

**An Evaluation of a Newspaper Advice Column as a Community
Psychology Resource**

by

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2006

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Ph d (Community Psychology) in the Department of Psychology at the
University of Zululand.

Promoter: Professor S. D. Edwards

November 2006

Acknowledgements

This thesis has finally emerged as a completed study. This was made possible through the belief, guidance, motivation, and support of several significant persons in my life. I am and always will be grateful for their encouragement at the times that I needed it the most.

It is with deep respect and gratitude that I acknowledge the support of my promoter, Professor S.D. Edwards. Professor Edwards is a fountain of information who possesses such enthusiasm that everyone in his presence become inspired. His drive and energy sweeps his students along to perform similarly. An outstanding attribute of this great scholar is his humility. I am indeed grateful to him for the support in helping me bring this work to fruition.

I am indebted to members of my family for their belief and confidence that helped me strive especially when the goings got tough. I wish to thank my wife, Krishnee, for her patience, tolerance and support throughout my study. I am grateful to her for the long hours spent in the correction of language, editing, proof- reading and typing of my thesis. My children Kerushini and Preshanthini are my biggest fans who constantly urge me on to keep my eye on the ball, and turn a losing game into a winning one. I thank them for the love and respect we share.

I acknowledge the role played by my humble parents in my education. Zululand is my place of birth. My late father would have been proud to see me return to graduate in our hometown. My special thanks go to my mother who still is a source of inspiration even at the age of eighty years.

I am grateful to the editor of the POST newspaper, Mr.Brij Ramguthee, for granting permission to conduct this study and for accommodating changes.

On a final note I would like to thank the National Research Foundation for the financial assistance received.

Abstract

This thesis has been concerned with community psychology and in particular, the promotion of the newspaper advice column as a community psychology resource. Throughout the world, advice columns provide help and information in thousands of languages reaching millions of people. This resource is unique in that it is instantly and repeatedly accessible. This study explored how this resource can be improved and extended so that it could serve as a valuable community support.

This thesis arose from the work of the author who has been engaged in replying to readers' concerns in a community newspaper over a period of eight years. The study takes into consideration the traditional background of readers and the author combines his personal experience and a professional psychological approach in answering their concerns.

Various theoretical models in community psychology are presented and newspaper articles that expound each of these models are examined. Actual articles from newspapers are quoted and pictorial examples are included in the appendix. The value of newspapers as a community psychology resource is highlighted.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were elicited. The research design made use of the Likert scale as an instrument of measure. Questionnaires were completed by readers and assessments done by colleagues in psychology. Their findings were analysed and

presented as a summary of recommendations on how the advice column can best serve the community as a resource.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Community psychology is concerned with the well-being of its members. Provision of well - being is achieved through community psychology resources which may be in the form of organisations, institutions, people, places and the media, such as television, radio and newspapers. The aim of this chapter is to introduce readers to the present research in terms of its aim, research context and methodology.

1.2 Aim

This thesis aims to evaluate a newspaper advice column as a community psychology resource, *giving consideration to the nature and themes of problems or queries submitted by the reader, appropriateness of advice given, and an assessment of the quality of the advice.*

1.3 Research context

Literature indicates that advice columns have a long history. They have been around long before the advent of television and the talk shows. Throughout the world newspapers play a major role in the dissemination of information to people in both rural and urban areas. Cope (2004) indicated that in 1872 a weekly newspaper called *The Ladies* was published in London. It offered women advice on fashion, housekeeping, employment and political activism. In America advice columns began in the eighteenth century when the “letters to the lovelorn” appeared in newspapers and magazines. This gave rise to a proliferation of advice columns in that country which continue to enjoy

popularity to this day. Care (2002) recorded that the Dorothy Dix weekly advice columns first appeared in 1895. The first issues were amusing, literate social satire and many related to early women's issues. Amongst other well-known columns are the Ann Landers and "Dear Abby" columns, which are distributed to about 1400 newspapers. In South Africa a popular advice column appeared in the "Drum" magazine, one of the most well known magazines in the 1960's and 1970's.

The popularity of the newspaper advice columns may stem from the fact that they are a more affordable source of help than going to a therapist. Many people are also embarrassed to go or to be seen to go to a psychologist. Time taken in travelling and the length of the session itself can be a further deterrent. The print has the advantage of being read and re-read and can be shared and passed around to people with similar problems. Articles can also be cut out and kept for future reference. The newspaper advice column therefore, has many advantages as compared to attending a session with a therapist, especially for those who cannot afford the fees, unable to travel the distance, and those who for some reason or the other cannot bring themselves to meeting with a therapist/psychologist.

The advice columns serve as a psychological resource to a wide range and number of people with various problems. Referring to the American advice column writer Ann Landers, Judd (2002) said that she helped teenagers, confused parents, couples on the brink of divorce, grieving widows, and many others who were in need of counsel. The

Ann Landers advice column was translated into over twenty languages reaching virtually millions of readers.

Newspapers have served and continue to serve as teaching aids to students at all levels in creative ways. Cabe *et al* (1999) discuss the educational value of advice columns as case studies in teaching. He described letters in the advice column as funny, mundane, tragic, or bizarre. However, they are engaging and cognate to the readers' experience. For teaching purposes, he found that the letters typically present problems to be solved. Although circumstances described in the letters are biased towards adults, the scenarios presented ranged over the entire life span.

1.4 Methodology

A comprehensive review of literature has revealed very little critical, evaluative, objective scientific research into the role function and effectiveness of newspaper advice columns as community psychological resource. In one particular study Molnar, Man-Son-Hing, Dalziel, Mitchel, Power and Byszewskian (1999) assessed the quality of newspaper medical advice columns for elderly readers. The objective was to assess the safety and appropriateness of advice given to elderly readers of newspaper medical advice columns. Fifty articles were independently assessed by five geriatricians. A scoring system was used to rate the ability to determine to which population the article applied, how well fact distinguished from opinion, the degree to which critical issues were addressed, the safety and appropriateness of the advice.

This thesis aims to follow a similar approach in the evaluation of a local Durban newspaper for which the author offers a psychological advice column.

1.5 Resume

This chapter has been concerned with a general introduction to the present research. It considered the literature review and research with regard to the evaluation of the newspaper advice column as a community psychology resource. The literature review covered the period from 1872 to the present time. The study made by Molnar, Man-Son-Hing, Dalziel, Mitchel, Power and Byszewskian (1999), who assessed the quality of newspaper medical advice columns for elderly readers, was highlighted.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the personal story/experience of the author as writer/advice giver/psychologist, theoretical models of community psychology and how they integrate with newspaper advice columns, examples of newspaper articles that amplify and expound these models, and the value of newspapers as a community psychology resource. It begins with the personal experience of the author.

2.2 Personal experience

The title of the advice column in the newspaper that I write for is called “Speak to the Guru”. Readers of the Post newspaper and others often ask me whether I am a priest or leader of some sort because of my name. In the Indian community the title “Guru” normally refers to a religious or spiritual leader amongst those who follow Hinduism. A teacher of the vernacular is also referred to as “Guru”.

My maternal grandfather gave my name to me at birth. My mother told me that my grandfather was well versed in the ancient Indian scriptures and in the knowledge of astrology. He named me “Gurunathen” and said that I was destined to become a teacher. As predicted I grew up to become a teacher. It would be appropriate to briefly define the meaning of the term “Guru” at this stage.

In his book “Science of Yoga” Volume 1, Sri Swami Sivananda refers in detail to the term. He explains that “Gu” means “darkness” and “Ru” means “the dispeller”. Being the dispeller of ignorance, the teacher is called “Guru”. Sivananda (1982) describes a real Guru as follows: “A real Guru is one who is a knower of the Self. He has full knowledge of the Self and the *Vedas*. He can remove the doubts of aspirants .He has equal vision and a balanced mind. He is free from attraction, repulsion, egoism, anger, lust, greed, attachment and pride. He is an ocean of mercy. In his mere presence one gets peace and elevation of mind. In his mere presence all the doubts of aspirants are cleared. He is absolutely fearless. He does not expect anything from anybody. He has an exemplary character. He is full of joy and bliss. He is in search of real aspirants.”

Communities that have a rich spiritual and cultural heritage have been known to overcome difficulties such as poverty, disease, and even invasions by foreign nations. It is no surprise then that in wars, we often observe the deliberate destruction of the spiritual and cultural heritage of the nation by the invaders, as evident in Lord Macaulay’s address to the British parliament on 02 February 1835, posted by Rezwan. (2005). Thus we find that although the British destroyed much of the people’s possessions in India, their spirit and spirituality could never be destroyed. Communities with strong traditions, community resources, spirituality and resilience have a stronger chance of survival.

(Refer to Appendix C, pages 108.)

Several definitions of “Guru” may be found on the Web.

(http://www.google.co.za/search?hl=en&lr=&as_qdr=all&oi=defmore&defl=en&q=

defi...) These include the following:

- (Literally the word guru means teacher) Second level of its meaning is that the guru is a spiritual leader, a saint, an Enlightener. GU (darkness) RU (light). One who brings light into darkness? A teacher.
- (“He who is heavy, weighty”): a spiritual teacher.
- A teacher who has attained mastery in the Supracosmic Sphere.
- A Sanskrit and pan- Indian word denoting a spiritual leader or teacher. It implies an initiatory relation between master and disciple. The guru passes on oral tradition and ascetic regimen to the student.
- A religious, spiritual teacher or mentor. According to ancient Indian Philosophy, *one cannot attain success in the spiritual field without the help of a real guru or Sadguru.*
- Spiritual leader who guides disciples on the path to liberation or enlightenment. A guru or lama is particularly important in the vajrayana tradition.
- Literally teacher or spiritual advisor. However, in India and Tibet it means one at a very high level of consciousness. In fact, worship of Guru is done to develop devotion or adoration, because the teacher is the highest expression of God we know on Earth in our personal experience.
- A spiritual master who has attained oneness with God and who is able both to initiate seekers and to guide them on the spiritual path to liberation. A true guru is required to be learned in the scriptures and must belong to a lineage of masters.
- Literally, “Gu”= darkness or ignorance. “Ru”= illumination. Guru is therefore the spiritual master who initiates and guides a seeker across the sea of Separation to

the shore of Union, and therefore liberation. Guru is not simply the psycho/physical human form-the Model. Guru is principally the function of Self Revelation through the power of Grace. Direct and continuous contact with the Guru function within ourselves is both the practice and the goal of the Guru/Disciple relationship.

