Know Your Children

A Symposium

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1. The School-Age Child.

By MARY E. SPENCER, Ph.D.

THE normal child of school age is at best a very complex human being. Hence, the problems at this stage of development are by no means so simple as those presented during infancy and the pre-school period. Each child comes into life a bundle of potentialities. How these various potentialities will develop depends to a large extent on environmental factors — in the child's case these are largely the personalities with whom he comes in contact. And during infancy and the pre-school years, the patterns of development are well outlined. The foundation of what the child will become has already been laid. This ground structure may evidence careful planning and well-defined outlines. Or it may have been built hit or miss, with supports too weak to carry a superstructure of any lasting value.

Or the masonry may be very shoddy, giving evidences of poor workmanship, as we review the foundation work on which the later personality and character building are to rest.

It is not, then, a new building that we who are considering the school-age child are about to begin. The foundation has been completed in the pre-school years. What we can do depends on what has gone on before. So the first task before us is that of reviewing the existing strength and weakness. For safety demands that the mistakes of the initial construction be rectified before further building can be attempted.

How can we determine when the lines are out of plumb? Where are the supports too weak? Are there any parts that cannot bear the load that is to be placed on them? Must part of the structure be torn down and built up anew? Is it even possible to make good any of these unintentional but careless errors? Fortunately for the children, it is not too late to improve the building that has gone on during infancy and the pre-school years. In many instances, the marks of repair will be there, but they will be evident only to the expert. And in any case, if repair work is necessary, it must be done.

When the children enter school, one of the first impressions educators receive concerning these youngsters leaving home for the first time is that a large number of them are not in proper physical condition to pursue their school work.

Obstetricians tell us that more than ninety per cent of all children are born normal. School statistics indicate that at school entrance from fifty to ninety per cent of all children are found to have physical defects of one kind or another.

If the defects are those of eyes or ears, school work may be seriously impeded from the start. And this often happens, as seen from the report of the United States Office of Education, which tells us that one-fourth of all children, at the end of the first year, fail to be promoted. Perhaps it is in the physical condition of the child that the foundation structure is weakest. Good health during school life calls for good health at the start.

All too early after school days have commenced the so-called "children's diseases" become rife. Many a mother who prides herself on the excellent health of her offspring during the pre-school period finds that, once the school doors have been opened to them they carry home in quick succession measles, mumps, whooping cough, diphtheria, or whatever communicable disease happens to be the rage in the first grade at the moment. Are the schools to blame here? Not entirely. It has long been an accepted principle of public health that the chance of the child for life and health depends as much upon immunization to infectious diseases as upon all other influences favorable to health. No matter how excellent the home care of the child's health may be, if a mass infection of diphtherial bacilli of sufficient virulence attacks the unsuspecting child, not "all the king's horses nor all the king's men" can prevent an attack of the dreaded disease, unless the child is carrying in his blood stream the antibodies which will neutralize the effects of the toxin. But the toxoid treatment can do this, and it is the parent's responsibility to assure the child this protection. The child today may likewise be spared the ravages and devastating after-effects of scarlet fever, whooping cough and smallpox by the use of the scientific measures for their prevention. Have we neglected to build up this protection during the pre-school years? If so, it is now our first responsibility.

But it may be with reference to the mental or emotional aspects of the child's development that omissions occur.

And these, too, must be filled in by re-education, if need be, in order to ensure a wholesome personality. Where are the problems in this field liable to occur? Taking Tilson's study as a basis, negativism or contrariness is often found as a school-age inheritance from the pre-school period. And this tendency to say, "I won't," is more often found among girls than boys. But more boys of beginning school age display such faults as temper tantrums, restlessness and destructiveness. Girls, on the other hand, are more inclined to conduct of the clinging-vine variety, with undue emotional dependence on grown-ups. Girls, too, in strict accord with the Victorian tradition of the delicate sex, are slightly more inclined to be wanting in appetite and to be capricious about food. Boys frequently show speech defects such as stammering or stuttering, indicating, perhaps, that even from the outset, women are better equipped to have the first word as well as the last.

All these personality traits evidenced in the early school years call for an understanding of their origin so that the cause may be removed. They also indicate the need of re-education through the substitution of new and more acceptable ways of behaving for the habits that must be discarded. Does the child of school age manifest any behavior traits or personality characteristics, of the types mentioned, that may have been carried over from the earlier period of development when they might have been excusable? Then these, too, must be repaired.

