



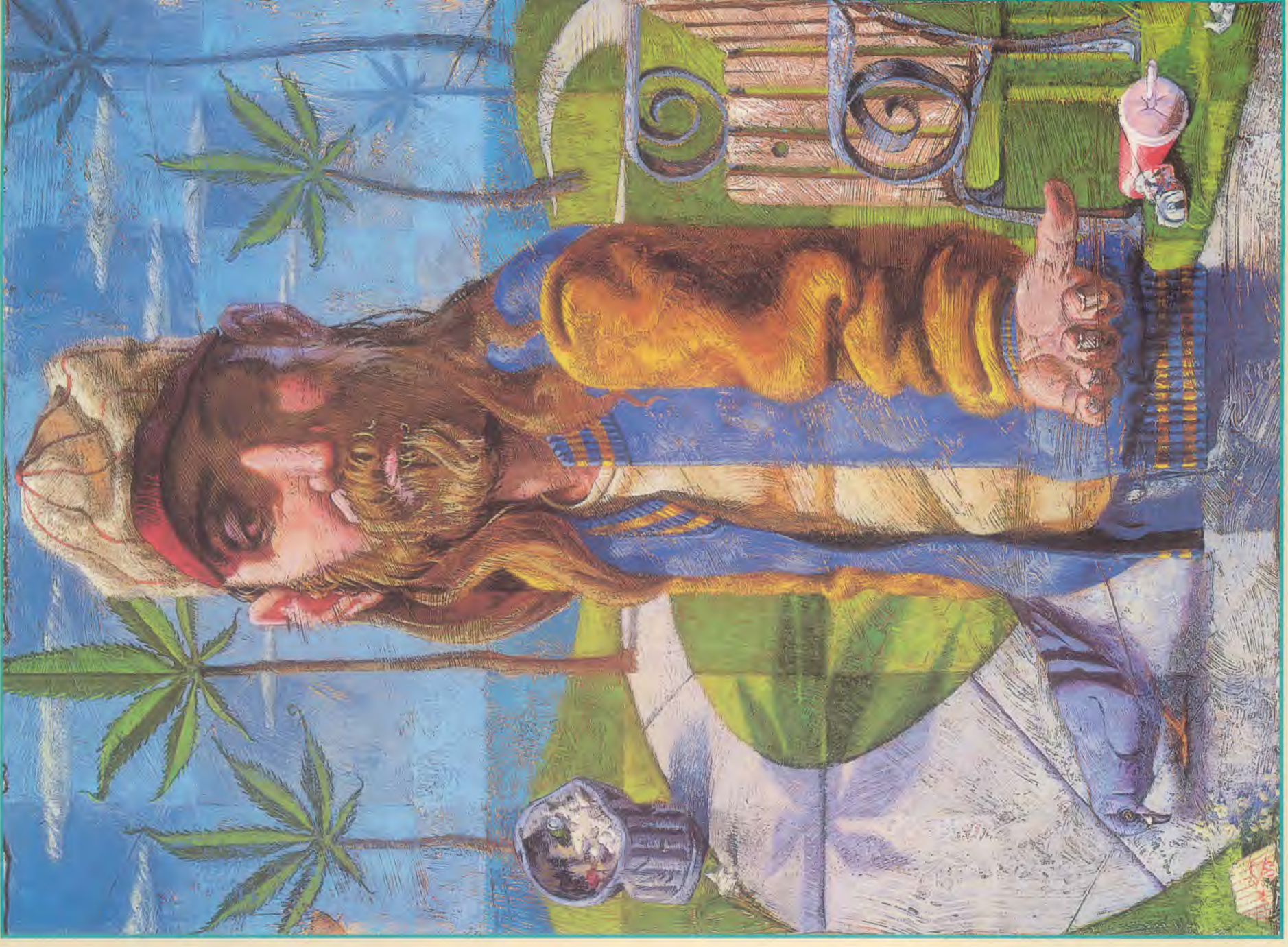
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A WEIGHTY PROBLEM

North American teens are
heavy into junk food, p. 18



by Sara L. Smith

"It sounds like my brother," said Alison, turning pale.

We don't see too many homeless people in our neck of suburbia, but the man in Cedar Creek Park fit the stereotype with his collection of plastic shopping bags, his shoulder-length hair hanging in greasy strings beneath a filthy baseball cap, and his dirty old letter jacket.

Letter jacket—wait a minute. In spite of its shabbiness, the sky-blue color with *Parkview Panthers* printed in gold letters grabbed my attention. I had one almost like it.

I guess I stared a little too long, for the man fixed his vague gray eyes on me. "Hey . . . you gotta . . . joint?" His voice had a strange

THE LOOSE S E R

toneless quality.

"No," I said.

"Gotta . . . cigarette?"

I shook my head, and he pulled a battered pack from one of his pockets and lit up. I noticed the name *Brian* and the year *1992* stitched across the upper left side of the jacket.

"Did you graduate from Parkview High School?" I blurted.

"Huh?" He inhaled deeply. "Yeah."

Even under the cloud of smoke I could smell his sour body odor. I turned to leave.

"Gotta . . . dollar?"

I walked away, pretending I hadn't heard, but the incident festered in my mind like a splinter.

The next day I set my lunch tray next to my friend Kevin's in the school cafeteria. "Hey, Kev, when did your brother Jeff graduate from Parkview?"

"Ninety-three. Why?"

"I saw this homeless guy in the park yesterday—a real burnout. He had on a '92 Parkview jacket."

"Probably stolen," Kevin suggested. "But you can look at Jeff's yearbooks."

I saw the homeless man in the same place a few days later. He was pacing in front of a bench and muttering to himself. I circled around to avoid him. But later I made a special trip to the convenience store and bought a carton of orange juice and some granola bars.

When I returned to the park, the man was rummaging in the sand-filled ashtray. I watched with a feeling of growing revulsion as

he fished out a half-smoked cigarette and lit it.

"Brian? I brought you something to eat." I held up the small sack.

He looked at me—or rather *through* me. "Gotta . . . joint?"

"No!" I snapped. "Food."

There was no expression on his face, and he made no move to take the sack.

"I'll just put it on the bench," I said finally.

Brian whirled around, his back to me. "Don't . . . mess with me!" he shouted into the woods. "Get away!"

No one was there. Chills ran down my back. What was wrong with this guy?

I headed for Kevin's house, and we hunted out the 1992 yearbook in his brother's old bedroom. Searching the senior class, I located a Brian James McAllister.

"I don't believe it!" I exclaimed.

Kevin looked over my shoulder. "That's the guy?"

"Yeah. I just barely recognized him." The handsome, clean-cut boy in the photograph did have the same physical features as the homeless man in the park.

"Track team captain," Kevin read from the list of accolades. "Class vice president. National Merit scholar."

I felt a little sick—almost as though I'd just learned that Brian James McAllister had died. "How did a National Merit scholar turn into a derelict?" I asked aloud. Sure, the guy smoked pot, but marijuana couldn't mess up your mind *that* much. Could it?

"I wonder if he's Alison McAllister's brother," Kevin mused.

"You've got to be kidding. Alison's one of the smartest people in school."

"So was he," Kevin said quietly.

Researchers have found a link between marijuana and schizophrenia . . . I could tell he didn't recognize his own sister.

I gazed at Brian's picture again. "There might be a resemblance," I said. "Maybe I'll ask her."

It took me a couple days to find a chance to speak to Alison. The school hallway was hardly private, but there were so many other conversations going on that I figured no one would notice ours.

I came right to the point. "Do you have a brother named Brian?"

Alison's serious gray eyes widened. "Yes. Do you know where he is?"

I told her about the man with the Parkview jacket in Cedar Creek Park.

"It sounds like my brother," said Alison, turning pale. "He's . . . very ill."

"Maybe you should call your parents," I suggested.

She shook her head. "They both work in the city. I'll go over after school and make sure it's Brian."

"I'll come with you," I said.

She managed a smile. "Thanks."

An hour later we headed down the path into the park. A chorus of birds sounded a warning of our coming in the trees above us.

"Brian was always my hero when we were younger," Alison spoke suddenly. "I thought he could do anything—but I was wrong."

"What do you mean?"

"Brian smoked pot all through high school," Alison said. "He said it was harmless."

"Every time I've seen Brian he's asked me for a joint," I told her.

"My brother is an addict," Alison said. "But he's also mentally ill. He has schizophrenia."

"What's that?"

"It's a brain disease," she told me. "People with schizophrenia see and hear things that aren't there and believe stuff that isn't real. Sometimes they forget things and have trouble talking because they can't keep their thoughts together."

"Shouldn't he be in a mental hospital?" I asked.

"Brian has been hospitalized many times," Alison explained. "The mentally ill aren't locked away like they used to be, but a lot of times they live on the streets."

"Isn't there any cure for schizophrenia?"

Alison shook her head. "Brian has medicine that controls the symptoms—when he remembers to take it. The pot makes him worse. Sometimes he gets violent. Marijuana made him mentally ill in the first place, and now he's too impaired to stop using it."

"I knew the hard stuff could make you insane," I protested, "but not pot."

"It's true," Alison said. "Researchers have found a link between marijuana use and schizophrenia. I just hope it doesn't take the rest of the world 50 years to learn that," she added bitterly. "It's too late for my brother."

The path made a sharp turn, and up ahead I saw the shabby figure. Alison gasped, and her eyes filled with tears. "Brian," she called softly.