- The three roots of Vajrayana practice: the guru is the root of blessings, the yidam is the root of accomplishments, and the dakini is the root of activities.
- In Hinduism, a spiritual teacher or preceptor, treated with the deepest respect and greatest reverence; one who lights up the way Godward; a torch-bearer on the way back to the mansion of the Lord.
- A guru (Sanskrit) is a teacher in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. It is based on a long line of philosophical understandings of the importance of knowledge and that the teacher, *guru*, is the sacred conduit to self-realisation. Till today, in India and among people of Hindu, Buddhist, or Sikh persuasion, the title retains its significant hallowed space.

Within the context of the research, the advice column can therefore be seen as *community and individually appropriate in their continuation both as a traditional Indian and more professional psychological approach.*

2.3 Models in Community Psychology and newspaper advice columns.

Models as abstract representations of reality provide different contexts or theoretical *frameworks through which community psychology reality may be seen. In this thesis*

models relevant to community psychology and newspaper advice columns will be discussed.

Edwards (2002) has shown how various models are linked and play a role in community psychology in Zululand. Similarly, links between models in community psychology and newspapers as broad sources of community advice and advice columns as indirect, narrower, specific or personal sources of advice will be explored in this thesis. The models to be considered are the social action, mental health, organizational, ecological and phenomenological models.

After the discussion of each model, reference would be made to relevant newspaper articles that serve to extol these models by the nature of its content.

2.3.1 Social Action Model

The social action model is typically revolutionary and political in action against oppressive structures for the purpose of liberating disempowered communities.

Newspapers as the eyes and ears of the community, have played a major role internationally and in this country to expose corruption, injustice, maladministration and in so doing helped galvanise members of the public to take the appropriate action to restore justice and freedom. Many newspapers have paid the ultimate price of being shut down by reigning governments because of their stand. A recent example is the situation that prevails in Zimbabwe. The following are examples of newspaper articles that serve to expound the social action model.

- “Zim exodus overwhelms SA. Deportations soar as thousands fleeing economic meltdown pour south,” are the headlines on the front page of the *Sunday Times* dated 23 July 2006. The article states that as a result of the political situation and economic collapse of that country, South Africa deported more than 51000 illegal Zimbabwean immigrants between January and June 2006.
- A further newspaper article that underscores the social action model is found in the report “Commission rips into state of the nation. Researchers underline failure to deliver on Constitution’s promises.” (*Sunday Times* 23 July 2006, page 8). (Refer to Appendix C, page 109). The report was drawn up by academics and researchers commissioned by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to review democracy and human rights in South Africa over the past 10 years. The report declares that there is no clear and comprehensive anti-poverty plan to address the poverty and hunger of millions of South Africans.
- “Exposing the dark side of the 50’s” is an article that appeared in the *Sunday Tribune Herald*, 20-08-2006, page 2. The journalist exposed the exploitation of child workers on a Natal sugar cane farm in the 1950’s. (Refer to Appendix C, page 110).

The advice column as part of the newspaper plays a role in liberating the disempowered, namely individuals who seek help, for instance, in cases of abused spouses. Other examples include employees who are exploited by their employers, children who are

abused, difficulty with corrupt public service officials and overcoming the perceived barriers of race, ethnicity and religion in marriage.

2.3.2 The Mental Health Model

The mental health model focuses on improving the mental health of communities living in a clearly defined catchment area. Local newspapers are invaluable as sources of reference in serving the needs of communities in a particular catchment area. They serve in advertising the services and in indicating the locality of particular service centres. The newspaper advice column often has queries from readers about where to go for help for problems such as domestic violence, adoption of children, assessment and school placement for children who are intellectually challenged, etc.

Edwards (2002) indicated that a holistic model of mental health care can be based on the principles of harmony, prevention and promotion. In the healing process from illness to health, the phases of prevention of illness and promotion of health may be identified.

Edwards (2002) developed a model based on the work of Freud, Adler, and, more recently Caplan (1964), Rappaport (1977), Antonovsky (1984), Strumpher (1990), Orford (1992), Mrazek (1994) and Levine and Perkins (1997). The model emphasizes both prevention and promotion as follows:

- Tertiary prevention is indicated intervention to prevent problems in living and reduce illness, disability, and handicap and human rights abuses in persons at high risk in very disempowering contexts e.g. impoverished communities. Examples are lithium carbonate management of poverty stricken persons with bipolar

affective disorder, or interventions to prevent child sex abuse in a large foster home.

- Secondary prevention is selected intervention to prevent problems in living and reduce prevalence and / or duration of illness, disability and handicap in persons at risk in disempowering context. Examples are the suspension of medication during pregnancies and the early detection of learning disorders in children.
- Primary prevention is universal intervention to prevent problems in living and reduce incidence of illness in all persons in all context. Examples are safe sex and smoking cessation interventions for the public.
- Primary promotion is universal intervention to improve solutions for living and increase incidence of health in all persons in all context. Examples are walk/run for life campaigns, and life skills programmes for the public.
- Secondary promotion is selective intervention to improve solutions for living and increased prevalence of health, strengths and skills in persons of potential health in empowering context. Examples are company worker lifestyle and time management programmes.
- Tertiary promotion is indicated intervention to improve solutions for living and increase health, strength and skills and human rights for persons of much health potential in very empowering context (high in health, wealth, and or power) e.g. further education conferences on caring resources for community leaders and or creativity skills workshops for professional health specialists.

The above prevention and promotion methods are illustrated in various newspapers in different forms and at various levels. These may be in the form of articles by journalists, reports on government policy, pictorial depictions, editorials, advertisements and other form of print communication.

The newspaper advice columns consist of issues that can be categorized as prevention and promotion interventions that are responses to the concerns of the letter-writers. Examples of primary prevention is the advice given with regard to pre-and post-test counseling for HIV/Aids, the location of community resources such as post-natal clinics, social welfare offices, child and family welfare societies, and interventions to stop smoking. Primary promotion may be seen in the advice given on stress management, grief counseling and the importance of healthy eating, exercise, and positive thinking.

The following are examples of newspaper articles that are in line with the mental health model:

- “U S clergyman impressed by rehabilitation work”. (Daily News 24 July 2006 page 2). This article refers to efforts by International Doctors for Life at Life-place Care Centre Mission at Pickering Street, Durban. The Centre managed to get more than three hundred prostitutes off the streets with the help of many volunteers. The Centre provides counselling, and has an HIV clinic that takes care of the medical needs of the prostitutes. (Refer to Appendix C, page 111).
- “School dropout rate shock”. (Sunday Tribune 23 July 2006 page 2). The article states that seventy two thousand girls between the ages thirteen and nineteen did

not attend school last year because they were pregnant. Teacher unions were concerned about the high dropout rate in schools.

- “Boy dies after mall beating”. (Daily News 23 July 2006 page 3). This article refers to a boy who was beaten to death by security guards and cleaning staff at a popular Durban shopping centre. The article further states that despite the fact that the boy was beaten a fortnight ago, and the alleged offenders were suspended from their jobs, police have yet to make an arrest. The mother of the boy believes that the police are delaying the matter and that they are covering up for the guards. She further declared that if it were a White kid who had died in this manner, the police would have taken action. (Refer to Appendix C, page 112).
- “Psychologist: prisoners are better off than most”. (Sunday Tribune 23 July 2006 page 4). The article stated that South Africa’s rehabilitation programme for prisoners was in shambles and that a lack of funding was to blame. The Department of Correctional Services revealed that for 110 000 prisoners in South African prisons, there were only 28 permanent psychologists and 27 contracted psychologists.
- “Violence gives S.A. the blues”. (Sunday Tribune 23 July page 5). The article states that violent crime is taking its toll on the country’s psyche, with one out of every five people suffering from violence-related mental problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. The article quoted the South African Society of Psychiatrists (SASOP) as saying that they were “gravely concerned” at the psychological, psychiatric and sociological impact of the current levels of violence. The Society called on the government to acknowledge publicly that

violent crime has taken on proportions of a national disaster. The article stated that a paper by Dr. Margaret Nair, Professor Brian Robertson and Professor Clifford Allwood posted on Sasop's website stated that the government was failing to uphold people's constitutional rights. The loss of these rights threatened the mental health of South Africans. (Refer to Appendix C. page 113).

- "Of human bondage-sex slave traders target Durban while police play down the problem". (Sunday Tribune 23 July page 9). The article quotes the International Organisation on Migration (IOM) as declaring Durban a target by international syndicates because of its easy access to its port. IOM stated that in an average month they rescue about 10 girls from other countries who are forced into prostitution. Four of the girls are reported to be rescued in Durban each month. They were concerned that the South African legislation has not been amended to prosecute anyone involved in people smuggling.

2.3.3 Organisational Model

The organisational model works at managing change in group processes and team building amongst all stake-holders in the organizational setting. Newspapers highlight how group cohesion and team building result in successes in local communities. An example of this may be a school feeding scheme for children, voluntary assistance to pensioners and drug awareness campaigns at schools. Queries are often sent by readers to the newspaper advice column with regard to names and contact telephone numbers of support groups e.g. parents who have lost their children, parents with hyperactive children, support groups for alcoholics and drug addicts.

