

# Personal Growth Concepts™

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## Q&A Forum - Review

### Missing The Relatives

[7-Aug-2003]

Fellow Q&Aers,

We now have 124 names on our Q&A list and it is growing.

I need your help. Roseann Moore, our Community Relations Coordinator is trying to find a location where I can hold a "Healing the Pain" weekend retreat/workshop on Nov 7-9 of this year. The location needs to be within 2-3 hours of our Stratford office and have a main meeting area where 10-12 people can assemble. It also needs its own kitchen and dining facilities where those participating on the retreat will prepare and eat their meals (an institutional environment is not what we are looking for, but more of a home atmosphere). Ideally, it will be in or near a pastoral setting i.e. lake or ocean nearby. We would like some bedrooms on site but are also willing to work with a nearby motel for additional sleeping accommodations. Also, the price must be reasonable. Roseann and I believe that someone's second or ummer home could be an ideal location. If anyone knows of such a place, please contact Roseann as soon as possible. Her number is 203-375-5782 vmail box 104 or at [rmooore@personalgrowthconcepts.com](mailto:rmooore@personalgrowthconcepts.com).

I will keep you posted on this and other services to be offered in the Fall in future Q&As.

A special thank you to Patty and Barbara for their contributions to this Q&A.

**Q:** As my children are growing older (as well as I am growing older) and they are settled into their families and their lives I find myself longing to be with them more and more. This can be difficult since one lives in Utah, the other in Connecticut and I am in Arizona. I also find myself just "plain" longing to be closer to my family i.e. sister, nephews, nieces. They are back east in Connecticut/New Hampshire. When I hear of a get together they are having I, of course, feel left out but more importantly I feel sad, very sad. I have done all the things I can possibly do to stay connected with all of them, children and family, but I am still feeling lonely, sad, isolated, not part of, and most of all I am constantly "whining" to my husband about how much I miss them. What is going on with me? I love my husband dearly; but I miss my family and friends from back east and my daughter in Utah. And what can I do about this ???

**A:** It is natural to want to be with those with whom we have a lot of family-arity (provided it is healthy). It sounds like you may be experiencing the empty nest syndrome but, make no mistake, the longing is "normal." Does the familiarity mean support? Do you have enough of the right kind of support for your self in Arizona?

Feeling sad is ok; feeling left out and "whining" sounds like your feelings are being displaced onto those back East whom you think are leaving you out? Is there a history of displacing feelings?

I would encourage you to continue to listen to your feelings but to make decisions with your head, not your heart (feelings). Perhaps it would help to briefly revisit the original decision to move to Arizona - was it based on feelings, or the need to avoid some feelings? If it was more logically based, did it take into account what feelings you might have had about your family once you were in Arizona?

I am impressed that you have identified your feelings so well. Now, you could work on accepting them and, once accepted, if you aren't particularly fond of them, start thinking about what you can do to change yourself, your thoughts, your environment or your relationships. Changing those things could make your situation more palatable. You cannot change others. Remember, the goal is not to feel good all the time (that's the addict's goal). The goal is to be able to accept your feelings at all times. Feelings offer you valuable information about your self – are you listening? These feelings indicate that parts of your self are in conflict with other parts. Are there any compromises? Pray and be patient. Ask for discernment and believe – the path will become clearer, with God's help. Peace, John

**Quote:** "Pain happens; the suffering is optional" - unknown

Bonus 1:

#### Living Day by Day

"Life by the mile is a trial; by the inch it's a cinch." In the past, we got into trouble when we thought we had to have our lives mapped out forever. That just did not work.

We need only deal with the problems and joys of today. If we try to see too far ahead, we lose touch with the reality of the here and now. The Lord lets us know what we need to know when we need to know it.

What seems impossible when looked at in total--writing a book, putting the children through college, abstaining for the rest of our lives--

becomes manageable when worked at step by step, day by day.

So many of the things we worry about never happen. How much better it is to concentrate our energies on the real demands and challenges of today, insignificant as they may seem. When we turn our lives over to our Higher Power, we trust Him to manage the master plan and to direct us in the small details of living each day.

Show me, Lord, how to best live each day. I leave the years to You.

Bonus 2:

### **GOD'S TAKE ON LAWNS:**

Imagine the conversation The Creator might have had with St. Francis on the subject of lawns:

GOD: Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in the Midwest? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honeybees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles.

ST. FRANCIS: It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD: Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD: The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS: Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it-sometimes twice a week.

GOD: They cut it? Do they then bail it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS: Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD: They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS: No Sir. It's just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD: Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS: Yes, Sir.

GOD: These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS: You aren't going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD: What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life.

ST. FRANCIS: You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD: No. What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS: After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD: And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS: They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD: Enough. I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE: Dumb and Dumber, Lord. It's a real stupid movie about.....

GOD: Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story from St. Francis.

bonus #3

### **The Pastor's Cat**

The pastor had a kitten that climbed up a tree in his backyard and then was afraid to come down. The pastor coaxed, offered warm milk, etc. The kitty would not come down. The tree was not sturdy enough to climb, so the pastor decided that if he tied a rope from the tree to his car, and then drove it away slowly away, so that the tree bent down, he could then reach up and get the kitten.

He tied the rope, and began to drive the car away from the tree, all the while checking the progress of the tree frequently. He then figured if he went just a little bit further, the tree would be bent sufficiently low for him to reach the kitten. But as he moved a little further forward, the rope broke. The tree went "boing!" and the kitten instantly sailed through the air--out of sight.

The pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the neighborhood asking people if they'd seen a little kitten. No. Nobody had seen a stray kitten. So he prayed, "Lord, I commit this kitten to your keeping," and went on about his business. A few days later he was at the grocery store and met one of his church members. He happened to look into her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food. Now this woman was a cat hater and everyone knew it, so he asked her, "Why are you buying cat food, when you hate cats so much?"

She replied, "You won't believe this," and told him how her little girl had been begging her for a cat, but she kept refusing. Then a few days before, the child had begged again, so the Mom finally told her little girl, "Well! if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it. She told the pastor, "I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees, and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you won't believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten suddenly came flying out of the blue sky, with its paws outspread, and landed right in front of her."

Never underestimate the Power of God and His unique sense of humor. Laughter is medicine to the soul. Prov. 17:22

end of bonuses

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**We wish you peace in who you are and in all that you do!**

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