However, the school period is not one of repair work entirely. Although its dependence on the pre-school period cannot be overemphasized, the school period, in its own right, deserves consideration. The school-age period is one essentially of growth and development. Growth at this age is not only physical but also mental, moral and social. The framework of the life building is erected, and the

structure is closed in. A good deal of inside work is done, although the finishing touches are not completed until late in the adolescent years. In all this process of building, the home now has a co-worker in the school. Yet the ultimate responsibility as to what the outcome in every aspect will be depends upon the home. Space will allow mention of but two of its important responsibilities here — the physical well-being and the mental health of the child.

With school days as a new phase of the child's life, parents may find in themselves a tendency to place the educational aspects of the child's progress first. Where this tendency is found, it is well to remember that the child may have another opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge, whereas the demands of development cannot wait.

Whether the child learns to read at the age of five, six or seven is immaterial in the long run. Some children go to school at a later age and soon surpass their peers in educational achievements. But if an adenoid growth is not remedied, the possible resulting deafness may be irremediable. An attack of scarlet fever may leave a damaged heart or impaired kidneys. A six-year molar lost because of faulty diet or careless health habits is irreplaceable in the natural species. Early rickets may leave a child with a lifelong deformity. A shy, shut-in personality that is the result of injudicious handling in the home or at school may lead to adolescent dementia and the hospital for the mentally ill.

Failure to learn how to get along with other people may cost the child in future years his job and success in life, since both are more dependent on proper adjustments to other people than on knowledge. The cultivation of defense reactions as a means of evading the responsibilities of school life may lead to forsaking reality when the problems and conflicts of maturity seem too difficult to face.

A careful consideration of these and other effects of neglect of the physical and mental factors in child development will give ample proof that in outcomes of true happiness, efficiency and successful living, training the child of school age for physical and mental well-being is second only to training him in religion. Neither can be neglected. The schools, because of their traditional interest in the academic, are all too prone to emphasize the intellectual at the expense of the emotional, the mental and the physical. This means only one thing — the home must do its share and more if the child is to receive an all-around education and development.

Let us recount, then, some of the ways in which the home can meet its responsibilities towards the child of school age:

Give him yearly, a thorough physical examination and correct his physical defects.

Immunize him against infectious diseases.

Plan for him a healthful regime of living and see that he lives up to it, so that he can forget his health and devote his energies to the higher aims of life.

Teach him to face his conflicts squarely and solve them rather than evade them or deny them.

Teach him to assume responsibility and then live up to it.

Teach him how to get along with others so that he may know the value of friendship.

Help him to cultivate a wide variety of interests.

Imbue him with the ideal of unselfish service.

Give him the best possible training in his religion and see that he uses his knowledge in his everyday life.

With this background, the child of school age will be equipped for the next period of his development — and for life.

2. The Gang Age.

By Rev. Paul H. Furfey, Ph.D.

THE adolescent boy of fifteen or sixteen is already in many ways an adult. He is beginning to show the vocational interests which normally culminate in a job. He is beginning to show the interest in the other sex which normally leads to marriage. He has something of the adult's emotional adjustment, his self-reliance, his dependability. On the other hand, the boy of eight or nine is still very much of a child. These generalities, in slightly altered form, would apply to girls as well.

I have ventured to propose the term "the gang age" for this interesting interstitial period between the immaturity of the young boy and the comparative maturity of the adolescent. The name itself suggests one of the outstanding characteristics of the period; for the boy of the gang age is gregarious. He plays in groups. He looks upon himself as a member of a gang rather than as an individual.

If you ask the average nine-year-old boy whether he likes to play baseball, he will answer glibly enough that he does; but if you watch him at play, you will discover that he plays his baseball with a difference. He does not choose teams and play the game according to the rule book. To him baseball means a rather random throwing or batting. At most, it means a form of the game in which the players rotate in the various positions. In any case, it does not mean the standard team game. Similarly, to the nine year-old boy, football is not the team game but rather a kicking or rushing with the football.

A couple of years later all this is changed. The twelve-year-old boy does play the standard team games and he plays them with a vengeance. Put a group of twelve-year-olds on a baseball diamond and in a few minutes they will have chosen sides and started a game. Turn ten of them loose on a basketball court and it will not be long before a game is in progress. Something mysterious has happened to the psychology of the child, which makes team games seem more interesting to him than individual competition. This is the psychology of the gang age.