The following are examples of newspaper articles that support the organizational model in community psychology:

- “Strike this rock and regret it”. (Sunday Tribune 6 August 2006 page 21). The article interviews Alzina Zondi 84, who participated in the march to Pretoria fifty years ago to petition the prime minister over a law forcing women to carry passes. Effective organization in the community led to a march by 20 000 women under the banner of the Federation of South African Women to the seat of government in Pretoria on August 9, 1956. (Refer to Appendix C, page 114).
- “Angel of mercy gives 46 orphans wings”. (Sunday Tribune August 6, 2006 page 21). The article refers to organization by the community that has led to the establishment of Clouds of Hope Community Centre, which is an orphanage in rural Underberg. The sister in charge, Abegail Ntleko, received the award in the social welfare category of the Shoprite/Checkers Women of the year competition. She said that she would donate the prize money into helping the children at the orphanage. (Refer to Appendix C, page 115).
- “S. A. Aid to Beirut can’t get through –humanitarian supplies pile up in Jordan as bombs continue to pound Lebanon and all flights are grounded”. (Sunday Times August 6 page 15). The article refers to organization within the South African community that led to the donation by the Aid agency Gift of the Givers. Reference is made to forty tons of medical supplies, tents, blankets, water purification tablets and baby food donated to the Lebanese by South Africans that are stranded in the Jordanian capital of Amman.

2.3.4 Ecological Model

The ecological model focuses on person-environment interdependence and adjustment, recycling of resources and succession through constant dynamic community changes.

Edwards (2002) stated that the focus of the eco-systemic perspective is on channeling community and environmental resources through basic principles such as the following:

- Succession through constant change dynamics of communities. This requires vision in that the direction in which the community is already changing must be taken into account. Only through sound inter-human relationships are such community directions revealed.
- Adaptations as shaped by the environment. Mutual aid groups are an example of this principle in South Africa today with dysfunctional families, and issues of alcoholism and unemployment. Facilitation of mutual aids groups with common interests provide mutual resources, advocates and support systems for change and healing.
- Recycling resources are evident where the community shares in tasks that are burdensome e.g. health care services.
- Interdependence. Intervention in one community problem or agency will have an effect on other community problems and agencies. Therefore, the concerns of the entire community must be taken into account and intervention applied at multiple levels and in various roles.

The following newspaper articles are examples of the ecological models in action:

- “Factories are found foul say residents”. (Sunday Tribune 23 July 2006 page 12).
The article refers to complaints of watery eyes, headaches and difficulty with breathing by Bluff residents who say pollution from nearby factories is the cause.
- “Fuel, South Africa’s rude awakening”. (Sunday Tribune 23 July page 14). The article quotes Clem Sunter as saying that paying more money for petrol will finally make South Africans sit up and realize that we desperately need to adopt energy-efficient measures. He goes on to say that people have to realize that cheap oil resources are running dry. There has been a shortage in the last twenty years with demands outstripping supply.

The basic principle of adaptations as shaped by the environment is applicable in the above newspaper reports. Environmental conditions necessitate the formation of groups with mutual concerns who advocate change so that the community benefits.

2.3.5 Phenomenological Model

The phenomenological model is concerned with improving experienced sense of community relationships in individuals, couples, families, groups, communities and society.

South Africa is an excellent example of how the trauma of the apartheid era had been resolved. The National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) aimed to restore trust, development, forgiveness and harmony in a post-apartheid South Africa.

Newspapers have been in the forefront in the reporting of the reconciliation process

amongst individuals of diverse backgrounds. Working with smaller groups of people, newspaper advice columns offer readers the opportunity to seek assistance with regard to relationships be it individual, couples, families, groups or communities:

The following are examples of newspaper articles that amplify the phenomenological model in community psychology:

- “Foreign volunteers lend a hand in KZN hospitals”. (Sunday Tribune 23 July page 14). The article refers to the programme in the community conducted by Chiva (Children’s HIV Association). The programme involved visiting health care professionals from Britain and Ireland who shared information and learnt from locals how to deal with the anti-retroviral roll- out initiative.
- “The readers open their hearts to help KZN Aids orphans”. (Sunday Times Extra 23 July 2006 page 1). The article refers to the donation made by Sunday Times readers to build a dining hall for the Aids orphans of Eshowe. The appeal for funds followed a report highlighting the desolate community ravaged by HIV/AIDS in the northern- Kwazulu Natal town. The facility is run jointly with Nurturing Orphans of AIDS for Humanity (Noah)- a non-governmental organization that provides emotional and psychological support for Aids orphans and other vulnerable children.
- “Stressed city dwellers turn to TV spirituality”. (Sunday Times Extra 23 July 2006 page 5). The article refers to people in the Indian town of Haridwar who are turning to televised spirituality. People follow the instructions on yoga and other forms of meditation beamed by the TV channel. The spiritual channels are said to

be a soothing alternative to TV stations congested by news and entertainment.

(Refer to Appendix C, page 116).

- “Empowerment is cemented by Lafarge-building material companies R1.bn deal will also see 1400 employees reap the rewards ”. (Sunday Times, Business Times 23 July 2006 page 3). The article refers to Lafarge, the French buildings material company that announced a R1.1 billion black economic empowerment deal in South Africa. The initiative was designed to achieving meaningful transformation in this country by creating employment for hundreds of South Africans. (Refer to Appendix C, page 117).
- “Slap in the face for single moms”. (Daily News 18 July 2006 page 11). The article refers to the delays for single mothers in obtaining maintenance payments via the courts. This has been due to a lack of effective financial management over the money in a trust managed by the Department of Justice. Single moms complain that they have no money to clothe, feed, shelter and educate their children.

2.4 Value of newspapers as community psychology resource

The following comment that appeared on the cover page of “ PsyTalk”, Issue 1, 2006, is apt especially with regard to its mention of “widely read advice columns” and “newspaper cover stories”: “Beginning with the formalisation of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the theories, practices and frameworks of post-apartheid psychology have increasingly become the objects of public scrutiny and debate. Indeed, the past decade has witnessed an exponential growth in public interest in the

discipline. Psychologists have played a major role in fashioning national socio-economic policies, moral regeneration programmes and overarching developmental strategies.

Whether represented in the form of widely read advice columns, newspaper cover stories, high-profile court cases, television appearances and precedent setting legislation,

Psychology occupies a key role in the public domain."

The theme of the 12th South African Psychology Congress held in 2006 was "Psychology in the Public Domain". The newspaper as an instrument of creating public awareness in the public domain is integral in helping psychology fulfill its role of improving the human condition.

The above quote is of significance as specific mention was made of "widely read advice columns," in which psychology is represented.

2.5 Resume

This chapter has been concerned with an overview of the research interest of the present stories beginning with the personal experience of the author followed by local community initiatives as contextualised within contemporary theoretical models of community psychology. The next chapter will be concerned with the methodology employed in interpreting the data.

Chapter 3. Research design and procedures

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and procedures adopted in the interpretation of the survey. The research was essentially a qualitative one. Themes and summaries of the sample of thirty letters were included. Comments were invited from readers about how the column can be improved. Two independent colleagues in the field of psychology were asked to present a critical evaluation of the advice column.

Quantitative data were considered when statistics were presented and ratings done. A survey of readers' views was elicited. This was done in written form. Readers were asked their opinion of the column in terms of the problem posed and the advice given. Their views were canvassed with regard to how the column can be improved and how best the advice column may serve as a community psychological resource. Open-ended, closed and a combination of these questions were asked.

3.2 Random sample and use of the Likert Scale

A Likert scale was used to assess the advice column. A Likert scale is a psychometric scale used in questionnaires and is most widely used in survey research. It asks respondents to specify their level of agreement to each of a list of opinion statements. The Likert scale was named after Rensis Likert who invented the scale in 1932. A typical test item in a Likert scale is a statement. The respondent is asked to indicate his/her degree of agreement with the statement. Traditionally a five-point scale is used although many

psychometricians advocate a seven or nine point scale. (Retrieved from

“http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Likert_scale”)

The scale may be represented as follows:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

Selection of articles.

The table of random sampling numbers was used to select a random sample of articles in the advice column of the newspaper from the period 1999 to 2005. A total of three hundred and sixty letters were published in the period mentioned. It was decided to select a sample of 30 articles as a representative sample. Page two of the book “Tables of random Sampling Numbers” was selected. A number was randomly selected and from that point on successive three digit numbers that were all under 361 were selected.

The following numbered letters were selected for the purpose of this study:

079	183	182
171	100	325
063	125	233
327	118	213
065	082	265

315	166	230
307	354	274
350	352	338
028	007	017
086	221	038

3.3 Appreciative inquiry by readers, journalist and editor

A questionnaire was drawn where readers were asked to indicate how they experienced the column. In question A readers were asked how they experienced the column. They were requested to rate the statement “I find the information in the advice column useful” on a five point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In question B readers were asked how they appreciated the column by rating the statement “I find the advice given answers the reader’s concern adequately”, on a five point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The final part of the questionnaire asked readers to comment on how the column can be improved.

3.4 Assessment of column by two colleagues in psychology

Two colleagues were asked to independently assess each of the thirty advice columns in answering the following questions:

- 1.Is the question asked by the reader relevant for inclusion in the advice column?
- 2.Is the advice given by the psychologist appropriate to the problem presented?

3.Has the advice suitably addressed the concerns of the reader?

They were further requested to critically evaluate the quality of the advice column.

The following guidelines were given to the colleagues.

Kindly provide a brief critical evaluation of the advice column in general.

In your evaluation you may want to consider the following points:

1. Does the column serve as a community psychology resource? If so in what way?
2. Does the column serve as a source of information and knowledge that is useful to readers?
3. Is there understandable communication between the reader and the psychologist?
4. Has the psychologist shown empathy and understanding in the advice given?
5. General comment about newspaper advice columns and their place as a community psychology resource?

3.5 Questionnaire for readers /journalist /editor.

Readers were asked to complete the following questionnaire:

Sir/Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy

Instructions:

A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers' concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3.6 Ethical Considerations.

This study complies with the ethical considerations of research. McMillan and Schumacher (1997) outlined several principles that guide research. In summary the following issues were observed: informed consent, honesty and trust, interpretation and use of research, confidentiality, harm and risk. These ethical considerations were borne in mind when the respondents were approached to assist in completing the questionnaires. The purpose of the research was explained and informed consent was obtained before requesting completion of the questionnaire. They were encouraged to answer the questions independently. No provision for names was made to ensure confidentiality. Thus respondents were not subjected to any harm or risk because of the answers provided or comments recorded.

