this treatment is that you may wind up smelling of garlic, and it may cause irritant dermatitis.

Compiled from the Web sites: Modern Mamma Online; Infinite eSolutions; Prevention's Healthy Solutions

Praying in unusual circumstances

From Chloe, WS

It's such a blessing to have the Lord's direct counsel and personal Words for us, but sometimes it's difficult to hear these when you're in public or in a busy setting, such as surrounded by people talking, right in the middle of hearing counsel from a doctor, etc. Yet it's in just these circumstances that we sometimes need the Lord's help the most.

My mate and I were encouraged with how the Lord came through for us in a couple situations when it would ordinarily be difficult to hear His voice. Once we were on a trip away from our Home, in order for my husband to have a needed operation. We were to have the pre-operation examination, and in the ten-day gap between that and the operation, we were to visit relatives.

The tests and examinations went well, however we found that there was another problem we had known of but had not received a medical diagnosis for. Late in the afternoon, the day before we were to leave to see relatives, one doctor

described a second operation (or "procedure," as they termed it) which my mate needed, and which could also possibly be done when we returned for the first operation.

We received this news at the doctor's office and then went out onto the busy street. We would have to make the request to the surgeon and his staff within an hour if we wanted to go through with this second operation. We needed to hear from the Lord desperately, and as it was so late in the day we didn't even have time to find a quiet place to do so. We were far from those we would normally counsel with (our shepherds and loved ones in our Home).

So we went into a restaurant—a small one, with people chattering all around—and just closed our eyes in prayer in the middle of that busy scene. We asked the Lord to block everything out, got out our little notebook, asked Him what to do and recorded what He said. It was no light matter to undergo this second operation. We wanted to

be sure it was necessary, and we knew it would be a strain on my mate's body to have both done within a short time. Still, here we were in a country where good medical help was available at a very reasonable price, with a surgeon we knew.

In a short message the Lord said we should go ahead with the operation, so we called up the surgeon to line up the appointment. Later in a more quiet setting, we received more promises from the Lord about this second operation, but we were so thankful for the Lord's on-the-spot counsel right when we needed it. The second operation was quite difficult, so it was a blessing to have His Words to stand on—and He kept all His promises faithfully.

A year or so later, again the Lord helped us to hear from Him in a busy System setting when we needed to make a business decision regarding funds my mother had donated. In this case, we had explained to the employee helping us that we were Christians, involved in missionary

work, and so when we began working with him we said we'd have to pray about which way to go with our decision and we'd return the next day. He respected that. Then later when another factor came up, we asked him if we could have a few minutes alone to ask the Lord about the new develop-

ments. He said sure, and left us alone in his office for five minutes or so. Everything worked out real well, thanks to the Lord's help, and it was a testimony to this dear man. He ended up telling us that he felt we were people of God, and asking for prayer for his life and marriage. So we saw our need to hear

from the Lord was a testimony to him.

Often we are hesitant to tell people that we need to stop and pray, but these situations made me want to do it more. It was such a blessing to have the Lord's immediate counsel, and it turned out to be a beautiful witness as well.

Lazy afternoon

Question

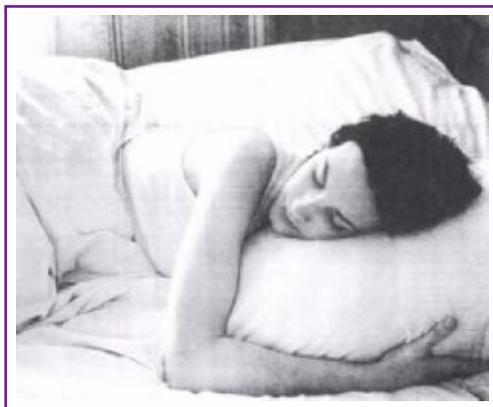
Why am I so sleepy and drowsy after lunch? It makes it hard to concentrate.

By C. Claiborne Ray, NY Times news service

A: There are three likely explanations, based on recent research.

First, what do you eat—and drink? A lunch high in carbohydrates, especially if no protein is eaten along with bread and milk, is likely to produce calm to the point of sleepiness, because of the complex role of carbohydrates in shifting the balance of neurotransmitters in the brain. Conversely, some protein contributes to alertness.

Second, as siesta-loving societies have long recognized, sleep researchers have found that there is an inborn readiness in human beings to take a mid-afternoon nap. Volunteers isolated from all evidence of



day and night and left to set their own sleep patterns tended to settle into one long sleep session and a session of one or two hours about 12 hours after the middle of the main period.

Third, you may be sleep-deprived. While the average adult needs eight to nine hours of sleep a night, most get only seven, and many get six or less during the workweek. People permitted to sleep as much as they choose sleep 10.3 hours out of every 24.

An afternoon nap may be just what nature ordered to restore alertness.

THIRTEEN-TIME VETERAN SHARES THE KNOW!