I could tell he didn't recognize his own sister. He looked at her with empty eyes. "Gotta . . . joint?"



YO! JENNY

Listen up, teens. Say Hi to Jennifer Acklam, a Miss Texas Coed and America's Homecoming Queen. Jenny wants to hear from you. Send your letters to us at **LISTEN** magazine, P.O. Box 859, Hagerstown, MD 21741, and we'll pass them on to her for the column.

My friend Molly and I have been best friends for three years. Just in the past month Molly has started to change. She wears black fingernail polish, black lipstick, and has dyed her hair purple. Kids at school think she's flipped out. They've even started rumors that Molly is on drugs. I know that she isn't. I'm so uncomfortable being around her at school now, because of the way she looks. I know you shouldn't judge a book by its cover,

but am I wrong to feel this way just based on her "new look"?

You're right, we shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but in this case, the "cover" probably indicates something going on inside the "book." Molly's sudden change has been caused by something—a rebellion toward her parents or teachers, a drastic attempt to get attention, or maybe even a rejection of the person she thinks she is. Something has caused Molly to want to

adopt this "new look"—so different and contrary to her old self. Try talking to Molly in a gentle, caring manner. Ask her what's been happening in her life, at home, with her classes, and even with the other friends she has. If Molly won't open up about anything troubling her, see if you can talk to her parents. Molly seems to be begging for someone to notice and care about her. She needs your friendship now more than ever. It's important that Molly resolve the problems that are causing her sudden transformation. Once those issues and problems are resolved, Molly will more than likely return to her same old self. Meanwhile, write her little notes of praise and encouragement and hang in there for her. She needs you!

My brother plays football and likes to work out with weights. He is in really good physical shape. He has been doing this for about two years. In the past six months he has really bulked up. I've noticed though that also during the past six months, while he has been bulking up, he's had really bad mood swings. Sometimes he even loses his temper with my mom and sister and starts hitting them. It seems as though he will get into these moods for no reason at all. It's scary when this happens. I'm afraid he's taking drugs of some kind to try to get stronger. What should I do?

What you're describing does sound pretty scary. Some guys in sports think that certain drugs (especially steroids) will help them become more muscular and stronger. Steroids can be very damaging to the body and the mind. Terrible mood swings and drastic personality changes can occur with the use of steroids. Many times persons on steroids will have a "roid rage," which is exactly what you are describing. They become wild and uncontrollable. Your brother needs help

immediately. Your parents need to be the first ones you talk to about your suspicions. Hopefully they will check with a medical professional and proceed from there. Your brother may be so intent on building himself up physically that he is not even aware of what is happening to his mind. Someone needs to step in as soon as possible before he permanently destroys both his body and his mind.

I feel drugs are the worst problem in America. Kids today have lots of stress, and they need help growing up. I used to be a drug addict until I almost killed myself in a car accident after my high school graduation. That woke me up to start living right. Now I'm trying to help others by starting a group that meets every day after school. I talk to them about the stresses and problems in our lives. I'm trying to convince other kids not to make the same mistakes I made, because I almost died. I hope you'll encourage other kids to start groups like mine in their schools. Brandon.

Your letter brightened my whole day, and I'm so glad to be able to share your story with our other readers. I hope others will follow in your footsteps and commit themselves to helping each other and their schools to understand that drugs never make lives better. Drugs do one thing only—*destroy!* Drugs destroy lives, futures, relationships, and whole families. Drug pushers and users try to claim drugs turn you on, but they don't tell the most important second part—*drugs will always turn on you!* Good luck with your group meetings and efforts to stop drug use. Please write and let me know how everything is going with your group. I sincerely hope other readers will be inspired by your mission and will seek the help of teachers or sponsors to get similar groups started at their schools.

LOVE, INFATUATION, OR SOMETHING YOU ATE?

ARTICLE BY GREG TRINE

"You have to know someone to be in love with them. If you don't know the person, then it's not love. It's that simple," says the author. Well, maybe not that simple . . .

The shaking started in my toes, then worked its way to my ankles, then my knees. My insides turned to Jell-O. When I tried to speak, nothing came out.

My friend Lee stared at me. "What is it? An earthquake?"

"Da . . . Da . . . Da . . ." I stuttered, pointing with my eyes as Debbie walked by.

"Oh, Debbie Meltzer."

"Yeah, Debbie Patricia Meltzer," I said with a sigh, letting her name linger on my lips as long as possible.

"I understand completely."

What did he mean, he understood? He didn't understand anything. Did he know that I had become obsessed with things like deodorant lately, and that I was considering using aftershave? And how could I even discuss the countless hours I'd spent in front of the mirror scanning for pimples?

I was in love. Or was I?

I mean, I actually got a

pain in my stomach when she walked by. What was that? Was it love, or was it infatuation? Or was it the guacamole I'd just eaten in the school cafeteria? After all, it was pretty spicy.

I'm happy to report that I did survive Debbie Meltzer (though not without a major heartache). No, I never dated her. Believe it or not, I never even

I recommend saying something like, "How are you? My name is _____. Get the idea?"



talked to her. But along the way I learned a thing or two about love and infatuation. That food issue is still a mystery, however. Not that I eat guacamole often enough to find out!

Here is what I learned:

You have to know someone to be in love with them. If you don't know the person, then it is not love. It's that simple. Well, maybe it's not *that* simple. You still have to deal with the pain in your gut.

While trying to sort out your feelings, you may find it helpful to ask yourself a few questions:

1. ☐ How well do I really know this person?
2. ☐ Is there guacamole anywhere in the vicinity?

Once you've examined this, you can do one of two things. First, if you realize you don't know this individual as well as you wish, don't be afraid to strike up a conversation. I recommend saying something like "Hello." Direct and to the point. Here's another winner. "How are you? My name is _____."

Get the idea?

In other words, a whole lot of talking has to take place in order to move from infatuation to love. In math terminology it may look like this:

Infatuation plus conversation (and lots of it) may eventually equal love.

Or . . .

Infatuation plus conversation (in large doses) can also equal "What in the world did I ever see in —?" And this may not be a bad thing. You may discover you have nothing in common and want to move on. Again, conversation is the key.


The second thing you may have to do is stay away from spicy food.

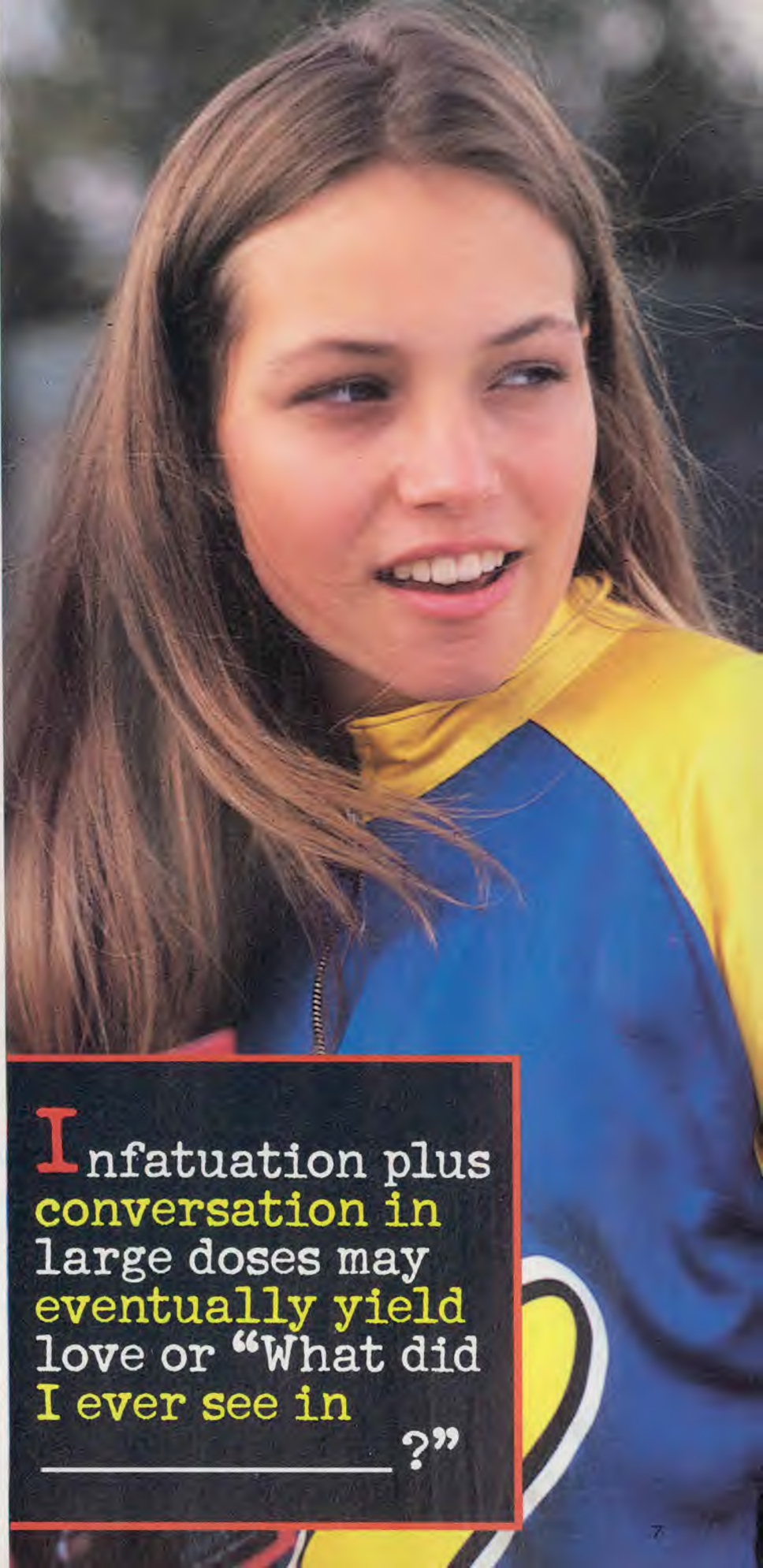
And now let me throw a wrench into the works. Put love and infatuation out of your mind. You know what they are. You know how to distinguish between the two, but put that information aside. It will be there when you need it. Concentrate on your verbal communication. Again, that "Hello" stuff works wonders. Who knows? Maybe I would have gotten to know Debbie if I had simply opened my big mouth and said "Hi" or "How are you?" or "Pass the guacamole."