3.7 Resume

This chapter was concerned with the selection of articles for research, the use of the Likert scale and random sampling, appreciative inquiry by readers, assessment of column by colleagues in psychology and ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 Results and discussion

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter a summary of the themes in the sample of thirty articles will be presented.

The chapter will be concerned with the results of the appreciative inquiry together with how the column can be improved. It will contain the assessment by colleagues in psychology and an analysis of their assessment, and the critical evaluation of the column. The results of the study will add to and enhance the value of existing community psychological resources. The evaluation of the newspaper advice column will highlight the role played by these columns in providing assistance to members of the community.

There are advantages and disadvantages of advice columns. These arguments often form the basis for lively debate in journals and other forums. Nel (2004) outlined the advantages and disadvantages of sex column advisors, which are significant, because in essence these principles can also be applicable to newspaper column advisors as well. His conclusion has been adapted here to apply to all advice columns in the print media. The advantages include accessibility, meeting the needs of certain clients, time for research, publication of certain issues and the fact that all readers may benefit from the advice given. Disadvantages include brief responses, limited background information, lack of decision making by clients, limitation of skills of columnists, and the fact that incorrect advice may increase trauma.

4.2 Summary of themes in the sample of the 30 articles

A brief description of the themes in the sample of the thirty advice column articles would be relevant here.

- Letter No.07. *Inter-personal relationship with sister-in-law.*

“Miss Curious” refers to a relationship issue. Her perception is that her future sister-in-law resents her. Her interpretation of this is based on the way her future sister-in-law looks at her. The advice given was to give her sister-in-law more time to get to know her better and to be friendly to her so as to promote a positive relationship.

- Letter No.18. *Teenage dating.*

“Neglected” is a teenage dating situation in which the complaint is that her boyfriend is paying more attention to her friends than to her. She has come to this conclusion because he listens to her friends whose stories she considers gossipy, and because he asked her friend for a dance at a social function. The advice given was to practise being a good listener and to question whether she was feeling insecure in the relationship.

- Letter No.28. *Forced marriages.*

“Confused and disturbed” refers to a forced marriage practice in which the parents are pressurising her to marry a man of their choice and the man is using emotional blackmail to get her to do so. The advice given was to speak to her parents and the

man about how she feels .She was further advised to also talk to a psychologist and a best friend and to focus on her studies so that she obtains financial independence.

- Letter No.38. Relationship of people from different religious backgrounds.

“Depressed” is about the relationship of two people of different religious affiliations.

Her boyfriend wants her to change to his way of belief and life. The advice given was to make allowances for differences but to also retain one’s individuality. Pre-marital counseling was recommended.

- Letter No.63. Relationship with a divorced person.

“In between” is about a relationship matter between an eighteen year old woman and a twenty six year old divorced man with a son from his previous marriage. She has doubts about the security of the relationship because he is an entertainer by profession. Advice given was to consider that the quality of the relationship rather than the occupation of the partner was important. The difference in their ages and her role as mother to his son, were to be considered. At her young age, she was encouraged to focus on studies, travel and meeting other guys.

- Letter No.65. Marriage in which spouse is unfaithful.

“Fed-up housewife” refers to infidelity in the marriage and thoughts of suicide. She was advised to present an ultimatum to her husband to change and if this failed to consider opting out herself. Marriage counseling was recommended.

- Letter No. 79. Inter-racial relationship.

“Aequitas” refers to an inter-racial relationship between a Christian Coloured man and an Indian Muslim woman. The issue of racial and religious prejudice comes into play. The advice given was to persevere and that love would conquer prejudices.

- Letter No. 82. Family disapproval of relationship.

“Where do I go from here?” refers to a relationship that ended because her family disapproved of her boyfriend because he was a Hindu and they were Christians. She is now dating somebody else but her dilemma is that she is still in love with her previous boyfriend. The situation has led to suicidal thoughts. She was advised that suicide is never a solution to any problem and that she needed to discuss the matter with her previous boyfriend to establish if they were both still in love and then to act on the situation.

- Letter No 86. In-laws influence in marriage.

“Desperate” refers to the relationship between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law who believes that she is being ill-treated because she is Hindi-speaking and her husband is Tamil-speaking. She complains that her husband embarrasses her in the presence of his family. She entertained the thought of eloping with a guy from her workplace. She was advised that by running away she would face worse problems. She was urged to discuss the matter with her husband with the view to a more equitable distribution of household chores. Marriage counseling was recommended.

- Letter No. 100. Broken relationship.

“Hurt and betrayed” refers to a betrayal in relationship and the subsequent hurt that she feels. She was advised to talk about the situation in order to release her feelings and to be able to fill her spare time with activities that are enjoyable.

- Letter No. 118. Relationship issue between spouses.

“Troubled mother” refers to a letter by a mother with regard to the troubled marital relationship of her daughter in which the husband often comes home late and is sometimes intoxicated. The advice given was for her to discuss the matter with her husband especially with regard to budgeting time for work and time to spend together. She was encouraged to find a job, engage in studies and leisure activities so that she need not feel lonely.

- Letter No. 125. Dominance of in-laws in relationship.

“Sidelined girlfriend” is about a controlling and dominating future mother-in-law and a situation in which the son is helpless to make any changes. She was advised to discuss the matter with her boyfriend and inform him about how his mother’s attitude impacts on their relationship. She was cautioned about living in the same home after marriage in view of the mother-in-law’s dominance.

- Letter No. 166. Infidelity in relationship.

“Tolerant girlfriend” refers to a one-sided relationship in which the boyfriend is a serial cheater and for whom she stole money. She was advised to free herself from the

emotional dependence on this man as she is being merely used. She was advised to seek counseling in order to regain her self-esteem and confidence.

- Letter No171. Sexual dysfunction.

“Fearful wife” refers to sexual dysfunction where the wife has a fear of intercourse. She was referred for a comprehensive assessment and therapy. She was advised to contact the South African Sexual Health Association for further information.

- Letter No. 182. Suicidal thoughts because of relationship.

“Heart-sore” refers to a relationship issue that the parents do not approve of because of the language background. She feels like killing herself or running away. She was advised to focus on her studies and to socialize with others. Attention was drawn to the perception that people of the same language background do not necessarily make ideal partners.

- Letter No. 183. Concern about studies and career.

“Matric student” student is concerned about studies and career. The student feels stressed because of the high expectations teachers and parents have of him. Another concern was the university fees. The student was advised to relax and do the best he can as stress leads to a lack of concentration and attention. The option of bursaries, student loans and studying part-time while working was discussed.

- Letter No. 213. Dependency in relationship

“Depressed and in love” refers to a broken relationship with a widower who is eight years older and who stated that he has a drinking problem. She was advised to become strong enough in order to move on in her life. It was recommended that she focus on the positive aspects of her life and to relax more.

- Letter No.221. Low self-esteem.

“Unbalanced” refers to sibling rivalry in which the feelings of insecurity are evident because of her physical disability. She was encouraged to boost her self-esteem and confidence and to feel more secure. She was urged to believe in herself and to focus on achieving success in whatever she did.

- Letter No. 230. Addiction to gambling.

“Dilemma” refers to a gambling addiction by an engineer and the consequent deterioration in the marriage and financial situation. He was advised to seek help for his gambling addiction and for his wife to resume work.

- Letter No.233. HIV/AIDS status.

“Suspicious” refers to the HIV/AIDS reality and the fear that his girlfriend might be infected because of her social lifestyle. They were advised to establish their HIV status. The issue of suspicion needed to be addressed. They were advised to seek marital counseling.

- Letter No 265. Relationship issue due to different religious backgrounds.

“Miss Crossroads” is about a relationship of two people from different religious backgrounds. She accuses him of controlling and not trusting her. She ended the relationship but resumed it because she found out that she was pregnant. She is considering marriage because of her pregnancy and is anxious about which religion the child would have to follow. She was advised to rethink the marriage option because her boyfriend may still remain controlling. With regard to religion she was advised that the emphasis should be on the quality of the upbringing of the child and the inculcation of positive values in a loving and nurturing environment rather than on the imposition of a particular religion.

- Letter No. 274. Eating disorder.

“Skin and bones.” This is about an eating disorder viz. anorexia nervosa in which she is the victim of jokes because she is underweight. She has not disclosed her condition to anybody and feels that she cannot go on any longer. She was advised to seek a medical evaluation and psychological assessment before treatment and therapy commences.

- Letter No. 305. Support for the aged.

“Depressed sister” refers to a situation where the siblings do not contribute to their mother’s welfare. The daughter is concerned because of the escalating costs in supporting her mother by herself. She was advised to discuss the matter with her siblings with the objective of contributions towards a medical aid for her and possible rotation of homes her mother could visit.

- Letter No. 315. Scholastic performance.

“Concerned mother” refers to the child’s poor performance at school. The mother complains that the father does not assist with the homework. The advice was for the parents to share supervision of homework, to read to the child and to listen to the child read, to be selective about TV programmes, to have a routine for study and homework and to keep in frequent contact with the teachers.

- Letter No. 325. Spousal abuse.

“Tormented and abused” refers to the theme of domestic violence in which there is abuse and threats of death by her alcoholic husband who is dependent on her financially. The advice given was for her to free herself from the abuse by separation or divorce. It was suggested that a protection order be obtained to prevent her husband from abusing the family.

- Letter No. 327. Sexual dysfunction due to depression.

“Lonely in marriage” refers to sexual dysfunction in marriage, a situation that is exacerbated by the side effects of anti-depressants and the emotional scars of a previously abusive marriage. The advice was for her to obtain a psycho-medical assessment in order for a treatment programme to be worked out. Reference was made to a paper published in New Therapist dated July/ August 2001 in which helpful information with regard to sexual dysfunction was listed.

- Letter No. 338. Sexual harassment in the workplace.

