

CELEBRATING POSITIVE CHOICES



Listen

■ **'HUFFING'**
DANGERS, P.10

■ **WAVE**
RUNNERS, P.24

**in
sync**

POP MUSIC MEGA-GROUP, P.16



Firsthand Experience

CAROLE ROSS-OAKLEY

C A story of hopes, goals, and integrity . . .

Chet wondered if his father ever regretted leaving his prestigious firm in New York to take over Granddad's small practice here in Chatsworth. Chet had made friends very quickly and was the leading points scorer for the Chatsworth Cougars.

"Hi, champ!" his father beamed down over his half glasses. "What's the big news?"

"It's unbelievable, Dad. Coach Carr has arranged a trip to Europe for the entire basketball team this summer. We're going to London, Paris, Geneva, and Rome. Is that great or what?"

"That is great, son," his father answered, but the grim look in his eyes made Chet want to rush on with more juicy tidbits about the adventure before his dad could say anything discouraging.

"Coach got a really good deal, Dad. The whole trip, plane fares, hotels, food, and everything is going to cost each player only \$2,500." Chet hoped he had made it sound like too much of a bargain to pass up.

"I'm sure your coach got the best possible deal, Chet. I have to be honest with you, though—your mother and I just don't have that kind of money to spend right now. Your sister Bev's wedding is coming up next week, and Will starts veterinary school this fall. Your mother and I were talking only last night that this will be the first summer since we were married that we can't afford to rent a cabin in the Catskills for a week.

"Sure, Dad," Chet fought back the tears, "Bev's wedding, Will's school, a cabin for you and Mom, but what about Chet, Dad? I'm a member of this family too. What about me?"

"Mr. Branston," a voice in the office intercom interrupted. "I'm sorry, but your 4:00 is here."

"Look, Chet, I know you're disappointed, but there will be other trips. You're only a freshman. I'm truly sorry. I'll try to come home early tonight so we can discuss it."

"Right, Dad!" Chet whirled and left with what he hoped was enough contempt to spoil the rest of his father's day as completely as his had been spoiled.

Bev and Josh had dated for four years; why did they have to pick this summer to get married? Why did Will have to go to vet school instead of the community college right here in Chatsworth? Why couldn't he himself have been an orphan and maybe someone would have adopted him who would put him first?

"Hey, Chet, what's up?" his best friend, Greg, shouted.

"I just got the word that my parents can't afford for me to go to Europe with the team."

"Bummer, man," Greg replied. "Why don't you come for a ride up to Lookout Point with us? Jack's got his brother's car, and we're gonna just hang out for a while."

"I guess I might as well," Chet said. "There's nobody at home I want to be around right now."

About five miles out of town Jack turned onto a narrow dirt road and straight into a grove of trees.

"Ted and I are gonna burn one, man," Jack said as he hopped out of the car and started into the woods with Ted.

"Ah, man!" Chet turned to Greg. "What's going on here? I thought we were going to Lookout Point."

"Chill out, man, they won't be long," Greg said, totally unconcerned. "In fact, this would be the perfect time for you to gain some firsthand experience yourself. Kinda get with the program, if you know what I mean."

Chet knew all too well what he meant. The last thing he wanted today was another debate with Greg on the subject of pot smoking. For some reason Greg

The words
"drug test" caught
on a snag in
Chet's brain.
His stomach
wanted to
turn over.

found it totally inconceivable that Chet could have such a strong opinion against marijuana when he had never tried it.

"It's like broccoli, man," Greg was saying. "You can't say you don't like it if you haven't tried it."

"That's about the stupidest thing you have ever said, Greg. Just drop it; I'm not up to your 'cool dude' philosophies today."

"Look who's talking," Greg said angrily. "What's your problem, man? Mr. Goodie-Goodie. What's it gotten you? You'll be sitting home twiddling your thumbs this summer while your teammates are touring Europe."

There was no argument to that. Greg had hit a bull's-eye there. "Wait up, Jack," Chet shouted.

"Let's see if I can't gain all this knowledge that Greg thinks I'm missing."

It didn't matter anyway. So what if he tried marijuana? What difference did it make? What difference had it made that he never had? It wasn't as if a wart would grow on the end of his nose if he tried it, and it wasn't as if his family would even notice if it did.

Chet lost all track of time until Jack pulled in the driveway to let him out. Suddenly he was starved, but he didn't really want to face his family. He knew that he'd been pushing reality out of his mind all afternoon to allow one heavy-duty pity party. He knew Bev had given up her dream of a big wedding because money was tight. Will had a full scholarship and was working nights at the Shoal's Veterinary Clinic to earn money for extras. Chet had a wonderful family, and he felt too ashamed to face any of them.

"Just in time for dinner," his mother said as she brushed past him. "Will is off tonight, and we can all enjoy a family dinner. Everyone is already seated."

"Chet," his mother began as she passed a bowl of fresh peas and potatoes, "your dad told me about the team trip. Please don't be discouraged. We'll work something out so that you'll be able to go. We're very proud of you, and you certainly deserve to go. Do you think you could find a summer job to help finance some of the expenses?"

"You know, Chet," his father said, "Henry Moss is interviewing for summer help down at the firm. I know the pay is decent, and you'll get plenty of hours if you think you'd like that."

Chet didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "Thanks, Dad. I'll call Mr. Moss first thing in the morning."



All the ifs and buts didn't matter now. He had to talk with his father.

He hardly slept at all that night, and it seemed that 8:00 a.m. would never come.

With spirits as bright as the morning sun, he smiled as he heard the lines connect.

"Branston, Krantz, and Albert. How may I direct your call?"

"Good morning, Mrs. Morgan; this is Chet Branston. May I speak with Mr. Moss, please?"

"Sure, Chet, good to hear from you."

"Thanks."

"Chet!" Mr. Moss answered almost immediately. "How are you, son? Your dad said you'd be calling, and I'm glad you did. Drop by here today and fill out an application. We'll get the routine stuff out of the way, send you by the clinic for our standard drug test, and have you working by the weekend."

"Thanks, Mr. Moss; I'll be by there this afternoon."

For some reason the words "drug test" caught on a snag in Chet's brain and kept revolving. He had taken only a couple hits on the joint that Ted and Jack were passing around yesterday. It had done nothing except make him cough and leave his throat parched. It had been horrible. This desperate rationalization made his stomach want to turn over. He hadn't enjoyed it, so it couldn't

possibly count. He felt as though he would heave. Surely this couldn't be happening. He was in a daze as he dialed Greg's number.

"OK, Mr. Expert, I've got to take a drug test today for a summer job. Based on my firsthand experience yesterday, what's the outcome going to be?"

"Bummer, man. Don't take it. My cousin Jake didn't smoke pot for three weeks before his drug test, and he still failed it."

"That's just great, Greg. You can't tell me what to expect, but you couldn't rest until I'd tried marijuana."

"Hey, man, don't get mad at me. Just don't take the test and no one will be the wiser."

"Thanks for nothing, Greg." Chet slammed down the receiver.

Of course, Greg hadn't forced him to try marijuana. If he hadn't been so angry yesterday, he would never have given in to the needling. All the ifs and buts didn't matter now. He was faced with the possibility that a drug test would label him a drug user without indicating that he had tried it only once. It would simply say "yes." What would Mr. Moss think? What would Mrs. Morgan think? He had to talk with his father.

"Hey, Chet," his father greeted him. "I'm going to get accustomed to you popping in here every day to share good news. Have you seen Henry Moss yet?"

"Not yet, Dad. I don't think you'll consider today's news good. May we talk for a minute?"

As Chet sat across from his father's huge desk and recounted the events of the day before, his respect for his dad had never been greater. With his hands cupped together and his forefingers to his lips, Mr. Branston listened quietly without the slightest sign of shock or disapproval.

(continued on p. 28)



The Courage to Be

You are free to
be what you have
the courage to be.

Crystal comes from a family of drug abusers. Her father died last year from complications of alcoholism, and her mom is still into drugs. Placed with a loving foster family, Crystal has a lot of challenges to face. Going to college and joining in some equestrian community activities are things she wants to do, but it seems so hard. When she lived with her parents, no one made her do much. She didn't even have to attend school regularly. She got to do what she wanted. Go where she wanted.

Now she is behind in her classwork because she didn't attend school regularly. She gets frustrated and blurts out the same language her parents used. But at school and home that gets her into plenty of trouble. She wants to be the "good girl," but it's so much easier to be the "bad girl." How can she get the courage to be what she really can be? Actually, the same way you can.

Fortunately for Crystal, she's not in one of those countries in which young people are set on tracks that limit what they can be.