From Sara (of John), Germany

Throughout my 13 pregnancies I have never felt nauseous or had morning sickness—for which I am very thankful. Up to my seventh child I was pretty much able to continue with my duties in the Home right up to the due date. I guess you could say it was “easy” for me to have a kid.

Then, sometime during my eighth pregnancy, I had an abdominal wall tear—one of the muscles that lift and support the womb ripped in the middle. Now this sounds awful, but please be assured that life goes on, and it is mostly just painful during the last trimester of pregnancy and the first few weeks after giving birth. Since there was very little to keep the baby “up,” I often experienced strong side pains that would wake me and keep me up at night.

When the side pains occurred during the day I’d just sit down and wait for them to pass, whenever possible. I also stopped laying on my back; the pressure seemed to be too much on my ligaments, and if I did I’d end up unable to move at all and in a lot of pain. Praise the Lord; He helped me adjust, and it was

just one of those things I needed to learn to cope with.

When pregnant with my tenth child, another little inconvenience started occurring. I am not sure if the same torn tummy muscle was to blame, but sometime during the beginning of the ninth month, the baby dropped quite a bit, to where I could feel its little head almost between my legs. Thus walking became very difficult, and it was basically the end of my helping out in the Home, aside from teaching the small ones a couple of hours in the morning and being around for “spiritual” guidance. I also had a lot of waking hours at night, probably because the baby had so much room in my womb to move around and kick, and promptly made use of the opportunity when I’d try to lie down and rest!

It’s difficult to describe all the things that happen with my body in the last weeks before delivery, and I certainly don’t want to sound negative. But maybe there is another mom somewhere who tends to get discouraged, and this may be of help. Mainly I needed to learn to let go and let the Lord—often in the form of my husband and loving

helpers—take control of my household, the children and many Home affairs. I had to make a schedule for myself with equal amounts of horizontal times, sitting and walking around, so as not to overdo in any of them. I asked the people in my Home not to tell me news about the latest “all Homes messages” or any troubles before going to bed, as otherwise I would get emotionally disturbed, which would just add to the baby moving about even more.

The doctors I have seen during my pregnancies are of course concerned, because I am not so young anymore and my uterus has carried 13 babies. But while I naturally have to go slower and take care of myself, doctors sometimes seem to be overly concerned—mainly because they never had a patient with that many kids and only know from theory what could happen, what to watch out for, etc. I am so thankful for my faith in Jesus, because I know that He would not have given me another baby if He didn’t think I—and that is my body and spirit—would be able to take it.

I still have to fight fear of childbirth. You might

think, “Oh my, she’s had so many kids, she should know the ropes by now!” Well, the thing I do know is that the Lord has seen me through every single time—but every time differently, so I guess I am always tempted to wonder and fret. In a way I would like to have the victory without the battle, and sometimes dream of one day just waking up and bingo, the baby is right next to me. Ha! It hasn’t happened yet.

My little booklet “Strength in Childbirth” has been a tremendous strength for me, as well as sections from the MOP like “Faith and Trust,” “Trials and Tribulations” and “Comfort,” and now also *From Jesus With Love*. Then there are the tapes “A Labor of Love” and “When You Need Him Most,” which I include in my daily Word diet during the last months of pregnancy.

With my last babies, about a month before the due date I wrote down specific prayer requests for the brethren in my Home to pray for, and the Lord honored them each time. The requests on my list were: how I wanted my labor to start (my contractions aren’t very strong anymore, so it’s difficult to tell sometimes when I’m in labor); for a healthy baby, and not too heavy so I would have the strength to push him out; against any

complications, of course; and for an easy and quick delivery in the Lord’s time. Also that I would not have to have an episiotomy, as I recover much faster without one. Something very big on my heart is also that my husband can be with me right from the beginning of the birth.

The Lord has been so good to me and usually answers these prayers, amazing me every time again with how faithful He is, when my faith often fails and I fret and worry. All glory to Him!

While it was fairly easy for me to have my first kids and maybe I took it for granted, my later pregnancies have taught me a whole lot of lessons that I would not want to have missed.

I’ve realized what a special mission the Lord has for me—I’m not having “just another kid”; every baby is His. I am carrying the Lord’s child, and He is more than interested in having a healthy child and mom.

The Lord has taught me so many lessons of faith and trust, from believing Him that He had indeed entrusted us with another child, to having the faith that He would again see me through to victory. To be honest, I am never as desperate in my walk with the Lord as I am in my last months of pregnancy, which has brought me so much closer to my Lover and Husband. I love you lots and pray for all you precious moms and mummies-to-be!

GOT THE BABY BLUES?

From Tina (of Ben), Zimbabwe

We’ve all heard of postpartum depression, or “baby blues.” I’m sure most mothers have had their worries or fears about if and when it will hit. My problem was that I got so overly concerned about not getting it that I left no emotional room for the gradual adjustments that having your first baby will tend to make in your life.