“Doubting men” deals with the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace in which the victim has flashbacks of the incident each time she goes for an interview. She was advised to report the matter so that she may be free from the anger and also that others may not be subjected to the same harassment. She was encouraged to talk about the matter to relieve her of the tension and finally to seek psychological counseling.

- Letter No.350. Homosexuality.

“Dumb-struck” revolves around the issue of homosexuality and the husband’s revelation that he has secret relationships with other men. She was advised to address the issue of infidelity on the part of her husband and that the option of separation from him was one she could consider.

- Letter No. 352. Post- test counselling and treatment for HIV/AIDS.

“Sister G” portrays the emotions the family goes through when a member is HIV positive. She was advised to refer her sister for treatment and to an HIV/AIDS counselor for counseling. Some pertinent information with regard to HIV/AIDS was provided.

- Letter No. 354. Extra-marital relationship.

“Walk into my life” refers to an extra-marital affair between two people who are married and have children of their own. The advice given was that continuing the affair will bring trauma to themselves, their spouses and their children. It was suggested that if the parties

were not in love with their spouses, divorce would be the logical step rather than engaging in extra-marital relationships.

4.3 Results of appreciative inquiry by readers

The appreciative inquiry consisted of obtaining reader's opinions. They were asked to rate the usefulness of the column and indicate whether the reader's concerns were adequately answered. This was done on the Likert scale. Readers were then asked to comment on how the column can be improved.

4.3.1. Results of readers' opinion on the advice column

Section A

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
0	0	16	27	57

As observed on the Likert scale above 57 % of the respondents were in strong agreement with regard to the usefulness of the column. 27 % were in agreement and 16 % were could neither agree nor disagree about the usefulness of the column.

Section B

Answering readers' concerns adequately.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
0	0	6	34	60

Readers' rating on the Likert scale revealed that 60 % of the respondents were in strong agreement with the statement that the advice given answers the reader's concerns adequately.

34 % were in agreement and 6 % could neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

4.3.2 Comments on how the column can be improved

100 completed returns by readers were obtained and analysed. Three forms were returned with no comment made. Seventeen forms indicated "no comment/decline to comment/job well done/keep it up/interesting/good" and so forth, indicating that the reader had nothing to add with regard to the improvement of the column. The following comments were categorized and arranged in order of frequency:

- Columnist to follow-up on advice given 6
- Have longer/larger column 6
- Discuss more case studies. 4
- List contact numbers of resources 4
- Include columnist's contact numbers and fees. 4
- Use forceful words to drive home message. 3
- Reply to more letters. 3
- Differentiate between advice column and astrologers/psychics columns. 3
- Form support groups. 2

• Simplify language used.	2
• Provide SMS service for those in urgent need.	2
• Create website for people to access.	2
• Present motivation talks to group/community centres.	2
• Set up stand at shopping centres for readers to meet columnist.	2
• Include pictures depicting stories.	2
• Inform abused wives about “protection orders”.	2
• Feedback by letter writer after taking advice.	2
• Suggest publication of column in other newspapers as well.	2
• End columns with spiritual or philosophical message.	2
• Write about how marriages can work.	2
• Indicate how columnist’s family coped with problems.	1
• Indicate areas where letter writers come from.	1
• Reader to provide background information about himself.	1
• Ask teachers not to embarrass pupils by demanding school fees.	1
• Request for contact details for free legal advice.	1
• Request for cost and length of session.	1
• Request for free services once a week.	1
• List therapists who can provide free service once a month.	1
• Provide for telephonic contact with psychologist.	1
• Ask neighbours to support victims e.g. violence.	1
• Inform partners to talk to each other first.	1
• Request contact numbers to report harassment in the workplace.	1

- Request to record stories for people who cannot write. 1
- Need better quality answers. 1
- To be objective and more empathetic. 1
- Have volunteers available to accompany victims to support services. 1
- Comment on abused women unable to leave husbands. 1
- Highlight plight of abused and advocate severe sentences for perpetrators. 1
- Promote culture in youth. 1
- Write about why people go to temples/ priest/ witchdoctors. 1
- Need for continuity and finality in cases. 1
- Encourage women to exercise their own will and rights. 1
- Arrange for social worker to follow –up advice with patient. 1
- Arrange for talks to senior pupils at schools. 1
- Comment on problems teachers face when parents don't discipline children. 1
- Teach abstinence rather than condomise. 1
- Encourage people to dance as therapy. 1
- Encourage listening to music as therapy. 1
- Emphasise taking time to choose the right partner to avoid problems. 1
- Host radio talk show for those who cannot read. 1
- Ask parents to spend more quality time with children. 1
- Encourage teachers of English to use the column as teaching aids. 1
- Advise readers about “sugars” addiction. 1
- Publish testimonies of those who were successful after taking advice. 1
- Categorise patients by means of levels of urgency e.g. by colour coding. 1

- Produce CD/cassettes on questions and answers. 1
- Write about preventing suicides. 1
- Encourage family therapy as opposed to individual therapy. 1

4.3.3 Response by stakeholders

The journalist responded by saying that she agrees with the information in the advice column being useful and the advice adequately answering the readers concerns. With regards to comments on improvement of the advice column she suggested that the advice be more practical or hands –on for the reader. She further suggested that the response could provide an internet site to research a particular problem further.

The editor was in agreement in both statements A and B. With regard to improvement of the column he suggested inclusion of case studies of younger people, feedback from those who received the advice and tackling issues such as apparitions and their impact on people.

4.4 Assessment of advice column by colleagues in psychology.

Two colleagues in psychology were asked to assess each of the thirty randomly selected advice vignettes by answering the following questions:

1. Is the question asked by the reader relevant for inclusion in the advice column?
2. Is the advice given by the psychologist appropriate to the problem presented?
3. Has the advice suitably addressed the concerns of the reader?

The following responses were obtained from Rater A and Rater B:

	Rater A	Rater B
Letter No. 07.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No. 18.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	No	Yes
Question 3.	No	Yes
Letter No 28.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 38.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 63.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes

Letter No 65.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 79.

Question No 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question No 2	Yes	Yes
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Question No 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 82.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
-------------	-----	-----

Letter No 86.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
-------------	-----	-----

Letter No 100.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 118.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	No	Yes
Letter No 125.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 166.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 171.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 182.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 183.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 213.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes

Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 221.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	No	Yes
Letter No 230.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 233.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 265.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 274.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes

Letter No 305.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 315.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 325.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 327.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	No	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 338.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	No	Yes
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Question 3.	Yes	Yes
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Letter No 350.

Question 1.	Yes	Yes
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Question 2.	Yes	Yes
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Question 3.	No	Yes
Letter No 352.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes
Letter No 354.		
Question 1.	Yes	Yes
Question 2.	Yes	Yes
Question 3.	Yes	Yes

4.5 Analysis of responses:

The raters' assessments of the advice given were as follows:

	Rater A		Rater B	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Question 1	90 (100 %)	0	90 (100%)	0
Question 2	87 (96.6 %)	3 (3.3 %)	90 (100 %)	0
Question 3	86 (95.5 %)	4 (4.4 %)	90 (100%)	0

In answering question 2, rater A responded in the negative to three of the replies given.

With regard to question 3, rater A responded in the negative to four of the replies given.

Both colleagues answered all questions in the affirmative with regard to all the letters

except the following: letters No 18, 118, 221, 327, 338 and 350.

Question 2 posed the question, “Is the advice given by the psychologist appropriate to the problem presented?” Colleague A responded to question 2 in the negative when answering Letter No 18, 327 and 338.

Question 3 asked, “Has the advice suitably addressed the concerns of the reader?” Colleague A answered in the negative when responding to this question with regard to Letter No 18, 118, 221 and 350.

The findings indicated that there was general agreement that the majority of the replies answered the questions appropriately.

4.6 Critical evaluation of the advice column

Each colleague presented an independent critical evaluation of the advice column in the form of reports. The reports are contained in Appendix B.

The reports indicate a positive response to the newspaper advice column as a community psychology resource. Colleagues agreed that because of the information and knowledge contained in these articles they serve an important educative purpose. They also agreed on the relevance and appropriateness of the information given. The style of writing facilitates comprehension by the ordinary reader. Readers expressed appreciation for the column and found the information empowering.

4.7 Resume

This chapter was concerned with the summary of themes in the articles, results of the appreciative inquiry by readers, comments on how the column can be improved and results of the readers' opinion of the advice column. This chapter also incorporates the assessment of the advice column by colleagues in psychology, and an analysis of the responses obtained and a critical evaluation.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will be concerned with the summary of the findings together with recommendations and the value of this study in community psychology. Many individuals have no choice but to live with their problems because they cannot or are unable to seek help for various reasons. By reading the advice columns these individuals will feel motivated and encouraged to obtain help. Gerhardt and van Staden (1991) state that the responsible written advice column may serve a role in encouraging the troubled individual to seek appropriate and/or professional help and it can contribute constructively by providing and dispersing correct information.

The findings of this study will help draw attention to an inexpensive and readily available community psychological resource i.e. the newspaper advice column. On a practical level these articles can be cut out, copied and made available at community centres such as clinics, hospitals, schools, social-welfare offices, magistrates courts, police stations, counselling centres, etc. Because of the minimal costs involved, this particular resource will be accessible to the majority of the poor. The message of empowerment, mobilisation and social action contained in some of the advice are valuable to an emerging democratic South Africa. The advice may also be particularly helpful to women, who historically led, and some still lead, submissive roles in heterosexual relationships and who form the majority of seekers of help.

5.2 Summary of findings and recommendations

This research was concerned with an evaluation of the newspaper advice column as a community psychology resource. In pursuit of this objective, information was obtained from readers of this newspaper, the journalist, the editor and two colleagues in psychology. The findings indicate a favourable evaluation by these respondents. Comments on how the column can be improved and notes made in the critical evaluation will be taken into consideration in improving the newspaper advice column as a community psychology resource.