The twelve-year-old's preference for team games is no mere accident. It is a disposition, which is rooted very deeply in his psychology. He plays team games because group effort permeates every part of his life. This tendency to form teams or groups of some sort is so essentially a part of his psychology that the term "gang age" seems to be the most appropriate designation for the whole period.

This gang tendency has important implications from the standpoint of the recreational leader. It makes group work possible. The recreational leader may organize playgrounds for younger children, but it is almost impossible to form a real club before the gang age. Examine the rules of the great national recreational organizations — the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, the Catholic Boys Brigade, the Columbian Squires, the Wolf Cubs, the Woodcraft Indians, and the like. In almost every case, you will find that their membership is made up almost entirely of gang-age boys or girls. Certainly nine-tenths and probably a larger proportion of the membership of these national organizations consists of boys and girls between nine or ten and fourteen or fifteen.

Of course, it is true that adolescents, too, form groups. It is true also, that adolescents enjoy the team games. Yet there is an essential difference between the teams formed in the gang age and these adolescent teams. Adolescents play the team games with enthusiasm, but it is an ordered enthusiasm. They demand uniforms, umpires, spectators, leagues. The gang-age boy will play baseball all day long on a vacant lot with no thought of the future.

There are adolescent clubs, but they are quite different from the gang-age clubs mentioned above. That is why boys of fourteen or fifteen drop out of the Boy Scouts of America so readily. Adolescents are bored with Scouting because it is such an excellent gang-age club and is therefore unsuited to their older interests.

There is still another characteristic, which distinguishes the gang age from the periods that precede and follow it.

It is the attitude towards the other sex. Upon questioning a long series of eight-year-old boys, I found that nearly all of them mentioned one or two girls as playmates. Girls of the same age are quite ready to play with boys. A few years later a great change has taken place. A twelve-year-old boy is insulted if you ask him whether he ever plays with girls.

The twelve-year-old girl is quite sure that all boys are "horrid." This is another characteristic of the gang age, the antagonism between the sexes. At adolescence, all is changed again. The sexes now become interested in each other once more, but it is no longer the old, free companionship. It is a social relationship in which the adolescents are quite conscious of each other as young men and women.

For those who, either as parents, as teachers or as recreational leaders, have to deal with gang-age boys and girls, the writer begs leave to offer the following suggestions: —

First, do not be surprised at the change which takes place in the boy of nine or ten. Before that date little Johnny may not resent being "mother's little man." He may not object too strenuously to pretty clothes. He is easily amenable to maternal discipline. But when the gang age arrives, a new psychology comes also. The boy suddenly becomes aggressively masculine. His mouth, if not filled with strange oaths, will at least be full of strange slang. He loses the old rapport with home. "What the other fellow does" now becomes of paramount importance.

Parents should not be too much surprised when this change comes. They should not be too much discouraged if the boy seems less attached to home. It is all a normal stage of development.

To parents of girls, somewhat similar advice must be given. The gang-age girl is a tomboy. She shows very few vestiges of feminine refinement. She takes very little interest in the niceties of personal adornment. She has an unfeminine interest in getting her hands dirty and climbing trees.

This again is nothing to be worried about. Parents need only be patient and their adolescent daughters will once again be well-behaved young women.

Both boys and girls need opportunity for group play. This means that home play is becoming less and less adequate. For the home cannot offer the necessary large group of playmates of the same age and sex. One good opportunity for group play is afforded by such national organizations as the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, the Campfire Girls, and others mentioned above. The objection is sometimes made that these organizations take boys and girls out of the home. This seems to me a

pointless objection. Gang-age children seek their play groups outside the home in any case. These organizations merely assure us that the groups will be organized wholesomely.

A word in closing about the religious life of the gang age. The boy of this period does not like to be called "pious."

He has little patience with sentimentalized religion. He does not like pious forms of speech.

The same is true in some degree of his sister.

To the casual observer it might appear that the gang-age child lacks religious depth; but this is only a superficial view. The child of this age does not object to religion; he objects to hypocrisy. Deep down within him he cherishes a loyalty to God, which is a tender and beautiful thing. His religion works out in deed. For, after all, the Masses, which priests say each day all over the world, are served by gang-age boys, who get up in the early morning with no hope of earthly reward to do this service for their God.

3. The Adolescent Boy.

By Rev. Jerome Merwick, O.S.B.