* * * * *

I just returned from my high school reunion. Guess who was there? Yep, you guessed it. Debbie Meltzer in the flesh. And being the confident, mature guy that I am, I walked (no, I ambled; I moseyed; I may even have strutted) right up to her; didn't stutter hardly at all. I looked her in the eye and said that one word that has been on the tip of my tongue ever since high school. "Hello," I said, smiling away, hoping my after-shave was wafting in her direction.

She smiled back. "Do I know you?"

Well, it's a start. 



Infatuation plus
conversation in
large doses may
eventually yield
love or "What did
I ever see in
_____?"



C H O I C E S

MUNCHIE MADNESS

K A Y D . R I Z Z O

Do you ever get the munchie madness? Maybe you keep a stash of salty treats in your backpack? Or perhaps you pig out on fatty french fries or crave chocolate, chocolate, **chocolate!**

Take the following quiz to discover your food fetishes and pick up on some ways to make your favorite foods work for you.

● 1. The first thing you put on your burger is

- ☐ a. mayo
- ☐ b. ketchup

● 2. When given a choice, you'd choose

- ☐ a. a Snickers bar

☐ b. Gummy Bears

● 3. When you crave something salty, you choose

- ☐ a. a bag of potato chips
- ☐ b. a dill pickle

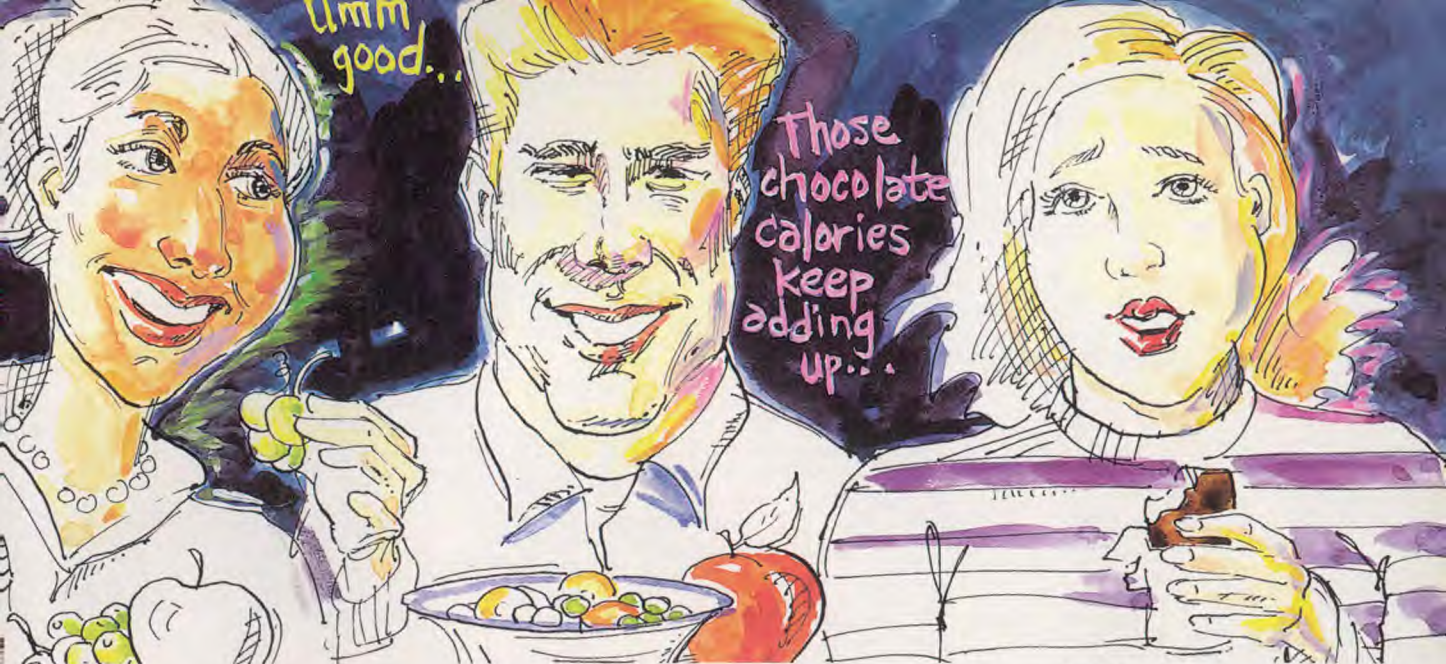
● 4. For a side order with your sandwich and drink,

your choice would be

- ☐ a. fries
- ☐ b. a piece of fruit

● 5. When you think ice cream, it's

- ☐ a. yes!
- ☐ b. sometimes, but only



certain flavors

● **6. The worst-case scenario would be**

- ☐ a. to eat a meal without following it with dessert
- ☐ b. to eat a meal without a saltshaker present

● **7. On a cold winter night you would choose**

- ☐ a. a cup of hot chocolate
- ☐ b. a bowl of tomato soup

● **8. At a party at which two desserts are being served, you choose**

- ☐ a. fat-free devil's food cake with chocolate frosting
- ☐ b. angel food cake with fresh strawberries

● **9. Your favorite pasta sauce is**

- ☐ a. Alfredo sauce (cream)
- ☐ b. marinara sauce (tomato)

● **10. While watching TV, you would most likely snack on**

- ☐ a. chips and dip
- ☐ b. fat-free cookies

chose b's, you did good. If you eat reasonable amounts, your weight should be in the "OK zone."

For all you a buffs who crave either salt or sugar, here are a few suggestions that could help you out:

☐ **1.** While ketchup does contain some sugar and salt, mayo is simply loaded with fat. But you can have your mayo and good health too by satisfying your craving for its creamy taste by using low-fat mayo or, better yet, fat-free.

☐ **2.** Regardless of what the TV ads say about the virtues of a Snickers bar, the Gummy Bears are fat-free and chewy, and it takes only a few to satisfy your sweet cravings. If you must have chocolate, eat a miniature bar *slowly*. The key word is *slowly*.

☐ **3.** As the Lay's company potato chip slogan goes: "Betcha can't eat just one." You can eat just one pickle, and your salt craving will diminish, but try that with chips, and you're in trouble.

☐ **4.** A no-brainer here. Having fruit for dessert can become a good habit in a few short weeks.

☐ **5.** Everyone likes ice cream now and then. This one piles on the pounds. For a switch, try frozen low-fat yogurt or fat-free ice cream.

☐ **6.** Believe it or not, neither salt

nor sugar is bad for you when taken alone, but not too many people would willingly swallow a handful of either. Cutting down on foods that contain high amounts of sugar and choosing not to add salt at the table are good habits that will give your good health a boost.

☐ **7.** Surprise! Surprise! Both the soup and the hot chocolate are good if you choose a no-sugar-added cocoa or a low-fat soup.

☐ **8.** Go with the angel food cake; it's a fat-free and cholesterol-free dessert. Remember, fat-free doesn't mean calorie-free.

☐ **9.** Alfredo sauce is made with heavy cream and cheese—a high-calorie combination. Tomato sauce would be your better bet here.

☐ **10.** Surprise on this one. A few fat-free cookies will be much better for you than the chips and dip, mainly because of the quantity of chips eaten. A better choice would be to dip fresh vegetables in a fat-free dressing.

Remember that salt, sugar, and fatty foods in *small* quantities are not a problem for your body to process. It does become a problem when you pig out on any of the three, or worse yet, on all three at the same time. Making food choices that limit the three "baddies" is a good bet for any avid eater. ▀

ANSWERS

Add up your answers. If your answers are mostly a's, you're in the "danger zone." Your cravings could lead you to health problems and weight problems. If you



GOOD KID . . . GOOD FAMILY . . . IT HAPPENED TO HIM.

Joey never thought it would happen to him. How could it?

He was, after all, a straight-A student and a starting defensive end on the high school football team.

Wyoming every summer. It happens to kids who hang out on city streets, not kids who tool around town in their Mustang convertibles.

These were the ones who became crackheads, crack addicts. Not kids like Joey.

But think again. Kids like Joey *do* become crack addicts. Joey knows, because he did.

It happened so fast. He tried it just a few times, just to be cool, just to show his friends that he wasn't scared. Besides, no drug could be that addicting so quickly.

ammonia with water, crack is dried and then "cut" into small chunks, known in the vernacular as "rocks," which are sold in vials for as little as \$10, and then smoked.