In some other places, by the age of 14 or 15 students are divided into the college-bound or the vocational groups . . . forever. In the United States we are much more liberal and believe in giving people many opportunities to make good, to go for what they can be. Crystal has every opportunity even now to make her way as the good girl, the good student, and the one who will make her dreams come true. So just how can she start on that way?

Right now Crystal is frustrated and heavy into swearing and lying

to cover her tracks because she is behind in school. It's embarrassing for her not to understand her homework or the reading assignment. The first step is for her to go to her teachers and ask for help. In this day and age teachers are frustrated and overburdened. But teachers are still delighted and eager to help students who want to help themselves. Crystal has to be honest. She needs to gather courage and ask for help. Many schools have grants and extra funds for tutors. Maybe there will be some resources for Crystal. Getting strokes and praise in school will go a long way toward helping Crystal feel good about herself. And there are some things she can do by herself to help. One is to read for pleasure. It could be a biography about a musician, magazines, or just the newspaper. The more you read, the better your reading gets.

Another big challenge is in her group of friends. She really enjoys Linnea, Megan, and Katrina. But those kids are already getting A's, and she feels unworthy. So she bounces back and forth between the girls she likes and another group of girls with whom the emphasis is not on studying, just hanging out. Crystal is going to have to make a choice. She's lucky there is a choice to make. By wavering back and forth between the two peer groups, she will end up being an outsider in each. This is the critical part. The choice is not up to her teachers, her foster parents, or anyone else. The choice is Crystal's. She needs to have the courage to make the choice and then make it known.

How does she get the courage? The same way most of us do. There is an old saying that "out of garbage cans a flower grows." This refers to the fact that from many awful home situations wonderful healthy people emerge,



It's hard to feel sorry for yourself when you read about deaf and blind Helen Keller. Even Einstein was a misfit in school. Remind yourself: if they could do it, I can too. Many successful people have emerged from troubled situations.

develop, and grow. Sometimes you will have speakers at your school who share inspiring stories of the challenges they had to surmount. There is a college president who often tells groups of students about his farm-worker parents and his experiences picking crops up and down the West Coast. Or the high-ranking African-American Marine officer who shared a bedroom with three other brothers. The stories are there. Go to the library and pick out some autobiographies or biographies. Read of the courage of some of these individuals. It's hard to feel sorry for yourself when you read about deaf and blind Helen Keller. Even Einstein was a misfit in school. Put pictures of people

you admire up on your wall and in your locker. Remind yourself: if they could do it, I can too.

Look in your community. Don't presume that all your teachers come from wonderful nurturing backgrounds. Some of them will have great stories of what they had to do. Ask them. People love to share their tales of triumph. Look to role models for inspiration.

Whether a teenager or an adult, it helps to have sayings to inspire and give encouragement along the way. Make a little notebook of good sayings. "One day at a time." "It's not where you came from, but where you go to, that counts." "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." When you see something that you like, copy it in your own personal book of encouragement. Put the book in your book pack.

Look at the person you want to be. Look for other students who are that way, and then go for it. Join the clubs that will support you in your journey. Make a new friend or two or three or more. Invite friends over. Ask for help on some homework or do it together. Go to the library together. Create activities with the kinds of people you like. Create the life you want.

Crystal can create the life she wants just as you can. Sure, it takes time, energy, and courage! But it's out there. We are not yet in a science fiction space age in which people are labeled to be Alphas or Betas or Gammas for their lives. You are free to be what you have the courage to be. Crystal can be whatever she wants to. For Crystal, it involves catching up on her studies, nurturing friendships with students who will be supportive of her goals, and seeking support and encouragement from people who care and have faced adversity themselves. For Crystal, and you, it's a matter of courage and choice. ■

ASK GARY

My best friend, Jeremy, is getting out of a drug rehab center next month. What can I do to support him in his recovery? Tina.

It's noble of you to want to support your friend. Obviously you care about him. The most important step for a newly recovering person to take is to become involved in clean and sober activities. Introduce him to your friends who don't use alcohol, tobacco, or other dangerous substances. Allow him a part in the fun and good times that you and your friends most likely enjoy. Also, letting Jeremy know that you are there for him if he ever feels lonely, stressed, anxious, or fearful can go a long way in helping him in his quest to remain drug free.

I've heard friends say they drink beer to deal with all the stress they have in their lives. Aren't there safer ways to relax? Megan.

You bet there are! Safer and healthier ways, such as going for walks, listening to music, talking to friends, meditating, reading, aerobics, sports, or just taking a nap. (Actually fun, and done by lots more than kids and seniors.) What most people fail to realize is that using drugs of any sort actually increases stress in the long run by putting extra pressure on them physically and emotionally. The key is in having a safety net ready when things get too tough to handle. Have a plan of action to de-stress at the first sign of distress.

Sometimes when I'm about to explode with anger, I smoke a

little pot and the anger seems to go away. The problem is that I feel guilty for doing this. Is there a better way? Carmine.

Not only is there a better way, but there's a safer, saner, and surer way. Smoking pot to deal with feelings of anger is like placing a tight lid on a pressure cooker. It works only so long at keeping the steam in, and pretty soon the cover blows off! Learn to manage your anger by expressing how you feel the moment you get mad. Always use "I" messages: "I feel angry when you do this." You might not change the situation that evoked your rage, but at least you'll be able to vent it and let it go instead of stuffing it. It's a lot better than having to deal with the guilt from getting high, or the damage you may be doing to your health.

I'm curious as to what the youngest age is that you've seen a person addicted to drugs. Victor.

I've seen it in someone only 11 years old. Even more frightening than knowing someone could be chemically dependent at such an early age is the fact that this same girl also had developed cirrhosis, a disease affecting the liver. Her alcohol consumption was responsible for this. The younger a person consumes illicit substances, the more rapid the onset of health problems can be. The body is an amazing thing that can deal with just about any type of stress except alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse. The best way to maintain a healthy body is to maintain a clean and sober lifestyle. That's the key to a promising future! ▀



Go ahead, ask Gary his advice on some of those big, serious, touchy questions. This guy enjoys the rough-and-tumble of helping teens with some serious problems. Gary Somdahl is a dad who puts his skills as a licensed youth chemical dependency counselor to the real-world test all the time. His latest book is *Drugs and Kids*.

Send your questions to:

ASK GARY

Listen magazine

55 West Oak Ridge Drive
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

THE



Article by Kimberly Cheney

... Once You Know What You're Doing.

When Tahj Mowry, who has been in numerous commercials, most notably with Shaquille O'Neal, performed in videos with Michael Jackson, and made television performances on *Who's the Boss?* and *Full House*, announced that he wanted his own show in April 1997, he got one. *Smart Guy's* premiere on the Warner Brothers network was their highest-rated debut to date and has made Tahj a well-known television star.

Not only a star, but a real talent. He has acted on *Friends*, *Sister, Sister*, and *Star Trek: Voyager*, and has been a regular on the Patti LaBelle series *Out All Night*, and starred in Disney's *ToonTown TV Special*. He has performed in music videos with the likes of Mariah Carey, M.C. Hammer, Prince, and Michael Jackson. He also starred in a regional production of *Black Oliver Twist*.

Tahj began acting at the age of 4 and has been in demand in Hollywood ever since.

We interviewed Tahj and found him to be charming, shy, funny, and an all-around smart guy.

Listen: Let's say your sisters, Tia and Tamara, from *Sister, Sister*, had decided to be waiters, for example. Do you think you'd still be an actor?

TM: Oh, yes. I love acting. They want to be child psychologists, and they still want to be actors, too. They want to work in movies, and so do I. I'll still be acting when they get a [regular] job.

Listen: Tell me about some of the people you've worked with—for instance, Michael Jackson?

TM: I worked on his video, but I didn't get to meet him. But he gave me an autographed picture. Everybody there was asking, 'Where is he? Where is he?' and they couldn't find him. He worked on a different day.

Listen: Shaquille O'Neal? What did you think of him?

TM: He was fun. He's so funny; he always makes me laugh. And then when he makes me laugh, I mess up.

Listen: What did he do? Make jokes?

TM: Yes, and he makes funny faces while I'm doing my lines. I did a promo with him, and then he got a tissue and stuck it in his nose and was making funny faces.

Listen: What did you work on with him?

TM: WB [Warner Brothers] promos. That was the second time I had worked with him. Very fun. The first time I met him I wasn't that really into basketball because I was only 7, I think. But then the

second time was really fun because they had a basketball hoop there. I was making more free throws than he was!

Listen: Who else did you enjoy working with?