“THE normal adolescent? There isn't such a being." It was with these words that a noted child psychologist recently began a treatise on adolescence. Perhaps there is some truth in the statement. The average adolescent is in a sense abnormal. He has certain peculiarities that set him off somewhat from the children of the other age periods.

These particular traits that characterize him make him somewhat "difficult" at times and tend to lead him into ways of behavior that are not altogether "according to Hoyle". It may well be added, however, that it is not always the adolescent's fault alone that his conduct fails at times to measure up to the standards set by society for boys of his age.

Not infrequently, parents or others in authority are also at fault. They fail to understand the adolescent. They fail to do him justice or to treat him with the consideration that is rightly his.

Parents, for instance, commonly look forward with pleasant anticipation to the time when Harry will be fully grown up and able to take his place in the world. Yet how many of these same parents will most inconsistently withhold from him the opportunities necessary for normal growth and development. How many of them, for instance, make it impossible for him to develop a full appreciation of adult responsibility. It is always well for parents and others in authority to bear in mind that the adolescent is no longer a little child. He is in a period of rapid transition from childhood to manhood, and it is of the utmost importance that he be given due opportunity at this time gradually to cast aside the ways of the child and to assume the responsibilities of the man.

The adolescent is usually characterized by a high degree of emotionalism. There is no valid evidence to show that adolescence introduces any new emotions, but the impulses that are already his, undoubtedly take on a renewed strength and vigor. It is this emotionalism that causes not a few of his difficulties. It tends to make him over-sensitive and moody. He may notice, for instance, or think that he notices, that his parents are less sympathetic towards him than towards other members of the family. He misses the love and consideration that were his, in his earlier years. A spirit of antagonism readily results. Goaded on by the notion that the least whims of others around him are always given attention, while his own most urgent needs and desires are disregarded, he may even be led to question whether his putative parents are in reality his natural father and mother. The

growing boy who is tormented with these and other misgivings needs sympathetic attention and kind consideration. He needs to be treated with the utmost fairness.

If such treatment is in reality vouchsafed him, his difficulties will soon be solved. His gloominess will tend to disappear and he will see life again through uncolored glasses.

Another emotional difficulty, which not infrequently characterizes the adolescent boy, is a feeling of loneliness. He very easily develops the impression that no one cares for him, that everyone misunderstands him. He feels that there is no one with whom he can go to talk matters over; no one to whom he can confide his real or imaginary worries.

Unfortunately, too, this feeling of loneliness, and the sense of insecurity that goes with it, is greatly augmented in some cases by the fact that his parents, instead of being prudently tolerant of his moods and peculiarities, tend to nag and criticize the adolescent constantly. There is no question, of course, that the growing boy can be somewhat of a nuisance about the house and not a little trying to his parents. And certainly no one knows better than he does, that he is awkward and clumsy, that his hands and feet are disproportionately large and that they have a peculiar knack of getting mixed up rather unconventionally at times. But he will outgrow all of this if only given a reasonable chance.

Persistent nagging and indiscriminate fault-finding on the part of the parents will not help him to do so; rather will they make matters worse. Happy the lad whose parents do not subject him to constant criticism. Fortunate the adolescent boy whose father is his frequent companion and considerate friend.

A new spirit of self-assertion and independence also commonly shows itself in the adolescent boy. Only too frequently, the reaction of the parents to this new development is one of rigidity and ever-increasing strictness. Such a policy is ordinarily not for the best. Many of the parental "don'ts" that are so common to this period might well be omitted with not a little profit to all concerned. As suggested before, if the boy is to grow up, he must be given a chance to do so. Endless restrictions on the part of parents will make the home anything but an inviting place to a growing boy. They will even create in him a spirit of antagonism and of open hostility or rebellion. All this is not to say, of course, that the adolescent should be cut loose entirely from all parental authority. It does not mean that he should be allowed "to live his own life free from all hampering restrictions." The adolescent needs some restrictions.

He needs discipline, a steady hand. He does not, however, need the same amount or kind of restrictions that were his in his earlier years. It may not be easy for parents to find the happy medium between the two extremes of rigidity and laxity, but every effort should be put forth to do so. It is also well to observe that the restrictions that are imposed should be appropriate and necessary and such as will enable the boy to see in them an instrument for the promotion of his own higher interests.