You can take care of someone else’s baby all day, but there’s always that point when you can send them back to their mom with the “I think he’s hungry” line.

So far, I’ve made it through eight months of having a baby full-time and learning to eat, brush my teeth and type with one hand. I love taking care of her, as she’s a great kid, though you do get to the

point where you freak out or figure that pursuing your career—be it a secretary, performing artist, cook, teacher or whatever—really takes second place. That is, if you get time for it at all!

Up till recently I'd been avoiding facing that fact for awhile, fearing that it was just those "baby blues" and that I should just get over it. My passion has always been to learn—whether dancing, language arts, literature, or most recently computers. I wondered if the Lord expected me to "grow up and move on," and be content to give up anything other than baby/

toddler care.

I prayed about it (finally!) and I came across the story that we've all heard a million times about the Lord giving the talents to His stewards. Any talents we have, of course, are given to us, right? So thinking that we're supposed to go and bury them would be saying the Lord's a pretty slack business manager!

Right now my major focus is definitely my darling pooch, but it's comforting to know that the Lord has many uses for our other talents somewhere down the road, if we'll just let Him.

MOMS:

Have any of you had experiences with postpartum depression? If you have any tips, experiences or other lessons to share on the subject, please write them in to share with all in an upcoming feature, DV. We love you!

QUEEN MOTHERS

Three cheers to MaryAnn—a beautiful queen mother of ten and grandmom of one, who daily lays down her life for her kids. Statistics show that she has spent 103 months (or nearly nine years) of her adult life pregnant. We will not include the years she has spent nursing, and one will never know just how many diapers she has had to change and wash.

Yes, this dear sacrificial mother has lived in India for the last 20 years, where she has raised all her children—of course with the help of her reliable husband. But raising kids is not her only ministry; she has also been an active outreach person. Hey, with one billion people in India it's hard not to want to be out on the field all day!

So I have to tell you, this mom is one busy lady who I know has a real big reward waiting for her up There. Mom, you are the best! We love you!

Love, Victoria



Let's Seize the Day!

—Tips for both sexes on how to understand women!

From Gabriella, Austria

After reading my menopause comments that were printed in *Eve #8*, pg.17, I wondered if some women might now feel bad about asking for prayer or sharing their menopause trials. Therefore I want to balance out the picture a little more and hopefully shed some more light on the "me" subject, for the sake of my dear sisters who are soldiers in the battle with me.

It's true, I did experience a let-up in my symptoms when I stopped complaining so much. But about two months later, the symptoms returned in full force with some extras thrown in. The hot flashes went from #2 on my "burner" to a generous #9. They are now my daily and nightly companions. I decided to time them and discovered that they come usually once an hour—some more intense, some less. They are always preceded by what feels like little electrical shocks. It's kind of like the feeling you have when your foot falls

asleep and then wakes up, except that it's all over my body.

At this point, if anything even slightly disturbing happens like a pot boiling over or my husband correcting the dog, I am ashamed to confess that my emotions triple. Thank the Lord for a calm husband. It gets to him at times, but he's pretty patient, he doesn't make me feel like the devil incarnate and reminds me that he still loves me. He frequently tells me the positive things he likes about me, so when I'm being a stinker I hold on to his words of encouragement for dear life.

It's very hard for someone who isn't going through menopause to understand someone who is, but here's an example that may help. Remember how wild your hormones were during puberty? Your emotions were going up and down and all around. It seemed like no one understood you, but it was a time when you wanted to be understood more than anything else. Menopause is similar. Just multiply

puberty times four, subtract the hopeful outlook of a better figure and you'll be getting close to putting yourself in our shoes. Of course, not everyone has such extreme symptoms as I have, but maybe this will encourage those who do.

Let me add a little background here to make things more understandable. A few years ago when my menopause set in, I had no clue what was happening to me. One symptom that hit me suddenly and unexpectedly was having difficulty remembering things.—And I mean from one minute to the next. I didn't sleep well at night, so this added to it. The tiredness brought on depression and I was quite lonely as my husband was away a lot. In the hope of sparing others the pain and discouragement that I went through at that time, I want to bring a few things to light. One of the things that happens in a woman's body is that everything is slowing down and shifting gears. This throws the hormones way off kilter in some cases. Hormones

even control our memory, and the short-term memory is very affected.

Thank the Lord it doesn't last forever—only till the body readjusts. But it can be very frustrating. For example, one morning I poured myself two cups of coffee, one right after the other, not remembering that I'd already poured the first one! That same day I locked the keys in the van and then

others) don't know it's "normal." It was even scary to me. I couldn't explain myself even to myself, much less to anyone else. Thank the Lord my hormones have sorted themselves out a bit, and at least now I know that I'm not the first one this has ever happened to. This change of life happens to all women at my age.

