

Getting it together

Cupid debunked: Love follows need



Award winner

Robert G. Slatkin of West Bloomfield has been named one of the 1978 recipients of the National Jewish Welfare Board Leadership Recognition Award. Slatkin, a graduate of the University of Michigan and president of the Slatkin-Kukes Corp., is past president of the Jewish Welfare Federation junior division in this area. His award will be presented during the JWB biennial meeting in Montreal in April.

OU conference to deal with single-style living

Realities, challenges, and opportunities of single living, the lifestyle of more than 30 per cent of all Americans, will be discussed in the April 8 "Single Style" conference at Oakland University. The conference offers guest speakers in 25 sessions covering occupational, social, legal, financial, and interpersonal concerns of single persons of all ages. More than 400 persons are expected to attend the one-day program sponsored by the conference department, OU Division of Continuing Education. The keynote address will be delivered at 9 a.m. in the Oakland Center by Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine, director of the Center for New Thinking. Among the many topics are "It's OK To Be Single" by Jules Jacobs, officer of Unitarian Singles of Metropolitan Detroit; "Taking a Closer Look at Shifting Values" with Kitty Dubin, workshop leader, OU Continuum Center; and "Causes and Stages of Loneliness: Positive Aspects of Being Alone" by Amanda Gudine, coordinator, Case Outreach Program, Detroit Public Schools Adult Education. Others are "Close Encounters of the Macho Kind: Surviving the Psychological Pressures as a Single Male" with Wayne T. Fisk, clinical psychologist, Sinai Hospital; "Merry Widows, Gay Blades, Spinsters, Gigolos, and Other Single Stereotypes" by Virginia O'Leary, associate professor, OU Department of Psychology; "Looking Out for the Singles Buck" with Charles Gallagher of Independent Financial Planning and Insurance. Registrations should be received by the OU conference department by April 4. The fee is \$15 with lunch, \$12 without. For registration information call the OU conference department, 377-3272.

To see two people who want to love each other, but can't, is like watching a tragic waste of natural resources, like water spilling in the desert.

Two lonely, needy individuals who used to love each other, would give a lot to recover those old feelings. "Life would be great," he sighs. "I could just love my wife." "I want to want him, but I don't," she echoes.

So, why is it so difficult? If both want it so much, then what keeps them from finding their old love?

To frustrated love-seekers it seems as if love feelings are elusive and uncontrollable. If you've got them, you can be successful lovers. If you lose them, no amount of honest effort seems enough to get them back.

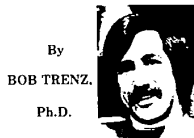
BUT THIS is exactly the opposite of the truth. Love feelings are not the cause of successful loving. They are the effect. Cupid's arrows are a myth.

And so are our more modern beliefs in personal chemistry and finding "Mr. Right." Only in fiction, fantasy, and infatuation do we fall in love before we have established a successful love relationship. The feeling of love follows effective loving, not the other way around.

Love feelings are made of joyful expectation, confidence, and concern for the welfare of another human being. It is the excitement of believing that we have found someone who really cares about us, who really wants to know us deeply and accept us. And that makes that person very precious.

But love feelings can occur between any two people who have successfully established a mutually caring, mutually understanding, and mutually accepting relationship.

Such a successful relationship requires devotion and vulnerability. It means building a sense of oneness in which one partner's hurts are also felt by the other. It is the establishment of a fortress, an alliance of the strengths



By BOB TREZN, Ph.D.

of two individuals to assure that each lover's needs will be met and the frustrations of the world will be cushioned. The more successful this relationship promises to be, the stronger the feelings of love that go with it.

IN A NEW relationship, love grows as lovers prove that they can effectively take care of each other's needs. If both are open to developing such a partnership, then love grows with amazing ease as lovers are able to provide such ingredients as admitted needs, honesty, and nurturing.

But, in an old relationship in which love feelings have faded, it's not so simple. Rekindling love is not just a matter of fostering fondness between two former strangers. There are obstacles to be removed before love even has a chance to sprout.

Instead of the atmosphere of hope and positive expectation that accompanies new love, burned-out lovers are surrounded by countless elements that are poisonous to love.

Old power struggles are now so established that their manipulations and strategies are predictable. Sensitivity and consideration have been replaced by callousness and a game of "You-can't-hurt-me."

Thousands of little hurts have become an indefinite pile of resentment. Mutual dependency has been replaced with a lonely self-sufficiency. Minor communication problems have

grown into brick walls that block honesty. Hopefulness has turned to cynicism.

It isn't just coaxing an ember of old love into a new flame that's needed. To save a spoiled love relationship you've got to discover and alleviate the obstacles to love.

TO DEVELOP successfully, love requires that potential lovers must take risks. They must expose themselves to the possibility of frustration and rejection in order to experience the joy of being really known and accepted.

But, before two individuals can do this they have to feel a degree of safety and trust. Then defenses can be

dropped, vulnerability can be expressed, and intimacy can be accomplished.

But it should be obvious that this is going to be very difficult for couples who have replaced their original hopefulness and trust with an expectation of hurt. They may still want to love each other, but they have reason to be afraid.

The biggest part of trying to revive a lost love is to remove those fears and re-establish trust and hopefulness. Most of the time, this requires outside help.

Bob Trezn is a psychologist and marriage counselor in Rochester. Comments for Dr. Trezn may be sent to P.O. Box 61, Rochester 48061.

Volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau, a program of the Volunteer Action Center of United Community Services, has weekly listings of agencies needing volunteers. Further information about these and over 200 agencies needing volunteer services may be obtained from the bureau, 642-7272.

TYPIST-FILE CLERK—A volunteer with some office training is needed by the Learning Community in Southfield to handle typing, filing and telephoning. Hours needed are 12-4 p.m. daily.

CASEWORK AIDE—Travelers Aid Society needs mature persons to work at its Metropolitan Airport and Greyhound bus station offices. Volunteers who are compassionate, have common sense and good judgment can make sensible decisions can help

clients who are facing crisis situations. The time commitment requested is one period of four to six hours on a regularly-scheduled day between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. Especially needed are volunteers for evenings and weekends. Training sessions will begin Wednesday, April 5.

ENVIRONMENTAL AIDES—Volunteers interested in working in environmental education and legislation are invited to an open house sponsored by East Michigan Environmental Action Council on Friday, April 7, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at One Northfield Plaza, Troy.

REGISTERED NURSES—Volunteer nurses are needed at the West Bloomfield Henry Ford Hospital, for blood pressure screening in the hypertension program. Hours are Tuesday, 1-4 p.m. The program is available to the public.

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