TM: I really enjoyed working with Patti LaBelle. The first time she gave me a kiss I told my mom that I didn't want to take a bath; (continued on p. 29)

• Tahj is the brother of *Sister, Sister* stars Tamera and Tia Mowry. Now Tahj has his own show, *Smart Guy*, on Warner Brothers Television.



MOWRY



NO DENIALS

Lessons From a Huffer



ARTICLE BY MILLIE NYLAN

Mary, a petite 16-year-old, was rummaging through some new garage sale acquisitions stored in the workroom of her mother's furniture renovation business. Sometimes when she got lucky, she'd find old *Life* magazines or record albums by groups from the sixties. Today was a very lucky day. A heavy metal file cabinet was unlocked and filled with partially used cans of spray paint. It was a treasure chest for a huffer who loved spray paint.

Mary's bedroom looks as though it came out of San Francisco during the hippie era. She loves to paint walls, ceilings, and furniture with large designs in her favorite color, yellow, with accents in lesser favorites, such as orange, blue, and gold. That day, deep in the treasure of paint, Mary found gold. Later, after she'd spent a few hours sniffing in her bedroom, her mother walked in and found the room filled with paint fumes and Mary's nose and mouth circled in gold paint. There was no way to deny the truth: Mary was a paint-huffing addict.

Huffing, or sniffing, is actually a relatively new type of addiction. Ether, which was discovered in the late 1700s, was a popular alternative to alcohol for a time. Then in the 1930s there were reports of people sniffing gasoline. By the sixties many modern products were used by desperate people for a cheap and quick high.

Until very recently inhalants had been largely ignored by the public and given little attention by drug education groups. One problem

is that the products that are commonly inhaled are not classified as drugs, nor are they illegal for people of any age to buy or possess. Most adults would think nothing of a child carrying colored markers or paper correction fluid, although both have been used as inhalants. Further decreasing adult suspicion is the fact that many inhalant substances are small enough to be hidden in a pocket, purse, or book bag.

Inhalants interfere with messages from the brain to the heart and respiratory system and cause irregular heartbeats, leading to heart failure.

The high from a single sniff of an inhalant, which can be accomplished quickly and without attracting notice, lasts only a few minutes. However, addicts learn it can also be extended for several hours if used repeatedly. The effects of this brief high are similar to alcohol intoxication in many ways. The body's functions are slowed and users may feel slightly stimulated and less inhibited.

Sniffing results in impulsive behavior and a feeling of invulnerability, which opens the door to a host of other consequences.

The depression of the central nervous system may bring on nausea and vomiting. There is another physical effect of inhalants that Mary experienced after her huffing sessions—violent and abusive behavior. After years of treatment centers, private school, and empty promises, her mother took steps to have her committed to a hospital for treatment. When the deputies came to her home to take her to jail pending a court hearing, she lashed out at them with all the fury her five-foot-tall, size-five body frame could muster. The deputies, who were large and trained to handle agitated people, found it necessary to restrain Mary with handcuffs. She still finds it hard to believe that she could be aggressive enough to require physical restraint.

There is also the risk of sudden death, referred to as SSD or "sudden sniffing death." Inhalants interfere with messages from the brain to the heart and respiratory system and cause irregular heartbeats, leading to heart failure and death. Suffocation also occurs when users sniff fumes from plastic bags and black out.

In the long term, users damage their bone marrow, impair their vision, and suffer muscle paralysis, loss of memory, and the ability to think clearly. Some of these problems tend to clear up with time if the user stops sniffing. However, damage to the liver, kidneys, and brain can be

permanent and can have a serious impact on the development of the user.

The impact of inhalants is especially serious when you consider that most inhalant users are in junior high. Kids in seventh grade are more likely to sniff than seniors. One recent survey of eighth graders found that 21.6 percent had used inhalants to get high. Put another way, about one fifth of the eighth graders are taking a chance on permanently damaging their bodies while they should be going through a big growth spurt.

The afternoon that Mary was carried kicking and screaming to jail was not her first time there. Only a few months earlier she had spent 28 days locked up for stealing paint from a local store. She was released by doctors who saw no need to commit her to the nearby psychiatric hospital. When she got home, she intended to call her drug-using boyfriend immediately. Her mother suggested that she call her drug counselor first and let him know that she was home. Mary agreed. The counselor said he was just walking out the door to eat pizza and invited her to join him. That sounded good to Mary, so he picked her up in a few minutes. After a few pieces of pizza, she

Inhalants are no laughing matter: There is a risk of sudden death (SSD) and damage to the liver, kidneys, and brain can be permanent.

consented to go to a small treatment facility five hours away from home for a two-week trial. It was clear that she could come home in two weeks if she changed her mind. They left town within the hour.

After two months (not two weeks) she was feeling like a new person, or perhaps it was the old Mary finally having a chance to shine again. She was released to a halfway house about two hours from her home.

At present Mary is living with a family within a few miles of the halfway house. She needs the support and structure both the family and the halfway house

provide. Her one visit home was brief by her own choice. She is afraid of falling back into the old traps, the old relationships, and the old lifestyle that could have killed her.

After four months of sobriety, during a recent home visit Mary said, "The physical death of an addict is oftentimes thought to be the worst consequence of using." She disagrees. Mary feels that spiritual death is more lonely and cold than physical death could ever be, and she is learning to love again.

Now that she's learned some hard lessons about the hope and joy in a life without sniffing, she is ready to go back to high school and get another kind of education, and with this education she gets a diploma at the end. ▀

FOR INFORMATION AND FREE MATERIALS CONTACT:

National Inhalant Prevention Coalition
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345
1-800-269-4237

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LISTENING

FEEDBACK FROM READERS



The Listening column this month is written by eighth grade students at Woodward Academy in College Park, Georgia. We congratulate their teacher, C. Kramlick, for encouraging the students to submit their original selections to *Listen* for possible publication. Each author will receive a *Listen* T-shirt as our way of saying thank you for being a part of *Listen* magazine.

WHY?

Why does everyone forget
who we are inside?
Why does everyone forget
what we are forced to hide?
Day after day
we wander in a world not our own.
Taking only moments
to remember our true selves.
Never letting anyone see
what we put on our shelves.
We are too afraid to show them
what we are inside.
We're too afraid they'll laugh
and push us to the side.
Why are we like this,
so cruel and unforgiving?
Why are we so afraid of living?
Why does everyone forget
who we are inside?

Katy Bosse, 14
Locust Grove, Georgia

WATER

I roll over mountains and the highest hills.
I nourish the ground with my life.
I help all, even husband and wife.
I provide a home for many creatures
and fall from the sky.
I pour out of eyes when babies cry.
I am water.

Saif Zaman, 15
Lilburn, Georgia

RAIN

The thirsty dirt drinks,
slurping each water droplet,
not wanting to share.

Gabrielle Morrow, 15
Stone Mountain, Georgia

I AM

I stand straight tall and proud.
My arms are swaying back and forth,
as my feet are planted in the ground.
I am climbed upon,
and as I look around,
I am surrounded by people
resting beneath me,
wearing clothes with patches of green all over.
I nurse the child's need for play;
I heal the sleeping people below me.
I am a caretaker,
a nurse,
a healer,
and a playmate.
I am a tree.

Hillary Bauer, 15
Atlanta, Georgia

I Am a Flower

Sometimes I am a flower
with colorful petals and leaves.
I can be beautiful
until someone picks me.
Too soon I will wither and die,
and be forgotten.
Sometimes I am a flower.

Anne Barnette, 16
Smyrna, Georgia

Beat the Homework Blues

E-Eugh! Homework! It's enough to mess up an entire weekend, right? You want to spend the weekend with your friends at the mall. Or take in the latest video game at the Zone-out Shop. Or catch the eight-hour Trek-athon on TV. And there, sitting on the desk in your bedroom, is a stack of books—two grueling hours of homework! Help!

Well, help is on the way. While homework is seldom as much fun as playing video games or hanging out with your friends at the mall, you *can* improve your attitude, involve less time, and possibly “up” your grades with a little bit of homework savvy. Take the following quiz to discover what you know and don't know about homework.