According to a survey taken a few years ago, an estimated 3 million Americans have tried crack, and more than 300,000 are current users, which means, essentially, that they are addicts.

"It goes straight to the head," says one former addict. "It's immediate speed. It feels like the top of your head is going to blow off."

CRACK-UP

His older brother was a scientist at NASA. His older sister was in her third year at law school and already had been hired by one of the biggest law firms in Ohio. His father was one of the town's leading businesspeople, a building contractor who even had a street named after him. And his mom was a former beauty queen turned writer, whose works had been printed in leading magazines, including *Reader's Digest*.

In short, Joey was a good kid from a good family . . . so how could it have happened to—of all people—him? It happens to kids who live in ramshackle shanties in inner cities, not in six-bedroom, 8,000-square-foot houses with a tennis court and pool; it happens to kids whose dads never come home, not kids whose dads take them white-water rafting in

But that's exactly what happened to Joey, even though things like that aren't supposed to happen to kids like him.

Crack: it has become one of the cheapest and most accessible hard drugs in all of America. It's one of the most addicting as well, and though it's now off the front page of newspapers and magazines, it's still in the life of hundreds of thousands of Americans, people of all ages, races, and genders. Even people like Joey.

Despite all the "glamour" surrounding it, crack itself is really just a customized version of its powder and onetime popular cousin, cocaine. The product of a chemical reaction in which a form of cocaine is converted into a "freebase" alkaloid by a process that mixes ordinary cocaine with a solution of baking soda and

Obviously some people like that feeling, which, however intense, lasts only a few minutes. Because it's smoked, it's absorbed through the lungs and reaches the brain in seconds, triggering a powerful euphoria. Users frequently experience a few incredibly intense minutes of irrepressible optimism, happiness, a sensation of incredible well-being. In short, it makes people feel really good, which is the reason, of course, they use.

But as always with drugs, it doesn't last, and in the case of crack it doesn't last too long, just a few minutes, before the party is over and users crash, often so low that they immediately want another hit. And then another, and then another . . . and before long, they're addicted.

The results can be devastating

A R T I C L E B Y C L I F F G O L D S T E I N

in more ways than one.

"Crack," warns the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, "has caused a surge in admissions to drug treatment programs and a sharp increase in syphilis and other sexually transmitted diseases (since it is often traded for sex by users with nothing else to spend). It's also a leading cause of infant addiction in babies born to crack-dependent mothers. And new research shows that crack may be the shortest shortcut around to one of the hardest drug habits of all to break."

Crack is in the class of drugs called the sympathomimetics—that is, it mimics what is known as the sympathetic system in the human body, that part known as the arousal system. Though the physiology of crack can get complicated, what it basically does is cause a stimulation of brain chemicals (particularly a neurotransmitter called dopamine) that are involved in what we call "pleasure." In other words, when we feel happy, a chemical reaction takes place in our brain. What crack does is cause it to take place in a very fast, concentrated, and intense manner. It releases, in a quick and powerful way, the chemicals in the brain that make us feel good.

At the same time, while we're feeling artificially happy, crack use speeds up most bodily systems. The heart beats faster, pupils dilate, blood vessels enlarge, breathing increases, and there's lots of sweating. What's really bad is that under certain conditions, crack users are putting their hearts at risk. Crack use, warned Dr. Nicholas Masi, who treats crack addiction, "throws the entire cardiovascular system into turmoil. Your blood vessels rapidly constrict. You're a key candidate for respiratory failure."

Also, however good crack makes people feel, there's the



**HEART RISK . . .
CRACK USE,"
SAYS DR. MASI,
"THROWS THE
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FOR RESPIRATORY
FAILURE."**

slight problem of the physical effects of so potent a stimulant in the body. It's kind of like putting rocket fuel in your car: you might get a fast start, but when you stop, the engine's not going to be in real good shape. Besides causing heart and respiratory problems, crack use damages the immune function, causes a disturbance of vision, and brings about prolonged fatigue, weight loss, malnutrition, headache, and dehydration.

But what crack does to the body is minor compared to what it can do to the mind. Here's where the price becomes really steep. Though while under the influence of crack people are frequently happy and optimistic, the high doesn't last long, and what happens afterward is no fun. Crack users become exceedingly depressed, often subject to extreme and rapid mood swings that cause them to do things that get them in trouble. As with many other drugs, the "high" state depletes the body's energy. Since the body tries to preserve equilibrium, the "high" soon is little more than a normal state for a nonuser. In this sad situation the user has to get "high" to escape

the terrifying "low" between use. Crack users often experience states of delusion, paranoia, and hallucinations. The more they use the drug, the worse it gets.

"Delusions," stated a report from England on crack use, "are the most marked during and up to a day after a crack-using session. The effects thereafter reduce in intensity; however, the beliefs and emotional features of the state can resonate after a prolonged period of cessation and use and can reemerge with great intensity after a number of months."

In other words, crack can mess up your brain even after you stop using it.

What happens is that because of crack use, the brain triggers neurotransmitters and causes pleasure, but then isn't able to reuse those transmitters. It's like going on a spending spree, only to wake up one day and find the account empty. Without these chemicals in their brains, users find themselves in a pathetic mental state.

"We think these physical changes correspond to the psychological changes of the crash—depression, irritability, paranoia, and craving," says Dr. Jeffrey Rosecan.

This drug holds on to people and won't let go like few others. A few years ago the news stories told of a mother, a crack addict, who was willing to sell her baby in order to get some crack.

Now, Joey had all the money he needed for the drug, which was why he wasn't stealing and selling things. Otherwise, to get the drug he would have stolen or sold anything he could have gotten his hands on. Yes, even a good kid like him. Poor Joey. I hope he gets smart and gets out while he can. ▀



LISTENING

FEEDBACK FROM READERS



Smiles

When I see you,
I see a smile
that brightens your face
and brings joy to my day.
When I see you,
I see your eyes;
the pain flowing out
in streaks down your face.
When I see you,
I see something
that I wish
I had.
When I see you,
I see just
a little
of me.

Marion L. Smedley, 17
Phoenix, Arizona

Spring

The season of spring
makes me think about my dreams.
I listen to the gentle breeze
as it seeps through the window cracks,
sounding like bees.
I see the sun peeking out,
motioning me to get on with my life and
go about.

Stacey Baker, 16
Hebron, Nebraska

Looking Out My Window . . .

Looking out my window, I see the glowing sun.
It shines down on me,
sending warm rays on my face and tingling my spine.
The lush green grass creeps out of the melting snow,
eager for spring.

Mark Ranieri, 13
Syracuse, New York

Friends

Who is there when you feel sad?
Who is there when you feel lonely?
Who is there when you have troubles?
Friends.
They are there anytime you need them,
whether good days or bad.
They are at your side whenever you need them.
If you need a hug, or just a little talk,
they will be there.
If you are having trouble in school,
they are always there
to give a helping hand.
They will be there whenever
you need them.

Katie Snyder, 14
Syracuse, New York

JANEEN
RENAGHAN

PICKING UP

"Speed" is full of false promises and comes with a price tag too high to pay...

JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL, ENGLISH CLASS, WEDNESDAY, 8:21 A.M.

Angela shifts down in her seat, resting her neck on the gummy plastic back of the chair. She closes her eyes and hopes that Mr. Ellis doesn't notice her. Her nearsighted teacher usually calls on the people with the highest heads—the biggest hair, the longest necks. Angela wiggles down a little farther, calculating her height against the width of the boy who sits in front of her. Luckily he takes up a lot of space and is the perfect cover.

"Angie, look down," whispers Kira, as she pushes a piece of paper across the floor with the toe of her sneaker. Kira, Angela's best friend, likes the low-risk thrill of passing notes. In especially desperate situations she writes important messages on her shoelaces.

Angela is now slumped so low she is practically under her desk. She opens her eyes just long enough to read Kira's scribble: *Meet me by my locker for a jolt!*

* * *

Kira's locker is at the end of the long hall that connects a row of Jackson High School classrooms to the deserted between-meals cafeteria. It was out of the way, an ideal meeting place.

"So are you going to pinch me or something?" Angela asks, peering into Kira's locker. "Or set me up with your cousin, Rashid? He's the only guy who has the power to jolt me out of this stupor."

"Not quite," Kira smirks. "Give me your hand." She drops a small plastic bag full of orange pills into Angela's palm. "Take a couple. You'll be amazed at how much energy they give you."

"What are they?" Angela asks, pushing her hair behind her ears, as if to get a better look at the pills.

"Oranges. Or if you want to get pharmaceutical,

amphetamines. They wake you up, like caffeine. And they're great if you want to lose weight. I've been using them for a week, and I've already lost five pounds."

"Wow, that's cool," Angela rolls one of the pills between her fingers. "You know, I've been having a lot of trouble staying awake lately. School's a nightmare—I can barely make it to third period."

"Yeah, you're a zombie. But now you'll be able to pay attention to Mr. Ellis's lectures." Kira pauses. "Actually, I don't know if they work *that* well," she adds and smiles.

"Five pounds, huh?" Angela repeats, impressed.

"Yup. Just let me know when you need more. But don't tell anyone."

Angela nods and, without hesitating any more than she would between sips of soda, swallows four of the pills.

The rest of the day Angela feels as if nothing is moving fast enough, as if her heart is beating faster than she can walk, talk, or write.