One other aspect is that we feel bad that we're not feeling good. Ha! A deep truth if you dig a little. I'm a fairly cheerful person and I like cheering others up, so I felt doubly sad that at times I wasn't happy enough to cheer up others. It's such a new experience. Our emotions are strange to us. Our thoughts can be way out there. We wonder if everyone is wondering about us and we hope that no one notices (much, at least). At the same time we're praying that relief will come and quick!

You're doing a balancing act, trying to sort out your feelings and your thoughts, but nothing makes much sense. Then, if you're in a Home with younger girls, you can be tempted to feel like the frog princess. Their radiant beauty tends to make you feel like hiding in a closet (one without a mirror). It's not easy when you see yourself seemingly morphing back into a

caterpillar after years of thinking of yourself as a thoughtful, energetic, attractive butterfly. Sort of like, "Is that *me*, John?"

This is the time when you need some solid reassurance from the men around you. And men, don't worry that the "older lady" is going to jump on you for paying her a compliment. Everyone of any age or gender needs to hear that there is something about them worth appreciating. "Withhold not good," the Bible says, "to those who need it." And a middle-aged woman usually needs to hear it as much as a teenager—and on certain days, even more. It is definitely in your power to help make our transition easier to bear.

The bottom line is this: If you have a sister or a wife that is going through her menopause years, here's a little tip and something that all women need. All we need is to feel that someone truly cares, that we aren't considered "weird" or a permanent "case." If you see her looking sad, just put your arm around her and say, "Hey, it's okay. I have my difficult days, too. Everything is going to be alright." Keep doing this.

Men are famous for saying that they can't understand women, that we're a mystery. But that's only because we are a



Everyone of any age or gender needs to hear that there is something about them worth appreciating.



in the afternoon I locked myself out of the house. I felt like a lunatic. How could anyone relate to that? How could I explain that to anyone? I was afraid to. Now I can laugh about it, but it wasn't funny at all then.

Now for the good news. All of these experiences made me start going slower in every area of my life—definitely a plus for me. But all of this can be very discouraging when you (and

mystery to ourselves a lot of the time. So if your wife or girlfriend is having “one of those days,” the worst thing you can do is preach at her or react emotionally yourself. This is throwing gasoline on the fire.

What you do is this: Take her in your arms (she may resist if her feelings are hurt, but keep trying—she really wants it) and say, “I understand. Everything is going to be alright.” Even if you don’t understand, it doesn’t matter. She doesn’t understand either, but she wants that stability. Now the key is, you have to do this sincerely or she won’t swallow it. If you are sincere, she’ll calm down almost immediately or really soon thereafter. Keep holding her. Add an appropriate (but not condescending!) gentle pat and let her sob it out. Once

she feels that someone understands, she’ll be alright and back to her cheerful self in no time, more thankful for you than ever. Try it, boys! Bite the bullet and hang on to your patience, and your life will go a lot smoother.

Last of all, for my dear sweet sisters in battle, I want to say that there *is* a light at the end of this tunnel. It’s difficult to go through—no doubt about it—but there are rewards that I am just now seeing—rewards that are far more attractive to me now than a youthful face or a nice figure. Of course we feel we need to look that way to get affection from the men, but I have gotten so much closer to that wonderful Sweet-heart up There that I sometimes feel like I’m drunk! Ha!

I’m not just saying this to make you feel good. It’s

true. If you thought I was wacky before, here’s the clincher: I’m looking forward to getting older. I’m 51, but I’m excited about turning 55, then 60. I figure that I had 50 years to get the “basics” down and now I’m really going to rock ‘n’ roll! I’ve got a whole wondrous future ahead of me and I’m excited about that. I’ve survived puberty and adulthood and now I’m surviving menopause.

As each day passes, I feel so strongly that a wonderful time is ahead, a sort of “mini-millennium” of my life. So I refuse to see myself in any other light but His. I love you, my wonderful sisters! Let’s march forward armed with all the wisdom and love and charm that our years have bestowed upon us, and let us seize the day!



Jesus speaking:

Yes, My loves!—Never forget that the future is as bright as My promises to you! I have given many promises for you, My Brides, within My written Word, and I have many more that I would also give to each of you personally. So come to Me, hear from Me, listen to My Words and lie within My arms, so that you may know with full and complete certainty the fullness and glory of My plan for your future, and that you may rest in the full assurance that the best is truly yet to come. I love you!

[Caffeine Busters]

Deliverance from Caffeine Addiction

From Steven Willing, India

[Ever] since I was a little boy I have been strongly addicted to drinking tea—excessively so when I was in the System. I always had difficulty with the two-cup rule in the Family. I felt sleepy a lot, and sometimes went over my quota.

Recently I've had a slipped disk in my back, which has needed a lot of rest to be healed. I found it difficult to rest when I was drinking tea, as it made me want to be active. So I had to cut down, by making my tea very diluted.