• **1. Homework teaches me how to:**

- ☐ (A) follow directions
- ☐ (B) apply research skills

- ☐ (C) manage my time
- ☐ (D) study independently
- ☐ (E) all of the above

• **2. When I sit down to do my homework, I:**

- ☐ (A) can't remember how to do the assignment
- ☐ (B) wish I had the phone number of the class genius
- ☐ (C) wonder whether or not the teacher is grading on the curve
- ☐ (D) crank up the stereo
- ☐ (E) can't find a pencil

• **3. When I think about doing my homework, I:**

- ☐ (A) think boring
- ☐ (B) think food
- ☐ (C) think impossible
- ☐ (D) think video games

• **4. I study:**

- ☐ (A) a specific length of time
- ☐ (B) however long it takes
- ☐ (C) as little as possible

ANSWERS:

• **1. (E) All of the above.**

(A) Learning how to follow directions is a skill you will need the rest of your life, whether you become an airplane mechanic, an office administrator, or a Navy Seal.

(B) The same is true for applying research skills. It isn't always what you know that is most important; it's how to find the information that spells success.

(C) Each of us has been given the exact same amount of time each day—60 seconds each minute, 60 minutes each hour, 24 hours each day. What we do with that time determines our life experience.

(D) Studying independently can be lonely at times, but solving a problem on one's own is an incredible high.

• **2. If, when you sit down to do your homework, you:**

(A) can't remember how to do the assignment, it would help if you bought an assignment notebook to write down the teacher's directions in an orderly

fashion. For long-term projects, you can record when the project is due as well. If you don't understand the assignment when the teacher is giving it, ask questions until you do understand.

(B) had the phone number of the class genius, you might get by an Algebra I assignment, but in the long run figuring the answers out for yourself is the surest way to learn not only the answers, but the process for finding out the answers.

(C) forget the teacher's grading system, don't worry; just do the work as best you can. An A means nothing if by the time you see it on your report card you can't remember anything you learned.

(D) crank up the stereo, go ahead. Wear earphones to protect the rights of others. Surprised? Bach, Chopin, Mozart, Beethoven—the music of champions.

Research shows that students who study while listening to classical music routinely get better grades.

(E) habitually can't find a pencil, can't remember where you put your calculator, or can't locate any paper, you need to get organized. You waste valuable time scouring the house for basic tools. Just as a carpenter keeps a well-stocked toolbox, and a tailor a well-organized sewing chest, so a student needs a study box stocked with whatever tools needed to complete a project—markers, pens, paper, etc.

• **3. If, when you think about doing your homework, you:**

(A) think boring, you should remember that attitude is everything. And no matter how you fantasize that your biology assignment is a “federation directive” on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, you will probably still need to rev up your engines, beginning with a positive attitude. A regular study time will help. Just knowing it's something you need to do if you want to get

good grades will help. Take time to celebrate when you keep to your schedule for an entire week or month—maybe a trip to the roller rink or a day rock climbing with friends.

(B) think food—that's right! Finger foods to nibble on while you study are a great idea. Your best source of study snacks are carrot sticks, celery, radishes, cucumbers—even handfuls of dry cereals such as Cheerios or Kix might help.

(C) think impossible, remember that it's not, no matter how high the tower of homework might seem. Every tower is built one brick at a time and can be taken down one brick at a time as well. Before you start, plan your attack. Some students like to tackle the hard assignments first. Others prefer to hit the easy ones to build confidence for the tougher ones. When you've finished, let your family and friends share

Each of us has been given the same amount of time each day. What we do with that time determines our life experience.

in your accomplishments. Talk about what you did with someone important to you—a parent, a grandparent, a friend. They're your best cheerleaders.

(D) think video games, promise yourself a reward when you finish your work. Something fun. Maybe not immediately, but soon. Whatever it is will be more fun knowing you worked for it.

• 4. A specific length of time set aside each evening will help you develop good study habits. If you don't have any homework, use the time to read a book. If an assignment takes additional time, reward yourself in the same way adult workers get overtime. Keep a log of your working hours. And when you clock up enough overtime, do something special—an extra visit to the mall, a pizza with friends, your favorite *Simpsons* rerun. ▀

CLUES TO BETTER HOMEWORK SKILLS:

- ☐ 1. Buy and use an assignment notebook.
- ☐ 2. Set a time to study and stick to it.
- ☐ 3. The right foods and music can help you study.
- ☐ 4. Set goals and reward yourself.
- ☐ 5. Share your successes with others.

• Attitude is everything. No matter how high your tower of homework may be it can be taken down one brick at a time. Here's an interesting item: Research shows that students who study while listening to classical music routinely get better grades.



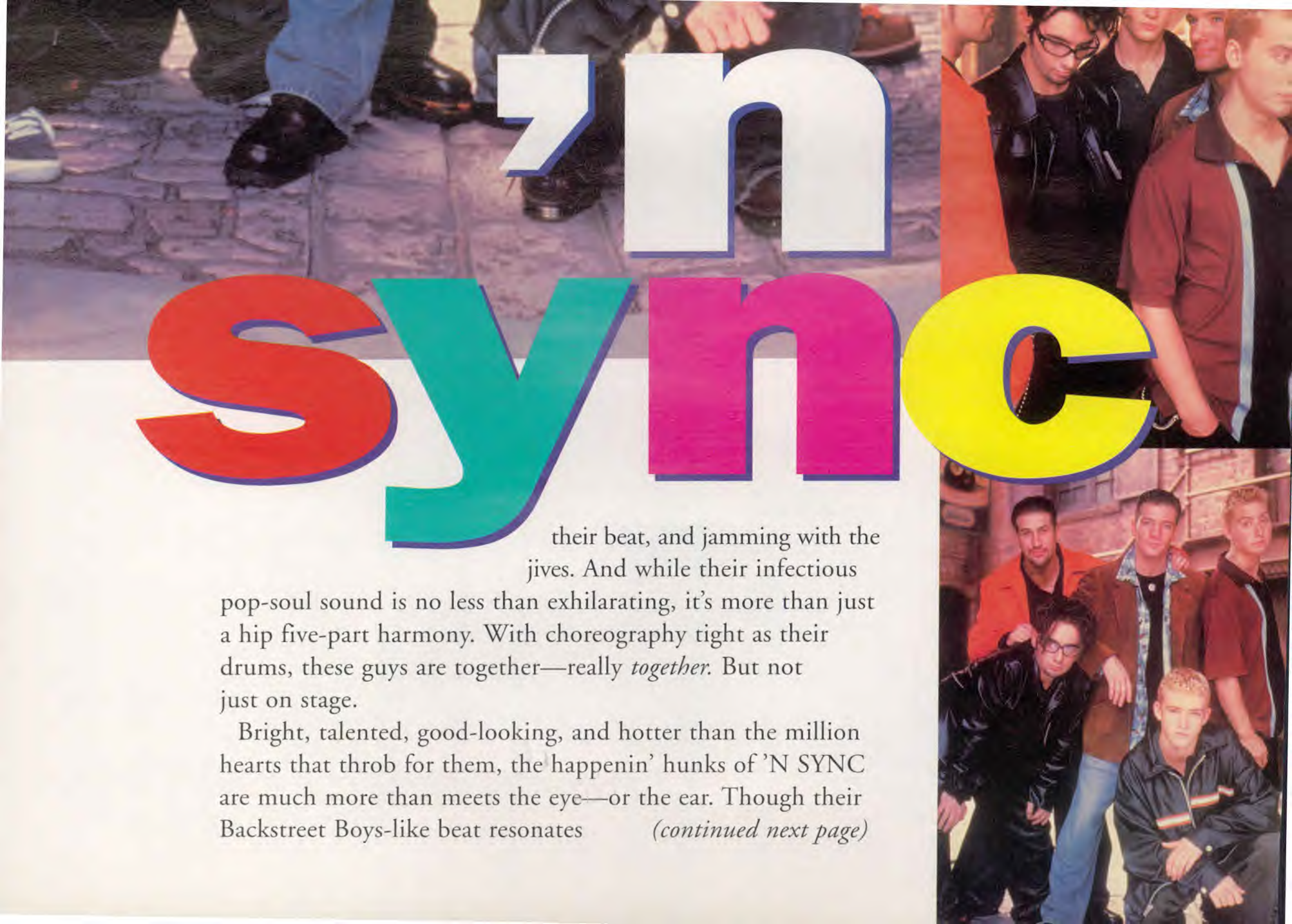
ILLUSTRATION: RANDY JAMISON



article by
SHELLIE M. FREY

Five teen icons with values for a theme . . .

It takes no more than a single synthesized chord and an initial glimpse of them for the crowd to explode with excitement. In less than a nanosecond, it seems, 'N SYNC has an entire stadium rocking to their rhythm, bouncing to



'n sync

their beat, and jamming with the jives. And while their infectious pop-soul sound is no less than exhilarating, it's more than just a hip five-part harmony. With choreography tight as their drums, these guys are together—really *together*. But not just on stage.