MATH CLASS, 10:15 A.M.

Ms. Weyland passes out a pop quiz. Sitting erect in her chair, Angela glances at the questions and laughs. "This is sooooo easy," she announces, too loudly. A couple girls look over their shoulders, but it isn't until Angela breaks her sixth pencil point that she notices everyone, including Ms. Weyland, staring at her as though she had taped the quiz to her forehead. "Perhaps you should use an erasable pen, Angela," says the teacher. "Relax. You have plenty of time to finish."

Angela does finish. She is finished a half hour before everyone else. As she leaves the room, Ms. Weyland picks up her red marking pen to grade the quiz. Then, with a puzzled look, she puts it back down: there is nothing to grade. Angela has

scratched out or erased every answer on the test, leaving her teacher with little more than a zealous mess of lead smudges and eraser shavings.

SCHOOL HALLWAY, THURSDAY, 8:00 A.M.

The school bell rings and Angela jumps, her backpack falling off her shoulder. *The pills*, she thinks. Angela whips around in a kind of clumsy pirouette to see if anyone is watching. A cramping nausea rolls across her stomach, forcing her to kneel on the ground. Her head throbs, and her mouth is caked with a white, sour film. All of a sudden she is exhausted. Maybe she spun too quickly? Maybe she took too many pills yesterday? Or maybe she is coming down with the flu? She couldn't sleep for more than an hour the night before and hasn't eaten in almost a day. Rocking slightly from the nausea, she unzips her backpack to make sure the pills aren't crushed, and quickly swallows six more pills with what little saliva she has left.

"Hey, Angie, how's it going?" Kira asks, putting her arm around Angela's shoulder. "Feeling preetty good, right?"

"I'm feeling a lot better now, yeah. Um, I know it's kind of soon, but do you think you could get me some more oranges? I just want to make sure I have enough for the weekend." Angie runs her fingers through her hair and looks down the hall, her pupils dilated, roving like searchlights.

"What are you trying to be—a superhero or something? No matter how many you take, you're not going to be able to leap tall buildings—or drive before you're 17."

"Very funny. Look, can you get me some or not? Here's some money." Angela slips \$20 into Kira's pocket.

"OK. But really, Ang, a couple a day should be enough. You don't want to become an addict. Now, a supermodel, that's something altogether different..." Kira trails off, patting her stomach. "I'll take

care of it. But stop sucking on your split ends and look at me when I'm talking to you." Kira wags her finger disapprovingly, laughing. "Where are your manners? . . . I thought I brought you up better than this!"

Angela grits her teeth and crosses her arms—it is all she can do to stop herself from shaking Kira.

Kira lowers her voice. "I'll bring a couple bottles of oranges to the program tomorrow night. Just show up and try to be normal. And by the way, you could at least pretend to laugh at my jokes," Kira adds sulkily and walks away.

HOME, 6:00 P.M.

Angela crawls into bed. Her muscles ache with fatigue and her stomach roils. She knows she should eat, but she can't even muster the energy to open the refrigerator door. As she lies on top of her covers, on top of her stuffed animals, her heart slows as if she were about to go into hibernation.

HOME, FRIDAY, 6:17 P.M.

Twenty-four hours later Angela wakes, disoriented and ravenous. She has slept through school—through the entire day—but she hardly feels rejuvenated. If anything, she is groggier and more depressed than ever. With a leftover peanut butter sandwich in her mouth, she walks over to the answering machine and plays the messages: they're from school, her mom, Ms. Weyland. Angela looks at the clock: two hours until the program. She grabs some money off the kitchen table and picks up the phone to call a cab. She'll have to do her explaining later, when she has more energy.

JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL GYM, 8:04 P.M.

The gym is hot. A red laser light circles the floor and momentarily illuminates Kira's face. Angela walks toward her.

"Kira, hi. Do you have them?"

"I'm fine; thanks for asking."

"Sorry."

"S'alright. Let's go to the wall over there," she says, pointing to the empty space in the corner of



... The rest of the day Angela feels as if nothing is moving fast enough, as if her heart is beating faster than she can walk, talk, or write.

the room. "OK—here are two bottles. Don't lose them and don't take them all at once, 'cause I can't get these all the time."

Kira walks toward a group of friends in the center of the room as Angela taps 12 pills into her shaky palm. * * *

The warm light makes Angela sleepy. She can no longer hear the music, just a regular dripping sound. She opens her eyes ever so slowly and sees the tube in one of her veins and her mother in a corner of the room crying. ▀

NBA STAR

ANDREW LANG





A MAN WITH PRIORITIES

ARTICLE BY SHELLIE M. FREY

He's the center of attention. Not that Andrew Lang will be found under any lampshade, but once he gets into the NBA arena, this six-foot 11-inch center commands full focus.

In his nine seasons as a pro basketball player, this veteran Milwaukee Buck has bounced all over the NBA. Drafted by Phoenix in 1988, Lang was traded to Philadelphia after a five-year stint with the Suns. His Sixer status was short-lived as the Atlanta Hawks soared in and snatched him up to lead their Southern team. Part of his tour included Andrew spending a few months playing for Minnesota, before being traded to Milwaukee. With all the bouncing back and forth.

(Continued on p. 28)

PHOTO: © NBA PHOTOS, SCOTT CUNNINGHAM



Bang! The back door shut with a thump. Tom flung his book bag onto the floor.

"Oh, man, I'm tired and hungry," he said as he shuffled toward the refrigerator to the left of the kitchen and opened the familiar door. "H'mmm, a soda, burrito, and a bag of chips. Cool.

Now I'll go rest," he told himself as he stacked up the food and headed toward the couch and TV. *Now, where is that remote? I don't want to have to get up and down all the time,* Tom thought, as he shuffled through the pile of magazines. *Ah, here it is,* he told himself, slumping on the couch and flipping the TV on. Then he settled in for an afternoon of rest.

Three hours later Mom called, "Tom, you need to put out the trash for tomorrow."

"Coming," Tom called as he flipped the channel and settled down for another show.

"No, you're coming now, and shut that TV off. You've been lying around all afternoon." Mom marched into the room and grabbed the remote.

"All right, all right, I'm coming." Tom shifted his heavy legs off the sofa.

He grabbed the trash bags and waddled toward the front door. *Maybe I should exercise more. I am getting a bit fat.* He looked down at his ample waist, knowing it was soft enough for the other guys to tease him about. He opened the door and leaned out, setting the

A WEIGHTY PROBLEM

North American teens are heavy into junk food. So what's the solution? Hey, let's eat better and move a little more.

trash on the steps. *But somehow I don't feel like going out. It's a nice day, but a bit warm.* He sniffed the air, then shut the door, heading back to the fridge. *Oh, good, my favorite show's on now.*

Tom opened the freezer and scooped himself a generous portion of ice cream, and topped it with chocolate syrup. Then he settled himself in front of the TV for several more hours of "rest."

Does Tom's day sound familiar? Have you picked up on one of the biggest problems for teens today? They don't move enough. They eat, watch TV, play computer games, and eat some more. Actually, more than 30 percent of American teenagers are overweight.

Why is this? Mostly because they don't eat right and don't exercise. North American teens are heavy into junk food, too,

which accounts for their excess pounds. So what's the solution? Pretty simple, actually. They need to eat good food and move a little more.

But how can I do that, you say? I've tried diets and push-ups, and usually I give up within a week. I really do want to get in shape, but I can't, it's too hard. Aha, there's the problem—you think you can't do it. But all you have to do is knock out the *t* and you *can*. Determine that you're tired of your dull lifestyle and move.

But what kinds of exercise can I do, you might ask? You hate to run, and weight lifting's too hard. All right, then, I won't tell you to do those activities, but what about the easiest type of exercise—walking? You and Kerri wander around the mall a lot. Why don't you walk it? Most

malls are pretty long, and one or two strolls up and down will equal a mile. If you walk with a friend, it will be more fun.

Another exercise that both boys and girls enjoy is basketball. Yeah, so it's a game, but you burn a lot of calories playing it, and who said exercise can't be fun?

What about swimming? That's my favorite sport. In the summer you lie around the pool trying to get a tan. Why not get into the water, get wet, and do some laps? Can't swim, you say? Problem solved supereasy. Just take a few swimming lessons. Yeah, so some of the kids are younger than you. That's how I started out, and I've been through all the levels now.

Now, about that weight lifting we shied away from at first. It isn't so bad once you're built up. You might find it enjoyable watching your muscles firm up and seeing those biceps grow bigger. Just make sure you have a professional helping you in your transformation to Arnold S. or Miss Olympia!

So now that you've gotten some exercise ideas, try them, and add more of your own. The key is to think active. Instead of driving to your friend's house, walk or bike there. Make yourself work, and you won't be overweight.

Of course, exercising isn't the only aspect we have to look at. Food is important too. "Ohhh," you groan. "I don't want to diet. I want chocolate bars, burritos..." Hey, I didn't say you have to diet. You just have to control your food intake. One advantage teens have over adults is that they're growing, and they use lots more calories. Teens don't have to diet if they eat the right stuff. Hooray!

In order to fix a problem, you've got to find the mistakes that cause it, right? So what are today's teens eating that's causing overweight? Take a look at a

In order to fix a problem, you've got to find the mistakes that cause it... So what are teens eating that is causing overweightness?