With regard to the improvement of the column, the following recommendations are made, based on the comments from readers of the newspaper:

- There is a need to follow up on advice given. This may be done by asking the letter writer to provide feedback after implementation of the advice. Readers may then be accordingly informed in subsequent publications. Publication of success stories will serve to motivate other readers and will also highlight the newspaper advice column as a valuable community resource.
- The advice column should be increased. This can be done by allocating more space in the newspaper to publish and answer more letters. This space can also be used to discuss case studies that fall under the domain of mental health.
- The contact telephone numbers and physical location of community resources should be published in the newspaper. For instance, if the letter writer has a gambling problem he should be given the contact numbers of Gamblers'

Anonymous or other resources available in his area.

- From feed-back obtained, readers indicated that forceful words help to drive home the message. The feed- back also indicated that the language should be simple so that it could be understood by all.
- The newspaper should clearly differentiate between the professional, scientific advice given by the psychologist and advice given by others such as astrologers, fortune-tellers and psychics. One way of doing this is to ensure that the professional advice column is not alongside or on the same page as that of the astrologers, fortune-tellers and psychics. A matter for concern is that a problem such as infidelity is directed to the psychologist and sometimes to the psychic. When the psychic replies to the problem there is an overlap of advice from two contrasting sources. This may lead to confusion in the minds of readers. A further concern is that a psychic has no professional, psychological qualification to venture advice that may be erroneously deemed psychological interventions by the reader. The adoption of advice that is not based on sound psychological, scientific principles may serve to perpetuate and intensify the problem rather than provide a solution.
- The formation of support groups for people affected by similar problems has proven to be a successful therapeutic technique. Support groups can be formed for families who may lose their loved ones, persons who are abused, victims of substance abuse, parents of children with learning difficulties and others depending on the prevalence of the problem. The newspaper can facilitate the formation of appropriate support groups by means of publishing this fact and

inviting readers to contact a coordinator who could liaise with the psychologist.

- The inclusion of pictures depicting the themes in the story would serve to capture the curiosity and interest of the readers as this would have a visual appeal. Visuals in the form of pictures tend to appeal to emotions and thus sets the readers' mood.
- It is strongly recommended that other newspapers, especially the weekly ones, feature an advice column as well. Alternatively, this advice column may be published in other newspapers as well. The advantage of this is that more readers will have access to the column and benefit from such a resource.
- As an extension of the service of the advice column and as a means to publicise this service, it is recommended that motivational talks be presented to community groups. Topics that have been dealt with in the advice column and that are relevant to a particular group, may be chosen. For instance, topics such as bullying and drugs are relevant to school groups.
- Information and procedures about certain vital issues should be published as a service to the community, e.g. how to obtain a "protection order", screening and admission procedures for rehabilitation of alcoholics and drug addicts, steps in reporting sexual abuse and rape, criteria for the granting of social welfare support, and other such services.
- The advice given or treatment suggested would be appropriate if certain basic background information about the letter writer is known. These would include age, gender, duration and intensity of the problem being experienced,

frequency of incidents, and such relevant details. This information would help the columnist in diagnosing and suggesting interventions or treatment. This request for the background information can be published in the newspaper.

- Provision in the newspaper advice column should be made for those people who cannot write or have limited writing skills. Their stories may be obtained by personal interviews, telephonic interviews or recordings. These stories can then be written in the form of a letter and responded to in the advice column. Not only would this service be of benefit to the letter writer who may get the assistance of somebody if he cannot read it himself but would also benefit others who may have similar problems. Another useful non-print medium is the radio. Regular radio talk -shows can be held in which advice is given.
- An extension of the services of the advice column can be in the form of provision of free counseling to people who cannot afford it. This can be done by drawing up a roster of volunteer psychologists and social workers who are prepared to offer their services gratis or perhaps half a day or one day a month.

5.3 Value of study in promoting community psychology

Amongst other objectives community psychology is concerned with empowering communities, providing resources and finding solutions to problems faced by the members of the community. Many individuals consider themselves helpless because

they appear to be isolated from the mainstream of the community. Isolation may be as a result of poverty, ignorance, oppression by males in a patriarchal society and conservative family backgrounds. The only lifeline to these individuals is the provision of resources that are accessible to them. The newspaper advice column is a community psychology resource that is accessible to the people.

Forsell and Rossi (2004) stated that faceless communication provides individuals with the possibility of getting information without having to reveal their own identity. This anonymity allows for transparency and honesty. The writer can then divulge personal or intimate information about himself or herself without being prejudiced. Other readers who may find themselves in a similar position are now provided with a possible solution to their problems. They also state that the process of writing about oneself is often therapeutic. Some writers may not necessarily seek answers. But in summoning their courage to have their problem reduced to print form is motivation in itself. Other writers look for confirmation of what they already know. Confirmation of the knowledge serves as a reassurance. Many people tend to live with their problems in the belief that nothing can be done about it. At times disempowerment and the length of time one tolerates a problem serves to condition the individual to do nothing about it. When people read about others having similar problems and look at the advice given in terms of vicarious conditioning and / or role modeling, they feel inspired and motivated to revisit their own problem with a view to solving it. In other words, options that were hitherto not considered now become feasible.

Gudelunas (2005) indicated that the newspaper advice column is found at the critical site of convergence of “formal” curricula including community and school based sexual education programmes, and “informal” curricula of the mass media. In a conservative culture that restricts discussion about topics such as sexuality, the newspaper advice column provides a widely available, culturally mainstream venue and public platform for talking, learning and debating issues around such topics. The newspaper advice column can then be seen as a safe space for taboo talk.

5.4 Resume

This chapter has been concerned with a summary of findings and recommendations. It has also highlighted the value of this community psychology research.

With the advance in technology and the sophistication of society, people are developing more problems that are psychological in nature. The choices of books on a subject and websites are too wide and often leave people confused and with doubts about the source of advice. This cannot be said for newspaper advice column as they carry the credibility of the papers in which they appear. Credibility arises from the fact that most newspapers have a long history, a fixed physical address with the journalists and editors being known to the members of the public.

Newspaper advice columns are popular throughout the world, appearing in numerous languages and read by millions. An apt quote by Care (2002) would be appropriate here. “The increasingly complex nature of contemporary life, compounded by the apparently

never-ending story of humanities depressingly changeless emotional, romantic, and sexual hang-ups, would seem to insure the enduring necessity of the advice column well into the next millennium. It remains the one element of the mass press still dedicated to the specific personal needs of one troubled, disgusted, hurting, frustrated, or bewildered human being, and thus to the needs of readers everywhere.”

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Appendix A

07.

Dear Psychologist

I am absolutely thrilled that Post has a problem column. I am psychologically well versed and have an incredibly good understanding of people, their emotions and what makes them “tick”.

My future sister-in-law seems to like me. But who knows what people are like “inside”. She talks nicely to me but I have caught her looking at me like something is wrong with me.

I am good looking, or so I am told by people. Could it be that she resents me now and then for no particular reason? I do feel weird when she looks at me like that. Please respond to my letter as soon as possible since I love going into people’s heads. Thanks a million once again.

Miss Curious.

Dear Miss Curious

I am pleased that you like our new column. You mention that you caught your future sister-in-law looking at you as if something was wrong with you. Are you sure that you are not misinterpreting the way she looks at you. It may just be a wrong perception since you say that she seems to like.

On the other hand, perhaps she is trying to figure out what makes you tick! I would suggest that you give her some time to get to know you better, even if it means giving you those “looks”.

As a future member of your family she should be entitled to her own evaluation. Meanwhile, you can help the process by being friendly and open with your future sister-in-law. In time she will trust you and reciprocate your openness.

Psychologist.

018.

Dear Psychologist

Although my boyfriend says he loves me, his behaviour makes me question that.

Whenever we are in company, he pays more attention to the other girls than to me. He listens to their silly stories which sound gossipy to me. About two weeks ago when we

went to a party, one of my friends joined us at a table. Just after I introduced him to my friend, he asked her for a dance.

I was so angry, but I had to control my temper because of the people around us. I buy him gifts and do so much for him but he doesn't seem to love me as much as I love him. What can I do?

Neglected.

Dear Neglected

Your boyfriend seems to be the sociable type and he appears to like your friends. Surely this is preferable to having a boyfriend who is anti-social and shows no interest in your friends. Generally people like you if you are a good listener even if the stories sound silly. Try it and you will find that you are popular as well.

Perhaps your boyfriend was being polite to your friend when he asked her for a dance. I am assuming that he did dance with you as well.

You need to ask yourself whether you are feeling insecure in this relationship. Being possessive or jealous can be counter-productive and may even destroy what you have.

Count your blessing that you have such a friendly and sociable boyfriend. He may pay attention to and dance with your friends but that does not mean he does not love you.

Also remember love cannot be bought.

It should be earned. Give love unconditionally and it will return to you unconditionally.

Psychologist

028.

Dear Psychologist

I am still in school, but am to be married to a man I do not love. I don't know how to end the proposal as my parents would not let me do so.

My parents are worried about what "the people would say" because he comes home almost every day and they have a good reputation that I would be "spoiling" if I broke off the relationship. I am also known as a good child in my community.

I hate this guy, he is unemployed and is sickly and I don't want to spend the rest of my life with him. He forces me to tell him that I love him and other things.

I hate him so much, and he told me if I leave him he would kill himself. He has such a disgusting past with women and he may even have AIDS. There is someone else who I care about. This person is working and is perfect for me. I love him and want to spend the rest of my life with him. What do I do?

This is the worst thing that could happen to me- I just hope I don't have to suffer for ever. I can't study and feel like killing myself.

Confused and Disturbed.

Dear Confused and Disturbed

It is sad that your parents and boyfriend are deciding what is good for you. If you do not love the guy, end the relationship. It is your right to decide that.

Do not be pressured into any relationship because you feel obligated to your parents. After all, you are the one who is going to live with him for the rest of your life, not your parents. If you marry someone you do not love, you would not be happy. The following steps are recommended for you to consider:

- Persuade your parents to see your point of view. A loveless marriage would be miserable for you and consequently for them.
- Inform this guy firmly that you are not interested in him. He will soon get the message if you do not talk or see him at all. If this fails, remember you can seek legal assistance because no one can force you into marriage against your will.
- You have much to live for and suicide should not even enter your mind. If you cannot consult a psychologist, talk to your best friend. Talking about your frustration and considering possible solutions would be a positive way to handle the matter.
- Your studies are important. Your success at school will eventually help you lead a financially independent life. In your situation, it is imperative that you do not have to depend on your parents or boyfriend for financial assistance.