Bright, talented, good-looking, and hotter than the million hearts that throb for them, the happenin' hunks of 'N SYNC are much more than meets the eye—or the ear. Though their Backstreet Boys-like beat resonates

(continued next page)



the boys of 'N SYNC have all managed to maintain positive, productive, drug-free lives. "We just don't do it," explains Chris. "That's not our style."

- 'N SYNC (JC, Joey, Justin, Lance, and Chris) with their mega recording success and sold-out concerts have already gained wide international acclaim.



deeply throughout groove-seeking souls worldwide, their values, characters, and demeanors are felt even deeper.

The five individual icons who make up the electrifying ensemble 'N SYNC actually came from all across the United States to form a band in Orlando, Florida.

Immediately after a successful performance in Germany, JC, Joey, Justin, Lance, and Chris released a self-titled debut album that was originally released in Munich. No doubt you've heard some of their smash hits: "I Want You Back" and "Tearing Up My Heart" each became gold in Europe.

Although their handsome mugs have been plastered all over music magazines everywhere, 'N SYNC is not just your flash-in-the-pop-music-pan teen idol act. Showbiz veterans themselves, the group consists of accomplished performers in their own right. Their versatility ranges from their trademark pop-soul to a capella rap to the simple bliss of easy-listening ballads.

Currently based in Orlando, the members of the group come from Washington, D.C., home for "JC" Chazez, and Memphis, Tennessee, native Justin Timberlake's home. JC and Justin met several years ago on the set of Disney's *Mickey Mouse Club*. After the show ended, JC and Justin found themselves in Nashville at the same time working with the same vocal coach and writers, but on separate solo projects. Justin was called back to Orlando, where he hooked up with Chris Kirkpatrick from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The trio then met New Yorker Joey Fatone in a local Orlando club. The four would go out clubbing, where their slick dance-floor moves had everyone wanting to know what group they were in.

Inspired, the quartet decided to form a band and started looking for a bass voice. Through Justin's

vocal coach in Tennessee the gang hooked up with green-eyed blond James Lance Bass (a.k.a. Lance), a crooner from Clinton, Mississippi. Lance fit right in with the group with his basso profundo. The band mates may have come from all over the U.S., but JustiN, ChriS, JoeY, LantseN (Lance's occasional nickname), and JC discovered they were immediately 'N SYNC.

I met up with this sensational



We try to hang around people who don't use drugs, and that makes it easier for us.

quintet at a charity event in Anaheim, California. Sponsored by KIIS-FM in Los Angeles, this nonprofit fund-raiser was instigated to raise money for the Los Angeles Breast Cancer Alliance. Since this was all volunteer 'N SYNC performed free of charge along with Gloria Estefan, Mariah Carey, Will Smith, Olivia Newton-John, Tom Jones, Amber, All Saints, Paula Cole, Vonda Shepard, Hootie and the Blowfish, Meredith Brooks, and Wyclef Jean of the Fugees. Needless to say, 'N SYNC had the fans eating out of their hands.

Young, yet seasoned; fresh, yet

polished; it's commendable that such a youthful group of pop icons have hopped on the rock and roll fast track while staying on the right track. Though they have achieved rapid notoriety and worldwide success this past year, the boys of 'N SYNC have all managed to maintain positive, productive, drug-free lives.

"We just don't do it," explains Chris matter-of-factly. "That's not our style," adds JC. Lance explains that environment and social settings play a role in helping them avoid drugs. "We try to hang around people who don't use drugs, and that makes it easier for us. Also, our families help us. Being around them and their influence has helped steer us in the right direction."

While their life path does not include harmful substances, it does include such things as solid relationships, respect for others, and unity within the group. Band members say it's important to work together as a team. "Usually we agree," explains Joey, on an America Online chat line. "But if we don't, we talk it out and deal with it. Once we come to a decision on something, we all back it up completely."

Unified on stage and off, the 'N SYNCers say that it is this mutual respect and camaraderie that contributes to the band's ultimate longevity. "Some of us were friends before [the band]," explains Justin. "That's why we think that we'll last a long time; we weren't put together by a record company."

As their stardom continues to rise in the pop music galaxy, 'N SYNC reminds *Listen* readers everywhere to shoot for their own stellar goals in life. "Don't let anyone tell you that you can't [accomplish something]," says Joey. "Stay determined and achieve your dreams."

Sound advice for someone who's always 'N SYNC. ■

MY ALCOHOLIC

This reads like fiction, but the author's experience is all too typical of the horrors caused by alcohol.

Quiet and alone, I sat beside the emaciated body of Judd, my 38-year-old alcoholic husband, who lay in the mourning room of the city mortuary. Only yesterday he had been alive and in an uncontrollable rage had started toward me, fists doubled up to strike me. Suddenly he fell to the floor, blood pouring from his mouth from the hemorrhage that ended his alcoholic life.

I was 16 years old when I met Judd Warren, a meat cutter where my parents shopped. I was reserved, shy, and inexperienced, didn't date, drink, or smoke like some of my classmates, and had little knowledge or experience with the outside world.

I liked Judd, was attracted to him, and enjoyed the few times he took me out for pizza. On my eighteenth birthday Judd took me to a swanky new restaurant, ordering champagne with dinner. He "toasted" several times, inviting me to "just taste it," but I pleasantly declined.

No way was I going to drink! We ate in silence. I was uneasy.

Suddenly Judd grabbed my hand and asked me to marry him.

"Cindy," he said tearfully, "I love you. If you'll marry me, I'll stop drinking. *Positive*. I'd have something to live for, someone to come home to. I need help to stop drinking." With tears running down his cheeks, he blurted out that he was divorced because he

and his first wife tried to drink the town dry. Now he wanted to stop drinking forever.

I was touched that Judd confided in me. I also wanted to help him. Later I realized that anyone unfamiliar with drinking wouldn't know that a drinker will make any promise that serves their purpose—but keeping the promise is extremely difficult. And other drinkers will make fun of the person trying to get disentangled from the octopus of alcoholism. They'll make such taunts as "What are

you, a scaredy cat?" or "You're just a chicken," or "Won't your wife let you drink?" These are just some of the irresponsible remarks made to shame a drinker into drinking again.

Naively I committed to Judd. We were married quietly and settled down to live in my parents' home.

I soon realized that my new husband was not changing. It was drinks before breakfast, with breakfast, with lunch, with dinner, and a long evening with the bottle to soothe his nerves.

Violence became a daily performance. A push into a wall, a push into a chair, all in playfulness, he explained. Days started with a "cross me if you

dare" look, and Judd could get mad enough to hit me just by looking at me.

There were arguments and fights about drinking, broken furniture, smashed lamps, burned chairs, food

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B L E N D E N A S O N N I C H S E N

thrown on the kitchen floor because I was trying to poison him, my graduation book and letters torn up, hair curlers and makeup destroyed. I got black eyes, split lips, hair pulled, arms twisted, verbal abuse, and “knockdowns” when Judd felt I needed “supervision.”

When my husband lost his job for arguing with a customer, he came home in a vile mood, announcing that we were moving to Las Vegas, where there were plenty of jobs for an A-1 meat cutter who was appreciated.

Judd was right—he was the finest meat cutter anywhere, and he was fired from every job for drinking. We lived in cheap motels and had no money or credit. My husband stubbornly refused to let me work. He proudly announced he was an alcoholic, and if I had any sense, I would drink and smoke and live like the rest of the world.

Our marriage was a shambles. Judd screaming that he was sorry he married me; that he wished I were dead. I told myself my husband was going through a difficult phase. In time he would see the light and stop drinking. Oh, the optimism of youth!

I thought AA might help us, so one day I timidly mentioned going to an AA meeting. Judd went wild—screaming and cursing.

**“Are you crazy?”
my husband yelled
as he took me by
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to my face with such
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knocked out my
front teeth.**

“Are you crazy?” he yelled as he took me by surprise with a fist into my face with such force that he knocked out my front teeth. Enraged, my husband slammed the door, and I heard the car start. I knew if Judd came back, he could kill me.

Cleaning myself up and bleeding into a towel, I went to the nearest phone and called the police. At the station they asked questions, and my answers led me to the bus station with a ticket to my home in California and \$4.00 in my

hand from sympathetic police officers.

Home again, I sat down to relax and think. A fierce pounding brought me to the front door. A shabbily dressed man, reeling in a haze of alcohol, handed me a piece of crumpled paper. Politely tipping his hat, he blubbered, “I’ve come for my house.” What did he mean, *his* house?

Smoothing out the wrinkles, I read, “I paid Judd Warren \$500 for his house,” signed Boomer Beam, ex-fighter, and dated two days before.