... Put some of these ideas to use and next time you look in the mirror you're likely to see a healthier, stronger, more in-shape teenager!

typical teen's day of meals, and we'll probably find out.

Erica's alarm rang late (she forgot to set it). "I don't have time to eat," she said, pulling her slacks on and rushing for her books. She grabbed a chocolate doughnut and ran out the door. Later at school Erica started to feel hungry. *I'll just get a snack*, she thought, and she stopped at a snack bar for a few candy bars and a soda. Feeling more energetic, she was alert during English. But during algebra she almost fell asleep. When lunchtime came around, Erica

and her friend headed to McDonald's down the street (a Tuesday tradition). Very hungry by now, Erica ordered a Big Mac, french fries, and a large strawberry shake. Then she had an ice-cream cone from a nearby stand. *Now* she felt ready to face the afternoon! After school Erica and her friend ran a few laps, then headed to Erica's house to snack on cookies and soda (another tradition). Later at supper Erica had a healthy appetite and took seconds on the roast and corn on the cob (lots of butter—another tradition). A large slice of apple pie topped off the meal just fine.

Now, what's wrong with Erica's eating habits? Sure, they're actually a lot better than those of most teens. But she can improve in some areas. Where?

For starters, if Erica had eaten a good breakfast, she'd have had plenty of energy, and the doughnut, snack bars, and soda wouldn't have been necessary. Tip number one: eat a good breakfast. It's better for your body when you're not snacking, because your stomach isn't working constantly.

Tip number two: Don't snack, but if you have to, eat fruits, vegetables, or nuts, not sweets.

Another mistake Erica made was lunch. It lacked whole grains and was very high in fat. A whole-grain sandwich and tortilla chips with a fruit shake would've been better. But overall we'll give Erica some credit: she did eat a good supper (although she could have done without the seconds). She exercised, too.

Now, it's your job to take all these ideas on eating and exercising and put them to good use. Remember, eat good breakfasts, don't snack too much, get moving, and think active. And next time you look, you're likely to see a healthier, stronger, more in-shape teen in your mirror!

IF YOU'RE USING, YOU'RE ABUSING

You've attended the school assemblies. You've heard all the stories. You've seen all the public service announcements on TV. Still, you think you're not like the other kids. You can handle a drink or take a hit off a joint without becoming "addicted." Maybe you can, but the bottom line is: if you're using alcohol or other drugs, you're abusing your body and your mind. Try your wits against the following quiz to see how you score.



**SO YOU THINK YOU CAN
HANDLE IT?
THE BOTTOM LINE IS:
IF YOU'RE USING
ALCOHOL OR OTHER
DRUGS YOU'RE
ABUSING YOUR BODY
AND YOUR MIND. TAKE
THIS QUIZ TO SEE
WHERE YOU STAND.**

● 2. You think it doesn't matter if you smoke pot, because it doesn't stay in your system very long anyway. In fact,

- ☐ a. THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, marijuana's main active chemical ingredient), can be detected up to several days after use by standard urine testing methods.
- ☐ b. Chronic users maintain

levels of THC for weeks after use.

☐ c. As soon as you come down from a marijuana high, the THC can no longer be detected by a urinalysis.

☐ d. A couple hours after using marijuana, the THC can't be detected.

● 3. You've heard that only kids with problems at home and in school smoke marijuana.

Research shows that:

- ☐ a. Most kids smoke pot because they have friends or siblings who pressure them into trying it.
- ☐ b. Some kids use it because their parents smoke pot.
- ☐ c. Some kids think it's cool because smoking marijuana has been made popular in the media (TV, songs, movies).
- ☐ d. Only "bad" kids, those who get in trouble all the time, smoke.

● 4. Marijuana affects different kids in different ways. It depends on:

- ☐ a. The user's experience.
- ☐ b. How strong the pot is.
- ☐ c. The user's expectations.
- ☐ d. If the user has also consumed other drugs or alcohol.

● 5. You've tried alcohol, but you know you don't have an alcohol problem because:

● 1. Lots of kids talk about smoking pot at school. The percentage of kids actually using marijuana is:

- ☐ a. About 20 percent.
- ☐ b. More than 75 percent.
- ☐ c. Approximately 40 percent.
- ☐ d. Less than 10 percent.

BY PENNY EHRENKRANZ

☐ a. Everybody knows alcoholics can drink other people "under the table," and you always get sick if you drink too much.

☐ b. You have only one drink in the morning before you go to school.

☐ c. When you're angry at someone, you have just one drink in your bedroom.

☐ d. If you get sick from drinking, you don't drink again for months.

● **6. Alcohol is legal for people over 21, so it can't be dangerous or bad for you. Actually:**

☐ a. The leading cause of death among young people aged 15-24 is alcohol-related accidents.

☐ b. About half of fire, suicide, homicide, and drowning deaths of teens are alcohol-related.

☐ c. Because young people weigh less than adults, they reach a higher blood-alcohol level sooner and exhibit the effects for a longer time.

☐ d. The younger you are when you start drinking alcohol, the greater the chances that you will become a heavy drinker and have alcohol-related problems.

● **7. The three drugs most commonly used by teens and young adults are:**

☐ a. Alcohol, heroin, and marijuana.

☐ b. Marijuana, tobacco, and cocaine.

☐ c. Cocaine, heroin, and alcohol.

☐ d. Alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana.

● **8. You think you won't have an alcohol problem if you drink only beer. Which of the following drinks has a higher alcohol content than a can of beer?**

☐ a. A cocktail.

☐ b. A 12-ounce wine cooler.



Marijuana contains THC, which changes how the brain works... It's a total-loss, waste-of-time method for coping with life's problems... preventing you from dealing with the challenges of becoming an adult.

☐ c. A 5-ounce glass of wine.

☐ d. None of the above. They all, including the 12 ounces of beer, have approximately 1.5 ounces of alcohol.

● **9. You'd never drink and drive, but if you smoked pot and drove a car, you:**

☐ a. Could judge distances better because everything seems clearer.

☐ b. Would react right away to other drivers on the road.

☐ c. Would feel really alert.

☐ d. Would be heading for trouble. Get someone else to drive.

● **10. School and grades aren't a problem when you smoke marijuana, because smoking marijuana:**

☐ a. Helps you concentrate better when you take a test.

☐ b. Gives you more energy.

☐ c. Makes everyone think you're really clever and funny when you're high.

☐ d. Enhances your perceptions.

ANSWERS

How well do you think you did? Some of the questions were "trick" questions, others had only one right answer, while some others had several right answers. Here are the facts as presented by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 1995.

● **1.** A survey of grades 8-12 showed that by tenth grade almost 16 percent of kids in high school claimed to have used pot within a month of the survey date.

Approximately 40 percent of high school seniors have tried marijuana or hashish at least once, and 20 percent of them self-identified as current users. Although c seems to be the correct answer here, actually most teens do not use marijuana daily. So both a and c are acceptable answers. Studies show that fewer than one in five high school seniors currently use marijuana. If your friends are pressuring you to try pot because they use it, find other friends. Sure, too many kids are messing with marijuana—but most aren't. For every one of your friends who is a user, there are four other kids who aren't.

● **2.** All forms of marijuana contain THC, which changes how the brain works and is absorbed by fatty tissues in various organs. THC can usually be detected by a

POT AND DRIVING:

Pot impairs your judgment and slows reaction time. A study of patients injured in car accidents showed that 15 percent had been smoking pot and another 17 percent had been using pot and alcohol.

urinalysis several days after smoking pot. In the case of heavy chronic pot users, traces of THC can sometimes be found by a urinalysis weeks after use. The answers here are a and b.

● **3.** Teens use marijuana for a variety of reasons. Most start because friends, brothers, or sisters who are using talk them into trying it. Some use it because their parents do, which makes it easily accessible. Others see movies and listen to songs about how supposedly cool it is to smoke pot and decide to try it. Kids who smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol are at a higher risk for marijuana use, according to recent studies. Home, school, and neighborhood all contribute to a teen's decision to try drugs. The answers here are a, b, and c. Keep it in mind that marijuana is a total-loss, waste-of-time method for coping with life's problems. Staying high only prevents you from dealing with the problems and challenges of becoming an adult.

● **4.** The correct answers are a, b, c, and d. Marijuana affects people differently, even if everyone is smoking the same joint. Different varieties of marijuana contain different amounts of THC. Eating marijuana can affect the user differently than smoking it. Experience, expectations, and setting all contribute to the effects. Someone new to the drug or in a strange setting may experience paranoia or suffer anxiety. Last, if there are other drugs or alcohol present, the marijuana will react differently than when these other factors are absent.

● **5.** This is a trick question. The consumption of alcohol causes a number of behavioral changes, including impaired coordination and judgment, aggression, and a reduced ability to function in any situation. If you had an alcohol problem, you could experience any or all of the symptoms listed in question 5. Other symptoms



exhibited by alcoholics are:

- ☐ a. Drinking to avoid problems.
- ☐ b. Letting grades slip.
- ☐ c. An inability to stop drinking.
- ☐ d. Gulping drinks.
- ☐ e. Memory loss after drinking.
- ☐ f. Lying to others about drinking.