So concentrate on your studies right now.

Remember you are not alone. Many readers of this column will be morally supporting you.

Psychologist

038.

Dear Psychologist

I am a 24 year old Hindi- speaking woman with a loving boyfriend. At the beginning of our courtship I declared my past relationships to him. It was unpleasant for him and he is still affected by what I said but he has accepted me in his life. Somehow we tend to fight all the time. I have known him for two and a half years and we are faced with difficult choices.

I am vegetarian. He is not. We are planning to marry but he wants me to leave vegetarianism so that married life won't have so many difficulties.

Why does he have to be so unfair? I too could ask him to be a vegetarian to alleviate future problems. My mind tells me maybe I should make a sacrifice, because of my past life, but how can I if I feel so strongly about eating meat?

His philosophy is that a good wife is someone who listens to her husband and does everything to please him. We live in a modern society yet he feels uncomfortable about me wearing jeans after we marry. He says he wants me to dress respectfully before his parents and doesn't feel it right for me to dress in jeans in public.

I am not a "jeans fanatic" and usually dress appropriately for functions and prayers. My concern is that I don't want to be stopped from something so innocent. Do I change my dress to be complimented as a good wife in my boyfriend's eyes or is he expected to tell me exactly what he wants me to do?

He is also unhappy about my sister's relationship as she is engaged to someone outside our culture. He feels I should be strong in his beliefs that it is wrong and that I should not participate in my sister's life and wedding.

Where do I draw the line? I love him but love and respect my sister too. I don't want to disappoint anyone but who's right and who's wrong? What do I do?

Can you also help me in respect of prayers? I am a Hare Krishna devotee and he is a Hindi-speaking boy. Must I automatically change to his religious beliefs and levels of prayers where functions are concerned?

I need help desperately because I'm afraid our relationship may not have the strength to survive-unlike the love we share for each other.

Depressed.

Dear Depressed

True love implies mutual respect, understanding and tolerance. Married couples should not strive to be like identical twins or clones of each other. Allowance should be made for individual differences based on choice and preference. This spices up life and makes it exciting.

Your boyfriend seems to want everything his way without even considering compromises. He wants you to adopt his food preferences, dress according to what he defines as respectful and wants your sister to marry someone from a culture he approves of.

What about your own individuality and way of life? Would he be prepared to adapt to accommodate your wishes? This seems to be a one-sided relationship where you are the giver and he is the receiver. This kind of relationship is bound to be punctuated with quarrels which will eventually bring it to a full stop.

Pre-marital counseling will benefit you both. If your boyfriend still remains inflexible it would be easier and less complicated to end the relationship now than to go through the painful process of a divorce later.

Psychologist

063.

Dear Psychologist

I am experiencing a mind versus heart dilemma. I am eighteen and acutely ambitious, optimistic and spiritual. I have been involved with a 26 year old divorcee who also has a five year old son.

We have been together for about eight months and met while he was in the divorce process. His divorce was the result of an unfaithful spouse. I have come to love him because he's understanding, sincere, thoughtful, loving, funny, religious and sober among other qualities.

I trust him but recently I've developed doubts about us. He's an entertainer by profession and I doubt if it's good enough for me. I feel as if his profession is not as solid and promising as my career. Should I terminate our relationship to pursue my freedom before making a permanent commitment? My heart wants a future with him but my mind says it won't be enough.

In- Between.

Dear In Between

Decisions on commitment should be largely influenced by the quality of the

relationship rather than by the occupation of one's partner. The factor that will determine the happiness is the personality of the guy and not his job. The quest for men with glamorous jobs is no guarantee of a successful relationship.

Right now you should be concerned about the issue of the difference in your ages and the possibility of assuming the complex role of mother to your boyfriend's son. Difference in ages may mean difference in interests and values. Can you cope with all of these?

At your young age you should not commit yourself to a permanent relationship which may be in the way of exciting challenges such as overseas travel, further studies, change in career, meeting other guys etc.

Psychologist

065.

Dear Guru

I am 33, married for 13 years, and have two sons. I have experienced problems in my marriage for the past two years as my husband is involved with another woman. I stay in this marriage because I have nowhere to go.

Everyone has failed to help me because he says he loves this woman and no one must intervene. I hate this woman for destroying what we have and treasured. I did speak to her but she is so thick that nothing seems to sink in. She is a divorcee with a child and works for my husband. She did kiss him many times. According to my husband they are only good friends.

I am so sick of this that I want to leave. I love my husband. I trusted him and after 10 years of marriage he tells me about his involvement with this woman. I did tell him to make his choice but he can't. What should I do? Sometimes I think of killing myself.

Fed --up Housewife.

Dear Fed-up Housewife

Do not waste your energy on this woman as she will not let go. She is quite content with receiving her salary plus your husband's attention.

You need to focus on getting your husband to remain faithful to you. Be assertive and present an ultimatum to him. He has to decide on one of you. Make it clear that you and your children will not share his life if he intends maintaining a relationship with any other woman.

The next step would be to carry out your threat if he does not change. You must realize that if you do not demand change now you are likely to continue in this unhappy position as you did for the past two years.

It would be difficult for you to work through this alone. Seek professional help and advice. Counseling sessions will reveal the consequences of your husband's double dealing and persuade him to change. It is important that you begin this process immediately.

Psychologist

079.

Dear Psychologist

I am a Coloured gent who is seeing an Indian woman. I feel deeply for her but there are so many issues to deal with. I am a Roman Catholic and she is Muslim.

We are both set in our ways and take our religion seriously, but we both want the same thing-each other.

I know her family will not accept me and what religion would our children follow.

These and more are the problems that I find myself surrounded with. My feelings for her still overpower all that my mind sometimes tells me to do. I am not ready to give her up just yet and don't know whether I ever will.

Are we facing a colossal mountain that we may never reach the top, and should we stop now, or should we endeavour onwards in the hope that we can reach there, for how will you know unless you try. Right? Times are changing and why should the Indian community not acknowledge inter-religious relationships? Why is it that they always want to keep things under the carpet? All I ask is the opportunity to be given a chance.

Would they prefer that she be wed to a man whom she does not love, and be silenced into a prison for the rest of her life, just for the sake of "doing the right thing" according to them, or would they rather have her wed someone she cherishes and who just wants to make every moment of her life filled with happiness?

Now I ask you, what then seems right?

Aequitas.

Dear Aequitas

True love should be able to conquer differences of race, colour or creed. If two people really love each other they would be prepared to make sacrifices and compromises to be together. You must be prepared to face rejection and criticism from families. If you both have the strength to withstand this then your love will endure. As far as which religion the children should follow, this would largely depend on your mutual tolerance, understanding and openness.

Many happy, well-adjusted adults were once children from parents from different religious backgrounds. It is also true that we have many dysfunctional families where the parents are of the same religion. Speak openly to your girlfriend. Discuss the likely problems. If both of you are united in overcoming these problems then there is certainly hope that you would be united in love.

Psychologist

082.

Dear Psychologist

I am a 21 year old Christian woman. Two and a half years ago I fell in love with a Hindi-speaking guy. My family found out about the relationship and disapproved of it because of his religion. I was torn between my love for him and the love and duty to my family. I was under tremendous pressure and took the only way out. I ended the relationship five months ago.

He is always in my thoughts. I still love him. A few weeks ago when I spoke to him he was blunt and cruel to me. I haven't spoken or seen him since.

I am studying at the Technikon and sometimes feel that this feeling of loss adversely affects my studies. I constantly compare guys to my ex-boyfriend and they fall short. But recently I met a guy and we've been seeing each other regularly.

However, I am still in love with my ex-boyfriend.

I am scared to move on and know I will never love any other guy as much as I love him. Will I ever get over him? I have even considered suicide. Please help me.

Where do I go from here.

Dear Where do I go from here

You don't have to be intelligent to realize suicide can never be a solution to any problem. It is the option of a defeatist and a coward. If you look around you will find hundreds of people whose problems are comparatively worse than yours. Therefore, count your blessings and focus on your strengths and positive qualities.

History shows that love can conquer the barriers of religion and ethnicity. However, both people must be equally committed to the relationship. To find out whether this guy would still be committed is to ask him straight out. If he is, there is hope. If he isn't, you need to accept the situation and move on.

The exercise of comparing each person you meet to your ex-boyfriend is futile as each person is unique in his own way. Each has his own strengths and weaknesses. Your habit of comparison can prejudice your mind negatively towards that person.

You're only 21, having just received the symbolic key to many exciting possibilities-career, travel, independence, etc. Focus less on past feelings and more on the possibilities of future successes.

Psychologist

086.

Dear Psychologist

I am contemplating running away with a guy from work due to problems with my husband and his family. I am from a Hindi-speaking background but married a Tamil a few years ago.

My mother-in-law expects me to cook for the entire family. They fuss about the cooking but don't offer to cook. Dishes are left for me to wash, his sisters don't help and I also iron for my in-laws. On many occasions my mother-in-law has brought her sari to me to iron again because she said it was still creased.

When I complain, my husband keeps quiet or walks away. I am most embarrassed when he scolds me in their presence. I can't go to my old parents who have their own problems. The guy from work said he would take me away from this. What do I do?

Desperate.

Dear Desperate

You would fall into a bigger trap by running away with a guy whom you may not love. You're thinking about this because of the problems. Its obvious you are being treated as a Cinderella. Your husband seems powerless to do something about the pressure that is imposed on you.

I would suggest you both arrange to see a psychologist with a view to resolving the problems. If he is not agreeable, you may have to seriously consider moving out. Your absence will certainly make them think how much they took you for granted. It would be wiser to live an independent life with dignity than to live under the present circumstances.