I shut the door and angrily sat down. Another pounding sounded, and my husband burst in with a look of hate, fist doubled up to hit me, when suddenly he clutched his chest and fell to the floor, blood pouring from his mouth from the hemorrhage that ended his life.

Alcoholism is deadly for many. It destroys not only body functions, it also destroys the mind. ▀



THE MAGICAL EDU-TAINER



Magician Steve Varro travels the world with a magic show that entertains and makes some important points on life as well.

ARTICLE BY CARL FLETCHER

When Steve Varro was 9 years old, he changed five of his mother's nickels into five dimes. At age 10 he made his dad's handkerchief vanish, and at 13 he poured a pitcher of Grandma's milk into a newspaper, only to have the moo juice reappear in a glass! Steve was definitely the family illusionist, learning and practicing tricks from a little magic kit he had bought.

"Fantastic, Steve!" his father shouted at his sister's birthday party. Steve had just blown the candles out on her cake, somehow getting them to relight by

themselves. "Great!" shouted all the kids when he made the broccoli disappear so they didn't have to eat it.

"You really do have a knack for doing tricks," his mother said with a smile as he pulled rabbits out of her best hat. "But I still don't understand how you do them," she admitted.

"Oh, it's just an illusion, Mom, based on the quickness of the trick. It's not really magic."

"Well," she said, "you're so good at it that when you grow up, you'll have to become a full-time illusionist, entertaining audiences wherever you go."

"I'd like to, Mom," he beamed. "Ever since I went to my first magic show, that's all I ever wanted to do."

Now Steve's grown, and his childhood dreams have come true. Presently he travels the world with a magical show that entertains and educates teenagers, teaching them many lessons about life. As he tours schools and colleges and visits with youth groups, he shares some of his best tricks so young people can make the best choices.

Two of his illusions he performs to help kids stay off drugs. The first, called the Bongo Hat, has been a favorite in the United States, India, and the Philippines. Steve places a small hat on a teenager's head and says, "Drugs are like this little hat. We think we can knock it off anytime we want to." Steve then makes the hat bigger and again places it on the teenager's head. "Now it's a party hat, because we think we're having fun with drugs. 'No problem; drugs aren't that big a deal,' we say."

Still bigger, the hat now begins to restrict the teenager's vision. "The power of drugs keeps on growing. Soon we can't see what we're doing. We think we're clever, but the truth is we are starting to make mistakes and are messing things up," adds Steve.

The hat then gets even bigger, and as Steve places it on the teenager's head again, he says, "The hold drugs has on us doesn't stop there. . . . We get to the point where we can't see that we are damaging our bodies, wasting our money, and even hurting our families."

The hat then becomes even bigger and covers the whole head. Steve says, "By now drugs have taken over our

"Drugs can turn us into a monster. They can ruin our lives, and we don't often see it."

minds, blinded our eyes, and we are addicted. Drugs can turn us into a monster. They can run and ruin our lives, and we often don't see it. Don't let drugs ruin your life. Say *no* before you even try them."

Almost as popular a trick with kids as the Bongo Hat is the Tiger Lady. Here Steve shows the audience three big cards, each with a tiger on them. The last card has a picture of a woman riding a tiger. As each card is shown, it is turned around and then later turned back toward the audience. When the last card appears, the woman is gone and the tiger is smiling because it has eaten her. Then Steve tells the story of a woman who turned her back on the advice of those who loved her, and went for a ride on the back of a tiger. She was having a lot of fun, but when she least expected it, the tiger turned on her and killed her.

"Drugs kill," warns Steve. "They may seem like a thrilling experience, but sooner or later they're going to turn on you and destroy you. Don't let your life be ruined by the temporary excitement that leads to *death*. In the United States 500,000 people a year die from drugs. Don't be one of them."

Steve meets young people from so many different backgrounds: some who think they are better than others, and others who feel they're looked down on by some. So he has developed a trick that demonstrates that all kids are equal and should be treated with equal respect. He takes three pieces of rope: one short, one medium, and one long. "These ropes are just like people," Steve points out. "Some are tall like Michael Jordan; some are medium height; some are short. Some people are rich; some are poor; and some are in between. We shouldn't call people names just because they are different to us, neither should we listen to people who call us names. Being different just makes us unique and special, but even with these differences we are all equal and need to treat each other as equals," he says with a flourish, as suddenly the three ropes he's holding out miraculously all become the same length.

Although Steve believes that all kids are equal, his travels have also taught him that all kids don't share the same agenda, and unfortunately some kids have bad agendas. If you hang out with them, you're more likely to get into crime or trouble. So choose your friends wisely. To illustrate this, Steve places four small scarves in a box. One is yellow, one red, one purple, and one green. When the box is opened, the scarves

are all blended together into one large scarf to demonstrate that the friends we choose will have an effect on the person we become.

An admirer of sports teams who play to help each member of the team succeed, Steve has a trick that teaches young people to seek help with problems they can't seem to solve alone. A member of the audience is asked to choose one of the two ropes he's holding. Then the teenager is told how to tie a knot in the center of the rope without letting go of the two ends of the rope. But each time the teenager tries, he fails to tie the knot, even though he seems to be doing everything correctly. After several tries and several failures, Steve helps him by taking hold of the ends of the rope, and together they are able to get a knot to appear.

"Sometimes when we try to solve problems and can't, there's no shame in asking for help. Sometimes it takes teamwork to overcome difficulties. If your troubles seem more than you can handle, ask someone you respect and trust for help. Work as a team, and you'll be able to overcome the problems before they get any bigger," says Steve.

Of course, Steve's show is not only educational. Some of it is just pure entertainment—such as the two-minute Flash Magic he begins the program with. He plays fast-paced music with a series of quick effects. A silk scarf vanishes and a cane appears in its place, then a burning string becomes the scarf. With the wave of a magic wand, a candle changes color, then vanishes into thin air. Finally the wand vanishes, leaving behind only the scarf.

"It's an exciting start, full of interest and variety. It sets the scene for an enjoyable show. There's not meant to be a lesson in there, but you know, sometimes it kind of reminds me of how a teenager's life should be: exciting and full of interest and variety. Developing years that set the scene for an enjoyable life. Providing, of course, that they make the right kind of choices," says Steve with a smile. ▀

"Some kids have bad agendas. If you hang out with them, you're more likely to get into trouble."

"There is no shame in asking for help. If your troubles seem more than you can handle, ask someone you trust and respect for help."





It's like riding a motorcycle on water or snowmobiling across the waves. Either way it's an aqua blast—a thrill more and more teens are getting into. You guessed it; we're talking personal watercraft (aka PWC). As young riders all over the aqua globe bounce from wake to wake, challenge each other to speed duels, perfect their 360s,

and explore new fluidity, riding personal watercraft has rapidly become the fastest-growing boating activity in the world.

Interestingly enough, the first personal watercraft was invented by a former motorcycle racer, Clayton Jacobson II. Enchanted by both the sea and the individual freedom of motorcycle riding, Clayton wanted to take the thrills he had experienced on land and transfer them onto water—with



Running on water

*Check out the growing wave
of personal watercraft*

S H E L L I E M . F R E Y



fewer physical repercussions than on land. So he designed a string of PWCs, the first of which looked like a beached whale with motorcycle handles. Initially Sea-Doo (through their Canadian company, Bombardier) hired Jacobson to design watercraft for them, and produced 1,500 copies of this "first-of-its-kind" craft. These sit-down models reached a lightning speed of 25 mph and were only a teaser of what was still

to come. Unfortunately, their success was only short-lived, and Sea-Doo was forced out of production. Still, Jacobson was inspired, and was determined to perfect his PWC quest.

Catching the vision, Kawasaki (via Clayton) grabbed the reins and manufactured and marketed the first stand-up Jet Ski. (Sea-Doo is now back in the saddle with a successful line of PWCs.) Some say this breakthrough in

1973 was the catalyst that helped personal watercraft take off and pick up some pace. Jet Skiing allowed for more maneuverability than the original sit-down, and led to more creativity and development of the sport. Watercraft race competition is a direct result of Kawasaki's efforts. Freestylers spun and flipped the Jet Ski, rivaling Flipper and his school of finned friends. The sport was now moving ahead at full speed.

World champion Jet Skier Christy Carlton has enjoyed much success and avoided drugs and alcohol. "Drugs are dead-ends" says the champ.



Jet skiing is also a sport that the handicapped can enjoy.