● **6.** All of these statements are true. Alcohol is bad for you. It is especially dangerous for teens, and continued use can lead to dependence. Because it's legal for adults, alcohol is the most widely used drug in the United States. In a typical year more than 10,000 teenagers die from alcohol-related traffic accidents, and 40,000 more are injured. Statistics further show that right now 4.6 million teenagers in America have a drinking problem. Medical research has also proved that long-term alcohol use can lead to permanent damage of vital organs. Lots of good reasons to learn to say no and stick with your decision.

● **7.** If you answered d, you answered correctly. Alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana are the drugs most commonly used by

teenagers, primarily because they are cheap and readily available. Alcohol and tobacco are commonly found in the home.

● **8.** Again d is the correct answer. Twelve ounces of beer, a cocktail, a 12-ounce wine cooler, and a 5-ounce glass of wine all contain equal amounts (approximately 1.5 ounces) of alcohol.

● **9.** If you picked d, you chose correctly. Using marijuana impairs your judgment and slows your reaction time. You may think that things are clear and that your response time is quicker, but it's only an illusion. Combining alcohol and marijuana is even more lethal. A study of patients in a hospital unit who had suffered injuries as a result of car accidents showed that 15 percent had been smoking pot and another 17 percent had been smoking pot and drinking.

● **10.** Another trick question. All of these answers are false. Studies have shown that marijuana affects the user's short-term memory, as well as hindering ability to perform complex tasks. Instead of feeling more energetic, you will experience lethargy and a feeling of drowsiness when the high wears off. Rather than making you witty and charming, using marijuana will probably cause you to make stupid, embarrassing mistakes. Finally, marijuana will distort your perceptions and affect how you see, hear, and feel things.

If you answered all of the questions correctly, chances are you've paid attention to the TV public service spots and health class teachers. You obviously know how dangerous using alcohol and other drugs can be for your body and your mind. The way to really win this game is to abstain from using drugs and alcohol. Remember, if you're using, you're abusing. ▀

The Sound

SAMPLING THE LIFE AROUND A RIVER

A chorus of amphibians greets us upon our arrival at the Verde River shortly before midnight. From a grove of giant cottonwoods we peer across the black ribbon of a river that seems to suck the glow from our headlights. Banks of layered sand and a tangled fretwork of willow frame the blackness. Even if we can't see the Verde, the night's viscous air betrays the river's presence. In the desert one can always smell water.

My wife, Karen, and I have traveled here to central Arizona with a group of science students. We've chosen a study site a few miles downstream from the river's confluence with Sycamore Creek near Tuzigoot National Monument. After a month of preparing to spend this fall weekend investigating



a unique riparian habitat, we've settled on a range of activities, all designed to sample the area's wildlife.

We will seine the river for aquatic animals, string a mist net for bats, set mammal traps, and call owls. With some luck, by the end of our two-day excursion we should be able to add a few more species to our checklist of the wildlife that depend on this riverine ecosystem.

Rivers are the lifeblood of arid zones. Like roads and highways, rivers are corridors of activity. Throughout the

of Water

ARTICLE BY
KEN LAMBERTON



Photos: (above) a spadefoot toad in the hand.; (far left) Discovering an Eastern fence lizard and a ring-necked snake.

Southwest these arteries of fresh water provide homes, food, and passageways to many animals. Here deciduous canopies of cottonwood, sycamore, and walnut border the river, highlighting its emerald course through bone-colored hills. Beneath this umbrella, rich soil supports grass and shrubs and wildflowers, all of which, in turn, encourage wildlife.

In previous years here students have catalogued tiger salamanders, spadefoot toads, canyon tree frogs, fence lizards, ring-necked snakes, great blue herons, and even mountain lions—to name just a few of the “critters.” *(Continued next page)*

PHOTOS: KAREN LAMBERTON



PHOTOS: KAREN LAMBERTON

● Photos: (top) camouflage expert – the canyon tree frog really blends into his environment; (right): campsite under the cottonwoods; (bottom left): student working to untangle a mist net; (bottom right): the author and students seining a river; (bottom): a tiger salamander.



The next morning, standing in warm water to our knees, we begin identifying and releasing whatever we trap in our net. With the seine stretched between us, the students and I work against the current, maneuvering around slick black rocks and over the muddy streambed. We collect more than a score of fish just in the first haul.

I lift a pale-brown native from the net so we can get a closer look. Its downturned mouth and fleshy lips tell us it's a flannel-mouth sucker, a bottom-hugging fish that feeds on algae and detritus. Its blunt head and



torpedo-shaped body help the fish graze in the swift water it prefers.

Chubs, both Gila and round-tail, make up most of our catch. They have fine scales and soft, flexible fins, and an overall drab coloration that matches the streambed and hides them from sharp-eyed predators such as herons and bald eagles. In the upper Verde, Gila chubs are common, growing more than a foot in length.

In a shallow stretch of stream some students spot what appears to be a dark stone, bearded with algae, scrambling against the current among other similar-looking stones. I lift it from the water, and a turret-like head and short legs appear. It's a Sonoran mud turtle, hunting for snails and insect larvae. I tell the students that this is the first mud turtle we've seen. I point out its elongated, dome-shaped shell or carapace and the location of its musk glands. We pass it around for a hands-on inspection before returning it to the stream.

Later that afternoon I demonstrate how to string a mist net over a calm section of the river. As evening approaches, we hope to snag a few bats in the net's ultrafine mesh, as they skirt along the surface of the water searching for insects. After the net is in place, I pass out a dozen rectangular box traps and demonstrate how to bait them with oatmeal. We set them near animal holes or trails and mark their location with orange streamers. We have a sort of contest to see who can set a successful small mammal trap.

Then, as dusk yields to darkness, we enjoy dinner in the glow of our campfire. The rhythmic chirping of crickets and toads swells around us. After dark Karen and I lead a group of students in search of nocturnal

animals. A lexicon of tracks, inscriptions in the mud left by skunks and raccoons and foxes, tells a story of frustrated attempts at getting a meal. In the leaf

**We wonder
if the Verde
will, like so many
other Southwest
rivers, be
swallowed up by
agriculture,
housing develop-
ment, and cattle
ranching.**

litter our flashlights find hunting scorpions and wolf spiders and a real prize—a banded gecko, a night-foraging lizard with bulbous eyes and velvety skin.

Then there are excited shouts from the students monitoring the mist net. We race to the river, where I wade in and carefully pull a small bat from the tangled mesh. Back on the bank we note its plain nose, tiny ears, and reddish fur. It's a red bat, a common tree-roosting species of river environments, but a new species for us. Before releasing it, I unfold one delicate wing. Backlighting by a student's flashlight, it is an intricate map of fine blood vessels spaced among tiny finger bones, patterning a tissue-like membrane.

As we crawl into our tents around midnight, Karen plays a tape recording of different owl calls. A pygmy owl responds immediately, defending its territory. Soon screech owls join in, their distinctive, single-pitched, hollow whistles adding to the

territorial ensemble. Later, when the tape finishes, the owls continue calling, silently winging through the trees to close in on suspected interlopers. We drift off to sleep as the owls continue their calls.

Dew mantles everything the next morning. In the wet grass several students find the doors on their traps closed. Inside, most are fat gray animals. Recognizing a rodent's black, goggle-like eyes in one trap, I pull a white-throated wood rat from the tight aluminum box. We've seen their nests in the area—loose piles of sticks and cactus decorated with cans and foil and other shiny pieces of junk. It's no wonder people call them "pack rats." In the 12 traps set, the students capture a total of nine rodents: five wood rats, three grasshopper mice, and one kangaroo rat. We guess that the rodent population in our area is successfully prolific.

We spend the remainder of the morning cleaning up our campsite and packing gear. Our growing assessment of this river's ecosystem continues to be cautiously optimistic. The number and variety of animals and plants here encourages us, but we also realize that our study area is one of the few cottonwood climax communities remaining in Arizona. We wonder if the Verde will, like so many other rivers in the Southwest—the Gila, Santa Cruz, San Pedro—be swallowed by agriculture, housing development, and cattle ranching.

As we drive toward home, the smell of the Verde River persists for a while, and then is only a memory. Our experience has emphasized the fragility of a river wilderness, particularly in a region where water is so rare. Secretly, I hope nothing changes. I would like to return here again for another survey with another group of eager students. ▀

ANDREW LANG

(Continued from page 17)

Andrew has experienced during the past decade, it's amazing that he's been able to keep his own life centered. "I was fortunate to be able to understand early on the value of having a good foundation—good priorities," explains Andrew, originally from Pine Bluff, Arkansas. "I have a rich, fun life. I have a beautiful wife and two sons, both my parents are still living, my sister and I are very close, and I have developed many friends through the years. But along with that, I haven't ever really changed. When you're on the road, there are opportunities to go out and do things, but you really have to stay steadfast in your beliefs. Because the things that are out there in the big cities, and even in the small markets, aren't necessarily good for you in the long run. They might satisfy you temporarily, but you don't want to look back over your shoulder and have regrets."

He continues, "I'm thankful that I have been married for nine years now and that my wife and I are close. My sons really appreciate what I do. So when I'm out on the road, I'm not just representing myself and my team; my namesake is back home. And I try to hold myself accountable because I love them, and I'm really doing what I'm doing out there on the court for them. They are really my main focus."

Keeping his priorities and goals intact has helped Andrew steer clear of the many dangerous pitfalls that could bring him down. "There are so many negative influences out there—peer pressure, alcoholism, drug use, and other [bad] influences—that if you put them into one category, well, there's enough evil in the world we live in to make it pretty tough," he explains. "You want to be around the type of

Andrew
Says . . .
" . . . those who
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short . . . you
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out regardless
of obstacles —
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who will?"



people who understand that we won't be able to [succeed] by ourselves."

