

Getting it together

The 'pinched husband' is one pressured by job and family

I call it the pinched husband syndrome. It occurs when a man feels squeezed so tightly by the competing pressures of his job and his personal life that he loses any sense of self-determination or self-assertion. The pursuit of career success and family pleasure is replaced by feelings of obligation and resentment over being trapped.

Why does this happen? Careers and families should be two of our best vehicles for attaining personal happiness. So how is it that they so often become sources of frustration? How do they turn into such demanding prisons?

The answer lies in the way most men approach their jobs and families. They have learned from societal and parental models that the keys to success are devotion and self-denial. And they apply this attitude to their job and family roles with equal ignorance of its inevitable negative consequences.

WHEN A YOUNG man enters the job world, he is prepared to work hard and get ahead. Too often he interprets that to mean that he must totally sacrifice his personal needs for the sake of his job. Believing that is temporary, the budding career man demonstrates his dedication by deferring to every demand, saying yes to every opportunity, no matter what the price is in personal sacrifice.

Dreaming of the day when he will be

able to relax and demand that other hungry young men do the sweating, the career man throws himself into his work. Assuming himself that they are temporary necessities, he makes sacrifices and compromises his values.

If geographic mobility is encouraged by his job, then he and his family must be prepared to move to another city at a moment's notice. The constant uprooting of social relationships, the disorientation and its security of never really living anywhere, the stress of frequent life changes, all are part of the price paid by the upward-striving career man.

BUSINESS TRIPS that separate men from their families may become a frequent job demand. They become a way of life for the acquisitive career climber and his family. His absence at home is something that must be tolerated. His exhaustion at the end of long days is an irritation that must be lived with, as are the increasing depression and buried resentments that he brings home from the job.

FEARING THE DISPLEASURE of his boss, the climber never says no. He nei-

ther confronts the errors of his superiors. He just lives with them. He increasingly sees his employer as selfish, inconsiderate and unreasonable. But he hides his feelings. That is, he hides his feelings from everyone but his wife.

She has the unfortunate privilege of being his confidant. Frequently this means that she becomes the frustrated receptacle for her husband's resentment.

In fact, the whole family pays for his defiance whenever he comes home raw with unexpressed anger or distressed by unresolved conflicts. Daddy had a hard day at work — is an ever-recurring excuse for children who have lost their father to his career.

Recognizing that he is failing to live up to his role in the family, the career man feels more pressured than ever. He probably entered marriage with the same attitude of devotion and self-denial which characterizes his career approach. And so he is acutely aware of how little he has been able to contribute as a father and husband.

He feels guilty but he also feels helpless to do anything about it. After all, he reasons, he is working hard in order to provide for his family.

By
BOB TRENZ,
Ph.D.



ating spiral of competing demands which leads to a pinched husband, a man caught in a self-made trap.

Next week, how to get out of the pinch.

Volunteers

THE DEVOTED CAREER climber sees that there is no way that he can fully satisfy the needs of both roles. So he commits himself to his job and rationalizes that he is a good father and husband because he is providing for his family's standard of living.

He looks at the needs of his wife and children and feels there is no way to satisfy them without throwing away his career. So he doesn't really try.

Instead, he loses himself even more in his job. He comes to associate his family with guilt and failure. He tries to keep them off his back by buying material substitutes for his attention.

Houses, cars, clothing and toys are provided generously. But, he explains, "if you want to live at this economic level, then I'll really have to work hard at my job." And so proceeds the self-perpetu-

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New booklet helps select nursing home

A new booklet to help consumers select a nursing home is available from Citizens for Better Care, a Michigan-based consumer advocacy organization.

Called "A Guide for the Use of Public Information about Nursing Homes," the booklet was prepared in conjunction with the Michigan Nurses Association according to Chas. Chornet, Executive Director of Citizens for Better Care (CBC).

The guide describes how public inspection reports can be obtained and used in selecting an appropriate nursing home. It emphasizes use of the annual licensure reports prepared by the Michigan Department of Public Health. These reports are available to the public because of legal action taken by CBC.

The Director of CBC's inquiry office

Mrs. Rose Lucas, said the booklet also can be used without the reports because it gives information and guidelines that every person looking for a home needs to know.

The guide book can be obtained from Citizens for Better Care, 800 East Jefferson. The telephone number is 588-1101. Cost is \$1 for handling and postage. Included in the book are sections on general considerations before placement; available public reports and how to obtain them; selected indicators for quality of care; handling complaints; a glossary of terms; and other resources for help.

Mrs. Lucas said CBC's Inquiry Office serves more than 1,400 persons a year. Most of these inquirers are unprepared to find an appropriate place.

"No one ever expects to have to use a nursing home," she said, "even though 20 per cent of older people will spend some time in a nursing home. This new guide helps a person know what to look for."

The other thing people ask for, Mrs. Lucas said, is a recommendation for a good home. CBC is not able to recommend. We can supply information about homes and tell them about state inspection reports as well as encourage a personal visit to the home. But individuals have to make their own choice based on the information they have.

A grant from the Department of Health Education and Welfare through the Michigan Association of Regional Medical Programs enabled CBC to prepare and publish the booklet.

WSU Friends pick officers

Mrs. Maurice H. Brittain of Birmingham will serve as vice president for the coming year of the Friends of Wayne State University School of Medicine.

Mrs. Robert Gerrach of Bloomfield Hills is corresponding secretary.

Board of directors members include Mrs. David Pomeroy of West Bloomfield; Mrs. Yvan Silva and Mrs. Arnold Weisler of Birmingham; Mrs. Raymond Mercer of Troy; and Mrs. Jacob Chason and Mrs. Robert Mach of Bloomfield Hills.

Others are Mrs. Eduardo Arcanegas of Lathrup Village and Mrs. James Montaste of Orchard Lake.

Mrs. Michael Short of Bloomfield Hills is chairman of four guides, and Mrs. Lawrence Welter of the same city is party registration.

A major membership drive will commence in July. The group is open to persons interested in supporting activities helpful to the medical school. Applications may be obtained by calling 571-1468.

Fun match set for huskies

The Siberian Husky Club of Southeastern Michigan will hold a fun match and the disco trial for AKC registered Siberian husky puppies and adults on Sunday at the Northland Center Mall, Greenfield and Eight Mile.

Entries will be taken at 11 a.m. and judging will start at noon.

Classes in conformation will include puppies from two months and under 12 months, adults and litters of two or more puppies. Obedience trial classes include sub-service, service and open.

There will be ribbons, trophies and photographs to all winners.

Donna Howard will judge conformation and junior handling classes. Obedience entries will be judged by Bill Dixon. Dogs with major AKC points are not allowed in the match.

FOR A TOTAL LOOK WE START AT THE TOP... GERALDS

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