A myriad of other watercraft were later developed. Kawasaki added a hybrid stand-up/sit-down boat called the X2. Yamaha got on the bandwagon and introduced their Wave Runner, later to be developed into a highly popular watercraft line. Part of the appeal was that Wave Runners seat two, even three, people, and some can even pull a skier. Needless to say, the watercraft industry has exploded since its inception in 1968, and there are dozens of models, styles, and brands to choose from today—most hovering around 60 mph.

Yet physical development of the craft is not the only thing that's evolved over the past 30 years. Watercraft application has expanded and diversified in many directions. Take, for instance,

Kawasaki's rescue program that has helped save thousands of lives over the years. Yes, just like in *Baywatch*, PWCs help lifeguards, dive operations, patrol divisions, or anyone in pursuit of saving a life, getting there quicker and with more maneuverability than before.

"Personal watercraft take a rescue from static to dynamic," says Ernie Ojeda, master instructor at the College of Search and Rescue (COSAR) in Los Angeles, California. In reference to flood rescues, Ojeda adds, "Traditional floodwater rescue involves tossing a rope to the victim as they are swept by. You get one shot at the rescue. Personal watercraft allow us repeated attempts at picking up a victim."

Kawasaki also offers a national

tour designed to develop adaptive water sports programs for people with disabilities. A team of disabled U.S.A. sports instructors, led by three-time disabled water-ski champion Bill Bowness, teaches people with disabilities how to water-ski and ride Kawasaki Jet Ski personal watercraft. The national team also trains the local volunteers in the latest state-of-the-art techniques and equipment. This enables each local site to continue the specialized water sports instruction once "Operation Challenge" moves to the next city.

Yamaha has also gotten into the loop. Honing in on high school students, Yamaha sponsored a spring break program in Lake Havasu City, Arizona, called "Teen Break." The program entailed a buoy course competition that first required teenagers to pass a safety course in order to enter. The program, which was designed to help keep kids off the streets and away from drugs and alcohol, awarded a brand-new personal watercraft to the teen winner.

World champion Jet Skier Christy Carlson is a shining example of how one has succeeded in this sport and avoided drugs and alcohol. "Drugs are dead ends," says Christy, who is also a devout Christian. "God wants to do fantastic things in our lives. And when we turn things over to Him, great things happen." So when people offer her substances that she knows will mess her up, she has no problem saying, "Hey, man, do what you want to do, but it's not for me!"

If you've always wanted to do something positive and fun in your life, such as, for instance, being the captain of your own ship, hop on a personal watercraft. You can rent them now at most major lakes, rivers, and beaches.

The risk of fatality in a boating accident is increased 10 times if the operator has been drinking irresponsibly. Injury or death occurs in more than half of the alcohol-related accidents. It is estimated that one third the amount of alcohol that makes a person legally too drunk to drive on the highway is enough to rob a boat driver of their critical judgment on the water.

Test your own jump height, speed, or 360-degree spinout methods, and see how you fare. Once you start jetting across those waves like a roadrunner run amok, you won't want to settle for a mere seaside stroll anymore. **But before you take off, don't forget these vital safety guidelines:**

1. Remember that you're a boater, too. All personal watercraft are officially considered power boats by the U.S. Coast Guard. No matter how simple they are to ride, under the law they have the same requirements for registration and regulation, and they fall under the same laws as other power boats. So be sure to check out the rules at your local body of water.

2. Always wear the approved PFD (personal flotation device). It's true you won't get as tan, but if you fall off and hit your head, you'll appreciate having it on.

3. Don't even think about drinking and then driving PWCs. Unfortunately, the statistics are sobering regarding

accidents and fatalities associated with drinking and driving, even on water. The risk of fatality in a boating accident is increased 10 times if the operator has been drinking irresponsibly. Injury or death occurs in more than half of the alcohol-related accidents. It is estimated that one third the amount of alcohol that makes a person legally too drunk to drive on the highway is enough to rob a boat driver of their critical judgment on the water.

4. Check the legal driving age in your area. Some states require that PWC drivers be at least 12 years old and pass a basic boating safety course before launching.

5. Always tell someone where you'll be and when you will return. If you run into trouble, this will help authorities find you more easily.

6. Never go out alone; use the buddy system. Ride with someone in a boat or on another personal watercraft.

7. Know your limits and ride according to your abilities, not someone else's.

8. Don't exceed the load limit.

9. Know how to swim. If you don't, learn before you take off on a PWC. This will increase your physical abilities and your confidence.

10. Be courteous. Stay clear of groups of swimmers, kayakers, people fishing, and especially other PWC riders. Have fun, but respect the limits.

11. Rescue. If someone is in trouble in the water, use elementary rescue methods first, such as throwing something that floats to the victim. Only as a last resort should you ever enter the water to save someone. Even then, take a buoyant object such as a PFD with you. As a boater you are obligated to render assistance to someone in distress. ■

FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE

(continued from page 4)

"I can clearly see the dilemma, son, but I can't tell you how you should handle it. I can tell you that we are very serious about a drug-free workplace, and I can also tell you that you won't be hired without a drug test even if you are my son."

"This whole thing is so stupid, Dad. I wasn't even wanting to try marijuana. It was awful. It tasted terrible, it smelled terrible, and I would never try it again. How can it possibly be fair that this one stupid act would show up on a drug test and make people think I use drugs? How can that be fair?"

"Chet," his father moved to the corner of the desk and sat down. "Before you slide into a pitiful victim routine, let's talk turkey. There is right and wrong. It's a lot easier to determine which is which when you take advantage of the guidelines already in place for us. The Ten Commandments, the golden rule, the laws that govern our society. Marijuana use is illegal. Even if you ignore all the moral, religious, and health issues at play here, that's all you need to establish it as a very clear 'wrong.' You are experiencing a degree of consequences firsthand. Believe me, son, you could be facing a much graver set of circumstances. Say you boys had been involved in an accident and someone was injured or killed. The seemingly insignificant 'burning one' would take on a very serious light. I see it often, Chet. I know you're not a junkie, but I can't tell you what the drug test will show."

The door opened, and Mr. Moss stuck his head inside. "Mrs. Morgan said you were here, Chet," he said. "Come on back when you finish your visit, and we'll get this show on the road."

How can it possibly be fair that this one stupid act would show up on a drug test and make people think I use drugs? How can that be fair?" Chet said out loud. "Chet," his father responded, "let's talk turkey..."



Chet looked at the casual way his father regarded Mr. Moss, as though he had not participated in the conversation they had just shared. He realized that his father

was truly leaving it for him to handle. His first emotion was one of panic, a feeling of being deserted and abandoned. But as his father's gaze returned to him and he saw the same adoration he had always seen, he felt an amazing calm.

"I really appreciate your giving me the opportunity to work here this summer, Mr. Moss," he said, "but I've decided to spend the summer in Iowa with my uncle. He has a farm there, and I think I could use the fresh air and hard work."

Chet searched his father's face for any sign of surprise or shock. He found nothing registered.

"Guess we just don't offer enough physical exercise for the boy, Gus," Mr. Moss said to Chet's father as he patted his own little potbelly. "Maybe next year, Chet." He ducked out the door as quickly as he had appeared.

"Do you think Uncle Willis could use some help on the farm, Dad?"

"I'm sure he'd be thrilled, son," Mr. Branston said. "But he won't be able to pay you until he sells his harvest in the fall. Your trip to Europe will have come and gone by then."

"I know. But like you said earlier, Dad, I'm only a freshman, and Europe will probably be around for a while longer. There's a possibility that I could take the drug test without any trace of the marijuana I tried yesterday, but I'm not willing to have people think that I'm a user if something did show up. I know what I did yesterday was stupid, and I know you're probably right about my getting off easy."

"I'm sorry about your trip, Chet," Mr. Branston said as he put his arm around his son's shoulders. "But I'm extremely proud of the way you have handled this situation. Now let's go break the news about Iowa to your mother." ■

TAHJ MOWRY

(continued from page 9)

I didn't want to wash it off!

Listen: What has been your favorite project you've worked on?

TM: My favorite thing I've worked on would have to be *Star Trek: Voyager*. That was pretty cool because I got to meet almost everybody on *Star Trek*. In the makeup room there are so many masks on the wall, and it takes three hours for each mask. All I had was this little tattoo on my forehead, and it took an hour [to apply] because it was so detailed. From a distance you can't see all the details, but when you go really close up you can see all the little lines.

Listen: Do you think your little brother will follow you into show business?

TM: He wants to, but my mom wants him to be a regular kid, you know. Be in sports. He loves sports. He loves soccer. He's doing karate right now. He finished basketball. It wasn't like games; it was just teaching him how to play. This year he is running track with me. And he's only 4!

Listen: What kind of sports do you like?