Eventually I had to start cutting out tea altogether. One or two days passed and I was having a trial about it but I had to continue in

Dad speaking:

God bless you, son! You've proven that it's possible to break strong addictions—even to caffeine. Caffeine has a different effect on everyone, and it seems that you do better with less of it in your system. This little miracle in your life is a result of you following the Lord's nudges in the spirit, and it's really paid off. It was a fight, but you won. You're now happier, calmer, and sleep better too. PTL!

order to stay inactive as much as possible. In fact, I started sleeping a lot as a reaction to this, and on the days that I wasn't sleepy I would feel horrible. I couldn't remember how long it took to get un-addicted. At first I thought it was supposed to be one week but I still had adverse affects after that. Then I thought it should be two weeks, but after two weeks I was still feeling sleepy and feeling

bad.

Three weeks passed and then four and I was still having trials. However, the desire to drink tea or coffee was lessening, and I wasn't feeling so sleepy. Only these strange feelings remained. So I asked the Lord and He told me to pray for these feelings to be removed. I did so, and they went away immediately!

Now I rarely desire tea or coffee, and it's very easy to resist. I feel glad I don't have to be a slave to the habit of constantly yearning for caffeine, and can live happily and calmly without it and without feeling sleepy. My back's doing a lot better also, although it still needs complete healing. Please pray for it. Thanks!

From Misty, Mama's Home:

I've found it helpful when wanting to "kick" caffeine, to substitute coffee or tea with juices—even one lemon squeezed in a cup of hot water is very refreshing and gives you pep. It also gives you something hot to drink for those who like and are used to drinking hot drinks regularly.—And another tip is that upping your exercise and activity level really helps too!

Watching Caffeine Intake? Look Beyond Coffee

By Phil Lempert, *Los Angeles Times*

[Do] you need an extra jolt in the morning to get going? Does a quick, mid-afternoon pick-me-up seem necessary to get you through the rest of the day? If so, you probably turn to coffee.

But it's the caffeine that perks you up, not the coffee. An alkaloid found in the leaves, seeds or fruits of more than 60 plants, caffeine stimulates the central nervous system, cardiac muscles and respiratory system. Just 50 to 100 milligrams (less than the amount found in one cup of coffee) can produce a temporary increase in mental clarity and energy.

Caffeine can also open breathing passages, improve muscular coordination for

routine tasks such as typing, and increase muscle strength and endurance even as it increases the body's ability to burn fat as fuel.

But there are risks as well as benefits. Although the Food and Drug Administration classifies it as "generally recognized as safe," caffeine is mildly addictive. Excessive amounts can produce irritability, fatigue, headaches, heart palpitations, feelings of anxiety and sleeplessness. And it can be found, often unexpectedly, in a variety of common foods.

Especially of concern is the amount of caffeine that children and young adults are consuming. Two Cokes a day, a cup of coffee-flavored yogurt or coffee ice cream and a couple of chocolate chip cookies could bring a child's caffeine intake to over 200 milligrams—possibly

starting them on the way to a caffeine addiction.

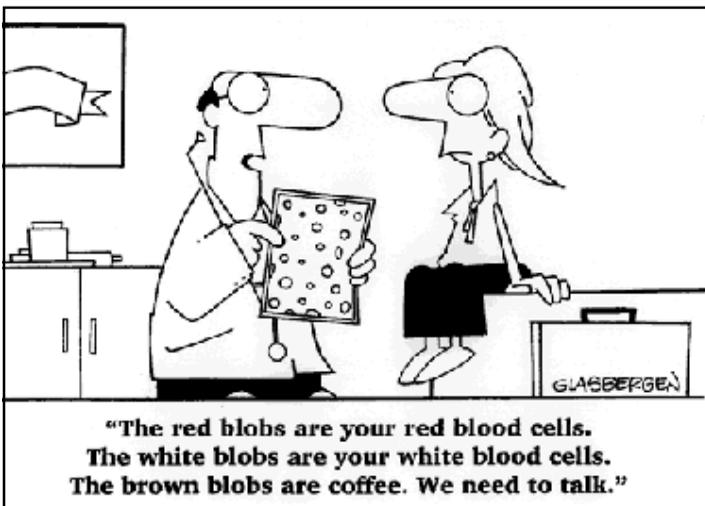
"While soft drink companies contend that they add caffeine to their products for flavor," Jacobsen says, "it's a great way to get [kids] hooked on the product."

Dr. Harvey Wolinsky, clinical professor of medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York, says sensitivity to caffeine varies, but that an adult can exhibit symptoms of caffeine dependence or habituation with regular use of 350 milligrams a day.

Caffeine is a diuretic that relaxes the smooth muscle in the colon and some reports show that consuming more than 100 milligrams a day effects a loss of potassium, magnesium, zinc, B vitamins and washes out Vitamin C. It also accelerates fluid loss through increased urination.

A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported that drinking the equivalent of one to three cups of coffee a day can increase the risk of miscarriage by 30%. This research reinforces the FDA's warning that pregnant women should consume caffeine in moderation, usually recommended to be less than 200 milligrams a day.

Other studies have found that caffeine interferes with the absorption of vitamins and minerals, especially calcium and iron.