Again, there is the further emergence of the sex instinct at this period of the boy's life. This implies new difficulties to be encountered, new battles to be won. Manual labor, physical exercise and good health will help the adolescent in his efforts to keep the mastery over this powerful impulse. But the Catholic parent will particularly encourage the adolescent boy to have resort to prayer and the sacraments as the best means of keeping the spiritual in the ascendency over the physical. Some further instruction regarding the instinct in question may be necessary on the part of the parents at this time. This will present little difficulty if they have already done their duty towards their child in

his earlier years. It will give them the opportunity, however, to increase in him his sense of respect for life and for the sacredness of fatherhood and motherhood. It will also serve to increase the bond of affection and the feeling of confidence between parent and child. Such instruction, properly given, will naturally create an attitude of chivalry on the part of the adolescent boy that will go far towards keeping him above reproach in his habits and thought-life.

The adolescent is naturally a hero-worshipper. He is very easily influenced by ideals. The parent is invariably the embodiment of the little one's ideals. But in early adolescence, the boy tends more and more to look to individuals outside the home. Not infrequently, he picks upon some well-known public character and makes it the height of his ambition to emulate him. Needless to add, it is of the utmost importance that his new-found hero be really deserving of emulation. Today, too, the adolescent boy gets many of his ideals from the printed page and from the cinema. This naturally suggests the need for parental supervision of the literature that the boy is to read and of the movies that he is to see, since here again, there are tremendous possibilities for evil as well as for good.

Such are at least a few of the considerations that parents may well keep in mind in their efforts to guide their growing lads safely across the restless sea of adolescence on towards the serene port of an upright and useful manhood. The relationship between the two, calls not only for mutual love but also for a generous supply of respect and kindly consideration. It calls, furthermore, for mutual effort to understand each other and for a. sincere and appreciative respect for each other's personality, interests, problems and pleasures. Fortunately, none of these things is beyond attainment. And they are worthy of every effort. They will serve to lead both parent and child upwards and onwards towards a life "rich and overflowing."

4. The Adolescent Girl.

By ANNA E. KING.

WHERE in American fiction can we find an adolescent girl as real as "Finch," Mazo De la Roche's adolescent boy in the novel, Finch's Fortune? You may be shocked, as I was, in re-reading our childhood favorite, Little Women, to discover that the delightful March sisters were not stuffed with blood and bones and tissues. Did Louisa Alcott ever permit them to question deeply their relationship with any other human being? Did they ever stir us with vexing questions about the meaning of life for them alone? Did they not rather ride along on a series of happenings, homely and natural enough to pass for any girl's real life? If you do not believe me, take Little Women off the shelf and re-read it for yourself.

Booth Tarkington, reputed wizard at interpreting youth, usually simplifies and caricatures his adolescent heroines.

Modern psychological novelists empty out upon the page the contents of a young girl's mind, but they, too, fail to satisfy, because the authors seem to be treading quaking marsh as much as their characters. The realities of adolescence may be more frequently encountered in books of psychology than in fiction. However, the best way to meet them is in daily contact with some adolescent girl. Every parent of a teen-age girl has a laboratory of his own.

All of which will not deter those who are up on their toes and genuinely determined to be the kind of parents adolescent girls need, from reading good, sound advice. On this account, we will dare to suggest, not prescriptions for handling adolescent girls, but some vital principles for parents to follow. For the sake of simplicity, let us assume that the important things to do include: observation,

the exercise of self-control, active co-operation in the really important matters (important to the girl), and a willingness to let go at the proper times.

Parents sometimes take for granted, with false optimism, that they know pretty much what goes on in their daughter's head merely because they have always lived with her.

Sylvia, Dorothy Canfield's heroine in the famous novel, The Bent Twig, said with surprise, after she had left her home: "All the time I was growing up, I was blind, I didn't see anything. I don't feel remorseful. I suppose that is the way children have to be. But I didn't see my mother. There were so many minor differences between us, tastes and interests."

Nor did Sylvia's parents see her. "She was growing up to be herself, not her mother or her father, little as anyone in her world suspected... She was alive to all the impressions reflected insistently upon her, but she transmuted them into products, which would immensely have surprised her parents, they being under the usual parental delusion that they knew every corner of her heart. Her budding aversions, convictions, ambitions were not in the least the aversions, the convictions and ambitions so loudly voiced about her... Her father would have been aghast if he could have felt the slightest reflection from the heat of her detestation of his favorite Emersonian motto, which aroused in Sylvia the rebellious exasperation felt by her age for over-emphatic moralizings." (Dorothy Canfield Fisher, The Bent Twig.)