Occasionally involved in a religious youth ministry, Andrew gains strength from his faith.

"There are enough obstacles out there working against you; it's always nice to have a fellowship and a comraderie," he says. "And it's real tough with most guys, especially athletes, who are pretty macho. We go out, compete, and generally it's the biggest, strongest, fastest, most savage guy who generally wins the game. But when you have a belief system, you open up; you become a little more vulnerable. You let people see you for who you are. And the simplicity of that is really powerful. Because you become less concerned about external things. You're there to honor your God. You're there to work hard and play basketball. All other external factors are like water under the bridge. It really simpli-

fies your life and your focus. Other things may still come your way, but you seem to be able to deal with them better because of your clear focus."

But Andrew hasn't always been so perceptive about his path through life. As a college student at the University of Arkansas, he experienced some culture shock regarding the amount of partying that went on and learned quickly that no one was going to make his decisions for him except him. "When you're out there you have to stand on something. *You* have to decide what's right or wrong. Not that I'm a goody-goody and have never made a mistake. But when I left home, my parents instilled in me a will that when I would see something offensive, I should back off. And when you're a big athlete, everyone expects you to be the life of the party. When you back off, they say, 'What's wrong with that guy?' I was always labeled a little bit corny or cranky, but the same people who labeled me those things now have more respect for me."

Besides his parents, Andrew credits good friends and teammates for his ability to make it through the tough times in college. "I had guys on my team whom I could hang out with, talk to, who wanted to do well [in school and basketball] and not get into trouble. I was also very fortunate to meet my wife my freshman year, so that helped a lot too. The older you get, the more experience you get. But you have to remember the simple lessons of life: an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. You don't go out looking for trouble. Happiness is too special to risk."

Though Andrew is quite content at the moment, he had to work through many trials and challenges to earn his peace and respect—within himself and the NBA. Though he demonstrated a killer college career as an all-

American center, Andrew was not chosen as a first-round draft pick. "I just sat there and thought, *Man, nobody wants me,*" he says with a laugh. But just minutes later the Phoenix Suns called and invited him to join their team. Soon Andrew was basking in the opportunity to prove himself and have his day in the sun.

"It wasn't too long before I played and eventually started before I left that franchise," recalls Lang. "Those were very treasured moments, because there were other players there who were perhaps better than I was, but weren't as eager or hungry to play as I was. I just worked hard and wanted to be a success.

I remember early on that I was taught to continue to do things you do well. In my case, that was rebound, block shots, and shoot bank shots. But always work on things that you don't do so well too. When I left college, I shot only 40 to 45 percent from the free-throw line. So every day I'd get myself to the free-throw line and shoot 50, 75, or 100 free throws. I'd work with assistant coach Paul Westphal, who later became the head coach. I got to where I could shoot my free throws pretty well. And they weren't afraid to perhaps put me in the game in the fourth quarter. At least I could make a free shot. Little hurdles like that I had to overcome. Being a second-round pick, people consider you a backup for your whole career. But I was fortunate to work myself into a starting position in Phoenix, and ever since I left there I've always started."

Though Andrew has overcome many challenges, injuries, and obstacles, he explains that there is no "easy street" in the NBA. "It's been a career of constant work," he says affirmatively. "Don't let anyone tell you that once you're in, it's easy. It's not any easier now

"You really have to work for everything in this life—nothing is free," says Lang. "You set your table, you chow down."

than it was the first day. That's why I really credit the great players, because it's tough to go out and score 20 to 30 points per game when the whole arena, opposing team, television network—everyone—knows what you're going to do. So the opposing team scouts you and tries to stop you. It's an ongoing process of continual improvement and work."

Lang's experiences and NBA philosophy not surprisingly coincide with his perspectives on life, instilled in him by his mother, his greatest role model. "You really have to work for everything in this life; nothing is free," he says. "You set your table, you chow down. But before you do, you have to earn the right to have food on your table. You have to earn the right to provide for yourself. No one's going to give you anything for free. It doesn't matter how prayerful you are, what type of person you are, nice or bad, you're going to have to earn your way."

While Andrew has definitely earned his status in the NBA, he encourages those in pursuit of a goal to believe in themselves. "Everyone will face criticism and obstacles from their peers and from society in general. You're going to have enough people tell you no, that you yourself have to really believe, deep in your heart, that you can accomplish things. Just because you fail at something

once doesn't mean that you can never do that. You *can* obtain your goals. Of course, every young man won't necessarily be a professional basketball player. And every young woman won't be a lawyer, doctor, or teacher. But in aspiring to obtain those goals, you create your destiny. Sure, you have to be blessed and get a break now and then. But never should you doubt yourself. Because those who doubt sell themselves short. You have to go all out when you're in, regardless of any obstacles—because if you don't believe in yourself, who will?"

Almost everyone who knows Andrew believes in him. And he certainly believed in himself when he blocked six shots in one game while in Phoenix. And he certainly showed courage, leadership, and encouragement as the captain of the Atlanta Hawks. And helping the Milwaukee Bucks get kickin' again was a new opportunity for Andrew to discover what he's made of.

"Lately I've had to be more patient," he says of his current struggles. "Because when you get bounced around from team to team, you start to think that something is wrong with you. You start to think that people don't like the way you work, or you wonder just what God is trying to do with you.

"I've had the chance to be bitter," says Andrew. "I've had the chance to be upset at the way things were going, because there were times when I really felt I had been wronged. And quite honestly, that grows old. You get to a point where you have to accept it, move on, and you have to be thankful for what you have. And through many prayerful nights, I'm at that point. I'm a happy guy! And I'm just so thankful. Some things in my life have been tough, and some things just aren't great. But I'm trying my best to work on those things." ■

EDITORIAL

THE SURFING GENERATION

Teens know what I am talking about. A few parents (and grandparents!) may have already conjured up images of Annette Funicello and the beach-blanket set scenario. But today's reality is that kids and young adults are "surfing" the Internet with a passion that sometimes makes yesterday's beach bums look like dog paddlers.

For many of the older generation the Internet is a mysterious, alien, and thoroughly unintelligible electronic game. But in this case the generation gap has perhaps a little more of a danger component. 'Cause the reality is that parents and kids need to know and be aware that the Internet is rapidly becoming peopled by sinister messages and sinister characters.

There is a lot being said of late about pornography on the Net. It's there and it needs to be dealt with—quickly. Already governments and user groups are moving to set up mechanisms to restrict child pornography.

Don't think that's the end of it, however. A lot of home "pages"—while cleverly disguised as entertainment and games—are actually marketing fronts for alcohol and tobacco producers. Following the pattern of the past few decades, they appeal directly to underaged kids.

I don't want to say too much about what's out there in case you are foolish enough to go looking. It's enough to know that Anheuser-Busch, Absolut vodka, and others are slipping in under the Internet radar, according to the National Parent-Teachers Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the Center for Science in the Public Interest, and the Campaign for Tobacco-free Kids. All of these groups say that at least 35 alcohol brands have full-blown Web sites, most having elements designed to appeal to children. "The marketers of alcohol and tobacco see the Internet and the World Wide Web as a powerful way to market their products and reach youth," says Kathryn Montgomery, president of the Center of Media Education.

Yes, surf's up! Time to call out the lifeguards and deal with the situation. There's a wicked undertow and there are sharks out there!



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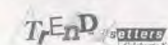
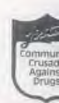
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BY JULIANA LEWIS

PUZZLE

Percussion Music-Makers

Music is, by definition, pleasing sounds. And sometimes music is as simple as basic percussion sounds. Percussion instruments produce their music when they are struck. Listed below on the right are various percussion instruments. Your assignment, should you accept it, is to match the features of each with the name of the percussion instrument.

- 1. One of the first percussion instruments, fastened to the arms or legs of dancers to produce sound.
- 2. Pair of wooden sticks that are struck sharply together (still used in Latin American rhythm).
- 3. Gourd rattles with attached handles (popular with Latin American musicians).
- 4. One of the earliest drums, made from a section of bamboo, open at the top and closed at the bottom (still played in the Pacific islands).
- 5. Drum made of calfskin stretched over a large copper bowl.
- 6. Double-headed drum played with two sticks (or wire brushes when used as a jazz instrument).
- 7. Tall, tapering drum played with the hands (used especially for Latin American dance rhythms).
- 8. Shallow one-headed drum with metal discs spaced around its wooden shell (popular in Spain as accompaniment for flamenco dancers).
- 9. Earliest keyboard percussion instrument, its name means "sound of wood."
- 10. Cup-shaped instrument, usually made of brass, with a spring inside that holds a clapper.
- 11. Instruments shaped like dinner plates and held by leather straps fastened to the center; usually two are struck together.
- 12. A set of heavy bells anchored to overhead beams, and played with a special keyboard (most often found in church towers).

- a. cymbals
- b. conga drum
- c. carillon
- d. snare drum
- e. handbell
- f. tambourine
- g. xylophone
- h. kettledrum (also called timpani)
- i. shell- or seed-filled rattle
- j. maracas
- l. claves

Answers: 1. l. 2. l. 3. k. 4. j. 5. h. 6. d. 7. b. 8. f. 9. g. 10. e. 11. a. 12. c.



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