Quitting Caffeine

Q: I'm trying to quit caffeine, but don't even know if that's possible. I'm also nervous about all the withdrawal symptoms I've heard about, like headaches and irritability. Do you think I can do it?

By Allan Spreen, MD

A: You have a great shot at it if the desire is there. The first thing is that you must be very careful to avoid swings in your blood sugar, which cause chemical cravings to increase tremendously. Try to snack instead of having a few big meals. Avoid sugar at all

costs! Use fresh nuts, seeds, cheese, veggies (complex carbohydrates), but avoid refined flour of all sorts. Whole-grain breads and pastas are okay, if you chew them well and eat them slowly.

There are tons of vitamins that help, but a quickie regimen would be a good multi-vitamin, one to two grams (1 gram=1000mg) three times per day or more of Vitamin C (it's a major anti-toxin, anti-stress nutrient, but a lot is needed), and chromium, 200mcg/day.

The first few days will be the worst, as very real withdrawal symptoms can haunt you. (Amazing how dependent we can become on a drug ... almost scary.)

For the energy drain that is not uncommon, consider a good ginseng supplement. Your adrenal glands have been tortured by the caffeine drug, and will need support when you remove their "fix." Another good addendum would be extra amounts of the B vitamin pantothenic acid, which in high doses (250-500 milligrams/day), can augment adrenal function.

Caffeine Withdrawal: Procedures and Symptoms

By Alex Lopez-Ortiz, Web reprint

[How] *to cut caffeine intake?*

Most people report a very good success ratio by cutting down caffeine intake at the rate of ½ cup of coffee a day. This is known as caffeine fading. Alternatively, you might try reducing coffee intake in discreet steps of two cups of coffee less per week.

The best way to proceed is to consume caffeine regularly for a week, while

keeping a precise log of the times and amounts of caffeine intake (remember that chocolate, tea, soda beverages and many headache pills contain caffeine as well as coffee).

At the end of the week, proceed to reduce your coffee intake at the rate recommended above. Remember to have substitutes available for drinking: if you are not going to have a hot cup of coffee at a certain time, you might consider having herbal tea—but not decaf, since that has also been shown to be addictive.

Some other people quit

cold turkey. Withdrawal symptoms are quite nasty this way but they can usually be countered with lots of sleep and exercise.

What are the symptoms of caffeine withdrawal? Regular caffeine consumption reduces sensitivity to caffeine. When caffeine intake is reduced, the body becomes oversensitive to adenosine. In response to this over-sensitiveness, blood pressure drops dramatically, causing an excess of blood in the head (though not necessarily on the brain), leading to a headache.

This headache, well-

known among coffee drinkers, usually lasts from one to five days, and can be alleviated with analgesics such as aspirin. It is also alleviated with caffeine intake (in fact, several analgesics contain caffeine dosages).

Often, people who are reducing caffeine intake report being irritable, unable to work, nervous,

restless, and feeling sleepy, as well as having a headache. In extreme cases, nausea and vomiting has also been reported.

Kicking the Coffee Habit

From India (of Gary), USA

[About] two weeks ago I decided I didn't like the idea of being "addicted to caffeine" and needing that boost to be effective. I started drinking coffee after our 3rd child was weaned about three years ago, and then gave it up again when I got pregnant with #4. However, for the last year now after weaning #4 I resumed the coffee habit just to be able to get anything done! I felt more effective and that I could think more clearly and move faster, etc.

Anyway, lately I was thinking about how dependant I have gotten on my morning and afternoon "fixes" (though I never took it very strong, only about a quarter-cup of coffee and the rest milk), so I decided to kick the habit—or at least see how it went for a while.

I must say that I don't wake up as quickly; it takes me about a half-hour to really feel "awake," but I have been sleeping more soundly at night, getting

real quality sleep, and I haven't been having as many headaches—which I think were stress related, as I felt nervous and anxious a lot due to the coffee. One other blessing of not drinking coffee is that I've noticed I have more tolerance for things. I don't get uptight as easily, especially with my kids—as it takes patience to work with four little kids, clean the house, do the laundry, etc. Anyway, I just thought I'd write this testimony in case it might help anyone else in the same situation, facing the same decision of "kicking the coffee habit."

Love the Tea But Hate the Caffeine?

Magazine reprint

[If] you like tea but don't want any caffeine, simply steep the tea in boiling water for 30 seconds. Remove the tea from your teapot or cup and throw away the liquid. Then, using the same tea, make another cup or pot, allowing it to steep for a full minute or more. Since most caffeine is released in hot water during the first 30 seconds, you're now left with lots of antioxidants but practically no caffeine!