It is a fairly common happening for daughters, like Sylvia, to become ashamed at times of the nicest parents, simply because they do not reflect the popular mode of thinking, verbalizing and competing with their fellowmen.

Parents who adhere to the principle of being good observers can tolerate that seeming rejection on the part of a daughter as a part of the struggle to grow up and be herself. The self-control exercised here is, of course, closely bound up with the exercise of a sense of humor.

Parents who are good observers watch all the phenomena of adolescent behavior with endless interest to see what their daughter is dramatizing for them from day to day.

The giggly, flippant manner, the bored air of condescension, the occasional direct defiance of parental edicts, the exaggerated emotional reactions to the most minor frustrations, the display of lack of consideration for others, spells of moodiness and apathy, all may be taken as reactions to the experience of growing up and often as reactions to the way parents treat them.

The questions which tease the minds of objective and understanding fathers and mothers are: "Who is this mysterious, contradictory, frequently-annoying human being? What does she want out of life? Does she know, and is she bothered about it? What does she think of me as a parent? What kind of a person would she like me to be?"

As many mistakes can be made in taking growth for granted as in refusing to see that it has taken place. Sound observations, honestly made, often reveal the need for family self-control.

A thirteen-year-old girl, a member of a brilliant, exciting family group, clung with grave tenacity to playing with her dolls. Her sisters had given up dolls long before that age. The family were chagrined. Could she be retarded? A mental test reassured them. What to do? How to make her more outgoing? Should they shame her from too much pretending? I am happy to say that the family council decided just to accept her present conduct as an expression of her continued need, and to wait patiently for the day when she might voluntarily put the dolls aside, to remark: "I'm

tired of these old dolls. I'm going over to talk with Alice." This family were wise enough to acknowledge that growth cannot be forced, that they can only co-operate in helping her to go out to meet her world and the people in it.

What are the matters really important to the adolescent girl with which all fathers and mothers must co-operate or fail her when she needs them most? Some, at least, can be mentioned. Each girl needs an emotional centre of gravity, first of all, in the assurance of the continued love and interested attention of her parents.

Then she needs: an opportunity to distinguish between other people's ideals and her own;
to acknowledge the existence of reasonable authority;
to appreciate the need for consideration of those under whose roof she lives and whose support she accepts;
to experience satisfying relationships with her own and the opposite sex;
to achieve a sense of her self-responsible identity;
to live in a spiritual and universal as well as a personal and vocational world;
to prepare herself in turn to become an adequate parent.

Co-operation in vital affairs implies quick recognition of the presence of the vital in seemingly trivial concerns. A daughter remarks with a swing of her head that she is through with Bill, who ignored her at the dance last night. A mother, with quick perception to get the implications, may find herself discussing the really important matter of what constitutes comradeship with men.

The problem of diminishing relationships with those who have meant a great deal is one, which many youngsters try to work out alone, often with considerable pain and disillusionment. They face the same situation as Robert Frost's "Oven Bird," for "The question that he frames in all but words, Is what to make of a diminished thing."

The sweetheart whom the girl is outgrowing, troubles her with a sense of loyalties forgotten. She may question the permanence of any love if her dearest friend meets someone more interesting and begins to neglect her.

Unselfconscious parents who can accept, without question or probing, any sort of behavior at such a time provide the comradely setting for thinking through and talking out the problem.

Fellowship in religious experience provides a bond for parents and children, which is of special significance in the period of heightened emotions called adolescence. A "Holy Hour" spent together in church, attendance at a retreat, open family discussions of the lives of the saints and the best philosophical books — these and other experiences touch the main-springs of reality. Of fathers and mothers who know how to share their own spirituality, youngsters can never say: "You can never talk to them about the things that really matter."

Perhaps the hardest job in co-operation is the willingness to let go at the proper times and the ability to know when not to let go. It would be fatal if the developing girl were to enjoy her dependence upon her parents too much to make an effort to escape. "Letting go" may mean something so small as letting her stay up an hour later at night, or something so big as permitting her to choose a job far away from home and not to the parents' liking. The sweetness of feeling a daughter's dependence is not easily relinquished. The one reward that parents can expect is the delight of recognizing the individuality of the person who is their daughter, and of helping her to grow out of their own lives into her own.

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