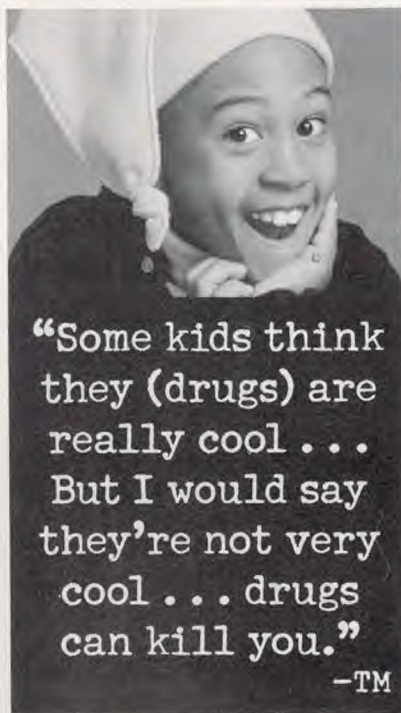
TM: I love all kinds of sports. I play football and basketball, and I run track. I love hockey, because I know how to ice-skate very well. One time I skated so fast that they kicked me off the ice. I asked my mom if I could play, but she said, 'Football is enough.'

Listen: What part of being an entertainer do you like best?

TM: I love how in a longer live presentation you can develop your facial expressions more, and with so many people in the audience, they can connect with you.

Listen: Have you done much live performance?

TM: It was my first experience. I did *Oliver Twist*, and I was Twist. It was in Philadelphia, but we



didn't make it to Broadway. That's why we're trying it again. They want me to play it again because I haven't gotten taller. But I'm getting real tall now.

Listen: Are you going to be doing any projects with your sisters?

TM: I've been on their show three times, and they've been on my show one time. We're thinking about doing a movie together. I can't wait for that, because I love working with my sisters. Because you're side by side with your sisters!

Listen: Do your sisters give you advice in your career?

TM: Yes, they give me advice. They tell me the most important thing is to have fun. And to enjoy what you're doing. Because if you don't enjoy what you're doing, that means you don't like it. You have to like it in order to do it right.

Listen: How many hours of school do you need every day?

TM: When I get tutored on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, I get four hours, and on Thursday I get two hours, and on Friday I

get one hour. Altogether I get 15 hours a week. My real school gets 32, so that's not quite half the hours.

Listen: Does that mean you have to make up the other hours?

TM: Nope. I work fast because I'm the only one in there.

Listen: What's your favorite subject?

TM: My favorite subjects are math and English. English is a lot of writing, but I'm really good at it. Last report card I got straight A's. I'm in sixth grade. Right now in math I'm learning division of decimals. They're pretty hard. I got a computer for Christmas, and I write a lot of stories.

Listen: What first got you interested in acting?

TM: I saw other kids on TV that were my age, and I said if they can do it, I can do it. I told my mom I wanted to be an actor. She said OK. She started calling all different agencies, and one day all the phones started ringing and there were all sorts of agents on the telephone. So we finally picked one.

Listen: So you do lots of things well. God's been good to you.

TM: Oh, yes. He's blessing our family very well.

Listen: What would you want to say to the readers about drugs?

TM: Some kids think they are really cool because other kids use them. But I would say they are not very cool, because drugs can kill you. They can get you very sick, and it's not right to do it. If somebody comes up to you and tries to force you to use them, just run away.

Listen: Anything you would like to say to the readers who are interested in getting into acting?

TM: I would tell them, because they think acting is really easy, that it's not, because it is very hard. You have to know what you're doing. It's pretty fun, though, once you know what you're doing. ■

JUST BETWEEN US

I BELIEVE

It was time to leave. In fact, aides were almost pushing me out of the office complex after nearly a one-hour interview. I wished that the conversation could continue, as we were pretty much interrupting a good discussion midsentence. But what stuck with me were General Barry McCaffrey's last words repeated several times: "We believe in what you're doing. You're doing a good job; keep it up."

As many of our teen readers and adults, including teachers and other educators, probably know quite well, General McCaffrey is head of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. He holds a Cabinet-level position in the administration and comes from a distinguished military background that includes a stint in Vietnam during the war of the same name and time as an aide to General Colin Powell.

Often during our interview the general referred to "my mission." He is taking it as an assignment worth dying for to protect teens from the drug culture and the societal temptations offered for underage drinking, smoking, and illegal drug use. And we certainly were agreed that this is a battle worth fighting for, as many of the teen victims are dying and losing out on life potential for lack of assistance. (Look for an interview with the general in our October issue.)

In past consultations with government officials regarding the "War on Drugs," there has been a public reticence to use war terminology. That's understandable, as no government wants to imply that in fighting drugs they are opposed to their own citizenry. That said, the mere fact of the general's presence and the reality of the situation does imply a war-footing situation.

I believe we are battling for the very survival of this present generation.

I believe in offering young people something better.

I believe in offering young people hope for a dynamic tomorrow in our society.

I believe that a drug-free commitment is basic for success and personal fulfillment.

I believe that every young person has the right to correct information regarding the dangers of drug use and the rewards of aiming high and living drug free.

I believe that every young person has the right to protective information in this war.

I believe that every young person should be using *Listen* magazine—a proven drug-education and lifestyle-guidance tool.

I believe that every parent owes it to their child to make sure that tools such as *Listen* are available and that their personal example leads the way for a developing young life.

Your country, your child, your young citizen, needs you and your support.

We need true believers in a bright drug-free tomorrow for America and for all youthful citizens of the world's future.



L I N C O L N S T E E D

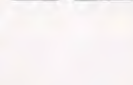
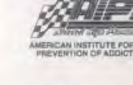
Editor **Lincoln E. Steed**
Assistant Editor **Anita L. Jacobs**

Designer **Ed Guthero**
Sales Director **Ginger Church**

Editorial Consultants: Winton Beaven, Ph.D.; Hans Diehl, Dr.H.Sc., M.P.H.; Winston Ferris; Patricia Mutch, Ph.D.; Thomas R. Neslund; Stoy Proctor, M.P.H.; Francis A. Soper, Litt.D.; Jennifer Acklam; DeWitt Williams, Ph.D.; Lars Justinen; Ed Guthero.



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AMERICA



PUZZLE BY JULIANA LEWIS

Every Second Counts

Fill each blank with the correct number. For example, the second half of a day would be the second 12 hours. The second half of a foot would be 6 inches.

1. The second half of a decade: _____ years. 180
2. The second hour after midnight: _____ a.m. 1,095
3. The second half of 150 percent: _____ percent $9\frac{1}{2}$
4. The second number to follow 1,093: _____ 500
5. The second half of a century: _____ 5
6. The second zero multiplied by 10: _____ 2
7. The second half of a yardstick: _____ feet 0
8. The second half of a millennium: _____ years 75
9. The total after the second 60 is added to 60: _____ 50
10. The second half of 19 dozen: _____ dozen $1\frac{1}{2}$

Answers: 1. 5, 2. 2, 3. 75, 4. 1,095, 5. 50, 6. 0, 7. 1 1/2, 8. 500, 9. 180, 10. 9 1/2.

The boys of 'N SYNC have all managed to maintain positive drug-free lives. "We just don't do it," explains Chris, "that's not our style."



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In This Issue

LISTEN MAGAZINE-SEPTEMBER 1999-VOLUME 52-NUMBER 9

Firsthand Experience

by Carole Ross-Oakley 2

A story of hopes, goals, and integrity . . .

The Courage to Be

by Ferne Cherne 5

Once You Know What You're Doing

by Kimberly Cheney 8

Tahj Mowry is a real talent.

No Denials

by Millie Nylan 10

Lessons from a huffer . . .



PHOTOS: (RIGHT) YAMAHA WATERCRAFT TOP: ED GUTHIERO

'N SYNC

by Shellie M. Frey 16

Five teen icons with values for a theme . . .

My Alcoholic

by Blendena Sonnichsen 20

Reads like fiction, but the author's experience is all too typical of the horrors caused by alcohol.

Running on Water

by Shellie M. Frey 24

Check out the growing wave of personal watercraft.

ASK GARY

My Best Friend Is Getting Out of a Drug Rehab Center **7**

LISTENING Why? **13**

CHOICES Beat the Homework Blues **14**

PRIME TIMES

The Magical Edu-tainer **22**

JUST BETWEEN US

I Believe **30**

WORD PUZZLE

Every Second Counts **31**



Next Month

■ UNDERLYING CAUSES

No one, including teens, is invincible

■ AIDS AND TEENS

No one is immune

■ THE ADOPTION OPTION