From an SGA Female:

One tip that has helped me when cutting caffeine from my diet was to not make excuses for myself. Sometimes we get into the rut of saying that our schedule during a certain period warrants additional caffeine in order to keep us functional. But making excuses like that doesn't help get us over our addiction; rather they keep us fooled into believing that we cannot live without caffeine, which is not true. Also, if we think of different times being "special" or "unusual," soon you find that most of your life is either "special" or "unusual" because it doesn't require you to take action against your addiction. I had that mindset myself when a year ago I realized that I was seriously addicted to coffee just to see me through the day. My method was to go cold turkey, but that is not recommended for everyone, heh!

From Bowes and Church's Food values of portions commonly used, by Anna De Planter Bowes.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| • Cup of coffee | 90-150mg |
| • Instant coffee | 60-80mg |
| • Tea | 30-70mg |
| • Cola | 30-45mg |
| • Small chocolate bar | 30mg |

Caffeine Victory!

From Josh W. (26, of Lydia), Ukraine

I know there are a lot of folks who can't imagine their morning without a nice cup of coffee!—And not long ago, I was one of those people. I mean, there's nothing wrong with a cup of morning coffee, but I got to the point where I literally couldn't drag myself out of bed if I didn't

have it. Even though I seldom had a third cup during the day, it had grown into addiction! I couldn't make it through the day without another cup of coffee in the afternoon. But still I felt really tired most of the time, I'd say as a result of it. (I also have kidney problems.)

I realized that I needed to make some changes or things would just get worse. The Lord showed me that I

should stop drinking coffee altogether, otherwise it would destroy my health. He also showed me that I should start exercising. Now that was a hard saying, because I had never exercised regularly before and I thought I didn't need it. But the Lord showed me that it would really improve my health and make me feel better.

So I started attending a little fitness place near our house. And yes, I quit drinking coffee! I know it was the Lord, because I'm sure I wasn't able to do it myself. It was all by His grace! Now I can testify that after I've started exercising (I try to do it four times a week) I feel so much better!

I hope my testimony will encourage others who may have similar problems. I'm not saying that everyone should quit drinking coffee, but we should take good care of ourselves, as we are the temple of the Holy Ghost.



**Despite the surge protector,
Marty still shorted out on too much coffee.**

20

twenty

Ideas For Familiar Lovers

Web reprint

Marriage shouldn't mean monotony. Think back to when you first met each other. The first few dates were one long, delicious foreplay session. This is what you should aim to recapture.

Sadly, the wild lust that characterizes new relationships disappears all too quickly, and sex gets relegated to certain places and times. Sometimes this is not only sensible but necessary. If you've just started a new job, or if you're struggling with family problems, the last thing you're thinking about is whether the underwear you put on this morning is sexy enough for your lover to peel off tonight.

But the rest of the time—when you're simply coping with the usual hiccups and routines of daily life—give sex the priority it deserves. Read our 20 seductive ideas for familiar lovers for fun and easy ways to keep that lovin' feeling.

Excerpted from "Hot Sex: How to Do It," by Tracey Cox. c. 1998 by Tracey Cox.

1. Combine Romance With Eroticism:

You feel great when your beloved gives you flowers; why not return the favor? Now turn that loving gesture into a sexy one. Enclose a note explaining in great detail exactly what your partner did to deserve it. (No, not washing the car, rather the to-die-for oral sex he or she gave you last week. Got it?) Your postscript can detail what you're aching to do that night.

2. Have a Bed Picnic:

Set up chilled wine and an ice bucket, foods you can eat with your fingers (fresh fruit, chocolates); have a sexy movie playing on the VCR.

3. Become a Bookworm:

Try out sex books. You don't have to read them cover to cover—just dip inside once in a while to keep things fresh and imaginative.

4. Once Isn't Always Enough:

There's a lot of hype about women having more than one orgasm, but men like second helpings, too. Have sex in the morning on the weekend, then drag your partner back to bed an hour later.

Sex and Romance

5. Get Wet:

Water does wonderful things: it makes us weightless and flexible and ensures every part of both of you tastes and smells wonderful. We wouldn't recommend having intercourse in water (it dries up lubrication and forcing water up the vagina isn't recommended), but the bathtub, a spa, a swimming pool, or the sea are great places to start off.

6. Give a Little:

Don't give all of yourself each time you make love. Use this philosophy, and instead of each sex session running the gauntlet from kissing to intercourse, concentrate on one activity at a time: kissing-and-fondling-only sessions, oral sex without intercourse, and intercourse without oral sex.

7. Flirt With Each Other:

Even if you've been together years! Experts say flirting sends natural amphetamines and endorphins surging through the body, stimulating an instant emotional "high" not unlike orgasm. Pretend you've just met him (or her) and act as you did at the beginning. Dress sexily, look your partner straight in the eye when they talk to you, and be aware of your body when you move in front of them.

8. Send Sexy Notes:

The written word is extremely powerful. Plant notes everywhere (preferably not just before your partner's mother comes to visit). In the drawer, or in his briefcase or her makeup bag. Each one describes parts of your partner you find sooooo sexy. Or write notes telling him or her ten things you'd love to do to them right that second.

9. Go Without Underwear:

This is one steamy idea even the least courageous of females can pull off. All you need to do is dress up for an evening out—and forget to put on your panties. You can either tell him about it, or "accidentally" show him.

10. Remember Kissing?

It's what you used to do when you first met. Many couples find that kissing stops once the relationship gets going or dwindles to a quick prelude before getting down to business. A long, passionate kiss can do more to turn both of you on than putting your hands straight down the front of your lover's trousers. It's more intimate than intercourse.

11. Have Sex With Your Clothes On:

Feel each other through your clothing, put your leg in between her thighs and let her gyrate against it.

12. Make the Move:

If your partner is always the one to initiate sex, the message you're sending is this: "I do it to please you, not because I want to." This leaves both of you feeling cheated. The person who initiates sex feels sexier because they're taking control and giving themselves power. Be the boss by suggesting sex and taking the lead role during lovemaking as well. Let your partner lie back while you do all the work.

13. Indulge the Senses:

Great sex comes from indulging all the senses, and silky sheets are one of a million ways to do it. Appeal to and vary one sense every time you make love and you'll never be bored again. Use music to stimulate his sense of hearing; talk to her while you're having sex, give a blow-by-blow description of how she's making you feel. Ignite his sense of smell by burning oils, wearing perfume, or letting him enjoy the naturally sweet scent your body emits when you're aroused.

14. Keep Your Eyes Open:

Watch what's going on when you have sex, look into your lover's face, watch your genitals moving, etc. Stimulate the sense of sight, not just touch.

15. Be Anonymous:

Remember those silly masks you bought for the dress-up affair you both went to? Dig them out, put them on, laugh yourself stupid for five minutes, then have sex. Let your fantasies run wild and pretend you don't know each other.

16. Plan a Sexy Weekend:

More than one lackluster sex life has been saved by a spicy weekend bounding about on a king-size bed. Take some time off to disappear into the sunset for a weekend neither of you will forget in a hurry.

17. Dress for Success:

He adores red lipstick, black stockings, and high heels? You've got no excuse—any little black number can be spiced up with these elements. Make a night of it by playing with your hair, playing with him under the table. She melts when you walk around the house in nothing but a pair of blue jeans, top button of the fly temptingly undone? Unless it's below freezing temperatures, indulge her on weekends.

18. Learn to Love Oral Sex:

Don't do it just to please him or her, revel in it. Crave it, concentrate, make noises to show you're enjoying it as much as they are. Switch from intercourse to oral and back again for sensational contrasts.

19. If You're Excited, Show It:

The biggest turn-on of all is seeing how much you're exciting your partner. If they're driving you wild, show it—better still, say so.

20. Make a Pact to Try One New Thing Every Two Weeks:

If you're too shy to launch into our other suggestions, start off simple. Take a bath together, give each other foot massages, take off her top or his shirt without using your hands. Once you feel more comfortable, you can move into things like making love to them with their hands tied behind their back and masturbating in front of each other. Get him to lick your fingers while you're masturbating yourself—you'll feel less embarrassed and both of you will find it a turn-on.

A Note From Jesus:

My Brides, as you read the following tribute to love, please remember that this much and more is My love for you. Human love is a wonderful thing, but above and beyond the flesh is the love of the spirit, and that is available to each and every one of you, all day, every day, anytime of the day or night. I love you!

Why We Men Love Women

Author Unknown

1. They always smell good, even if it's just shampoo.
2. The way their heads always find the right spot on our shoulder.
3. How cute they look when they're asleep.
4. The ease in which they fit into our arms.
5. The way they kiss you and all of a sudden everything is right in the world.
6. How cute they are when they eat.
7. The way they take hours to get dressed but the end result makes it all worthwhile.
8. Because they are always warm, even when it's minus 30 outside.
9. The way they look good, no matter what they wear.
10. The way they fish for compliments, even though you both know that you think she's the most beautiful thing on this earth.
11. How cute they are when they argue.
12. The way her hand always finds yours.
13. The way they smile.
14. The way you feel when you hear her call your name after you just had a big fight.
15. The way they kiss when you do something nice for them.
16. The way they kiss you when you say "I love you."
17. Actually... just the way they kiss you!
18. The way they fall into your arms when they cry.
19. Then the way they apologize for crying over something silly.
20. The way they say "I miss you."
21. The way you miss them.
22. The way their tears make you want to change the world so that it doesn't hurt her anymore.

Yet regardless if you love them, don't love them, wish they would go away, know that you couldn't live without them... it matters not. Because once in your life, whatever she was to the world, she becomes everything to you. When you look her in the eyes, traveling to the depths of her soul and you say a million things without trace of a sound, you know that your own life is inevitably consumed within the rhythmic beatings of her very heart.

We love women for a million reasons; no paper would do it justice. It is not a thing of the mind, but of the heart. A feeling. Only felt.

Cover photo: Love, Thailand

Suggested reading for ages 16 and up.

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