Keep in mind that when your husband comes entreating you to return you must lay down conditions. This would be for both of you to live on your own or for you to be treated with respect by his family. Each one should do his/her own chores. The task of cooking and duties should be shared or done on a rotational basis. Emphasise that if these conditions are not met you will walk out. Be strong and assertive and people will soon realize you are not at their beck and call.

Psychologist

100.

Dear Psychologist

All I wanted was to be happy and loved. I trusted someone so much that my life revolved around him. I never asked him for anything and I never nagged him or made him stay with me when he wanted to do anything or go anywhere.

I treasured him with all my heart. I smiled, laughed and thought because of him. I hoped one day that he would see me in a different way and realize how much he meant to me. He was my first thought, my first breath and I had eyes only for him. I stuck through everything because I loved him and always would.

He never said he loved me but he said he cared. That was enough for me until now. Things changed this year. One day he made me feel that deep down he really cared with all his heart. I felt I was actually being loved too. Then all of a sudden everything was gone. All our memories, all I said and all we did were no more there. It was like I was nothing in the relationship.

How could an angel break my heart? I gave him everything I had and thought a relationship thrived on love, honesty and trust. I loved him and yet he left me saying, "I love you". If he really did why did he leave? Why do this and most of all, why me?

I prayed, hoped, begged, cried and wished for everything to come back.. I still have all my love and I want to give it to him. I try to be strong but for how long can I survive? Why couldn't I love someone who would actually love me. I did nothing wrong. You live once, love once and die once. I try everyday but this pain is always going to be there. How can I get over this?

Hurt and Betrayed.

Dear Hurt and Betrayed

Your letter indicates how hurt and disappointed you feel. Expressing your feelings whether in writing or verbally as opposed to "bottling it up" will help you in the healing process. Talking about the situation to a friend, relative or counselor will allow these feelings to be released.

You said he had never said he loved you but that he cared. That fact should have conveyed to you that he was not serious about a relationship in the first place.

Therefore, do not feel betrayed as he was not at all committed to a love relationship. You need to work on moving on despite what has happened. Fill your spare time with enjoyable activities so that you do not give yourself time to be miserable. Sport and other physical activities will help you expel the negative feelings. If you continue to be alone you will isolate yourself from the world. Reach out and call a friend. Socializing is one sure way to brighten your life right now.

Psychologist.

118.

Dear Psychologist

I have read your articles carefully and thank you on behalf of the readers for your advice. I am writing about my daughter who married three years ago and lives with her husband on the North Coast. My son-in-law is an insurance broker and my daughter is a housewife.

I worry about her because she is alone most of the time. He won't allow her to stay at our house. My daughter complains that he often comes home late when she is already asleep. Sometimes he is drunk.

Last Sunday evening she accompanied her friends to a supper club while he was away at a conference. When he found out he became abusive and threatened to throw her out. He then telephoned me to complain that my daughter was not a fit wife.

Although we settled the matter, he is still the same. His excuse for coming home late is that he has to see his clients after they finish work. He also says that he is working after hours so that my daughter can have a better life. Please help me find a solution to my daughter's unhappiness.

Troubled Mother.

Dear Troubled Mother

Let us view this case without prejudice although you are the mother. Your son-in-law's job as a broker will necessitate coming home late at times. However, there should still be time set aside for his family.

With regard to your daughter's outing, I assume that she did this without informing him. If this was the case, your son-in-law's anger could be justified. Your daughter would feel the same way if her husband had to go to a party without telling her about it. Your daughter needs to get involved in some activity which takes up her time.

This can be a full-time or part-time job, studies, sport, reading, a hobby, etc. Then her time will be spent profitably and enjoyably. She need not be lonely. Your daughter also needs to discuss the matter with her husband. She must point out that as a young couple, they need to spend quality time together. Marriage must not be sacrificed for the sake of money although financial security is important.

By coming home late when she is asleep they are both being deprived of expressing their love. A loveless marriage crumbles easily. A compromise must be reached about budgeting time for work and time together as a couple. A balance will ensure that your daughter does not feel neglected and lonely.

Psychologist

125.

Dear Psychologist

I am engaged to a man who is the eldest and only son in his family. My problem is with his mother who seems to control every move. He often cancels our dates at the last minute because his mother wants him to transport her somewhere.

I think that she does this deliberately because she feels she is losing her son to me and therefore needs his attention. I also feel that she does not like me because whenever he visits me she calls him on his cell-phone for trivial reasons.

When I visit them she does not make me feel welcome. She asks me to sit in the lounge while she is busy in the kitchen or outside the house. She also talks glowingly of her son and says things like no one could cook better than her and that her son cannot stay away from her for long periods.

My boyfriend admits that he does things for his mother because she makes him feel guilty but is unable to stop her.

What can I do because I am afraid of what may happen after we marry?

Sidelined Girlfriend.

Dear Sidelined Girlfriend

This situation of overbearing mothers is a common one, especially if they have sons. Perhaps his mother feels insecure and believes that you will replace her as his object of love and attention.

You are correct in believing that if the matter is not resolved now it could become worse after marriage. You need to have an honest discussion with your boyfriend. Relate each example of his mother's control and how you feel about it and how it impacts on your relationship.

He has to convince his mother that her actions have a negative influence on your relationship as a couple. A close mother-son relationship is a good one but if it excludes the daughter-in-law, it is flawed and one-sided.

When your boyfriend is going out with you he should announce that he would be unavailable and that alternate arrangements for transport must be sought when you are together. If the cell-phone keeps ringing switch to voice-mail.

Both of you also need to consider where you intend living after marriage. Many a loving couple have parted because the daughter-in-law was unable to cope with the mother-in-law who still holds the belief that her son was still her "baby".

Psychologist

166.

Dear Psychologist

I have been in a disastrous relationship for five years. It all started as friends and then one thing led to another and we slept together. He was my first boyfriend and lover. He said he loved me, but always hid our relationship from everyone. He told me not to tell anyone that we were going out.

He made me steal money from anyone because he said he needed the money to pay for his cell phone calls he made to me. I stole money from my parents because I felt sorry and loved him very much. But little did I know that the money I gave to him he used to pay hotel bills for the time he had spent there with other women.

He was a very smooth talker and always covered up anything he did. My family came to know about him and disapproved of our relationship. I was madly in love with him and could not live without him. So in my matric year I decided to run away from home to go on a holiday with him. My family was devastated and I was in a lot of trouble with them. I stayed overnight with him and my family could not handle this anymore.

When I returned from my overnight stay with him, they would make me sleep outside. At that time, my family meant nothing to me because I was so crazily in love with him. I did not realize that I was hurting my family.

I found out that he was cheating on me with my cousin. I found this out as she told me that she loved him. She had no idea that we were involved with each other and he had not told her. I confronted him but he denied their relationship, saying she had forced herself onto him.

I then had a meeting with both of them and he proved to be a liar. He chose me over my cousin as he said he loved me. He then went on to ask my parents permission to marry me as I had forgiven him, but my parents did not approve.

We started a serious relationship with each other again and I committed myself to him totally. The next thing I heard was that he was sleeping with a married woman who worked nearby. This woman had found my phone number on his cellular phone and telephoned me to tell me to stay away from him.

I told him about it and he said that it was just a joke to see if I would tell everything that happened. So I believed him and continued to love him.

But I soon found out that he did in fact have a relationship with this married woman as I found letters, cards and short messages (SMS) on his phone from her. He once again denied this saying he would not break a person's marriage. Again, I believed him.

On Valentines Day I discovered that he had purchased underwear for the other woman and nothing for me. I saw the gifts and other disgusting things he had purchased in his car. His excuse this time was that his female colleagues had played a prank on him. On that day he wanted to have sex with me so we stayed together.

Now I have discovered that he is having an affair with another married woman whom I know very well. This woman is now divorced and her husband discovered that my boyfriend had visited her while he had been away from home. Unfortunately, despite knowing all this I still love him. All he can say is that people hate him and want to

mess up his future with me because they are jealous. I hate him but I can't let go of him.

I have sacrificed everything for him because I love him very much. I don't know if I can take anymore because he has also physically abused me but I have always forgiven him. He is now constantly drunk and also consumes drugs. He says he wants to marry me and that he loves me very much. I feel abused emotionally, physically and mentally.

Please help. I don't know what to do as I can't live anymore. I just want to kill myself because I love him too much and it hurts.

Tolerant Girlfriend

Dear Tolerant Girlfriend

Your description that your relationship is a disastrous one is correct because of the deceit and the lies that you are being subjected to. It is obvious that your boyfriend is deceiving you because of the following: the fact he wanted your relationship to be kept a secret, asked you to steal money for him, used the money for hotels, enticed you to run away from home, slept with your cousin and with married women, bought underwear for other girls, beat you, took drugs and alcohol.

Unfortunately, you have a boyfriend whom most women would steer clear of. He possesses all the characteristics that are normally quoted as grounds for a divorce or a break-up. It is clear that this guy is selfish and is using you simply for his gratification. He has no respect or love for you.

You have become emotionally dependent on him, perhaps because he was your first boyfriend and lover and still is. Right now your self-esteem and confidence is at its lowest. Therefore you are having difficulty in ending the relationship. Your boyfriend knows this and will continue to manipulate you for his benefit but only if you let him. Counseling would help you to start believing in yourself and in your worth. You have to put an end to being used.

Free yourself from this emotional dependence so that you may have the opportunity of knowing what mutual respect and love really is.

Psychologist

171.

Dear Psychologist

As you read through my problem, I hope you will understand, help and find a possible solution for me.

I have been married for two years but am unable to have intercourse. Whenever my husband tries to I cannot as I have a deep fear within me. I am technically still a virgin. Am I destined to go through life without ever being able to have intercourse.

Fearful Wife.

Dear Fearful Wife

Other readers have also written to me about similar problems as yours. The most recent article about a condition, which you possibly suffer from, on vaginismus, appeared in Post dated June 5-6, this year.

Your situation seems to stem from a number of factors. I repeat the previously quoted reasons by authors R.C. Rosen and S.R. Leiblum in their book, *Studies in Sex Therapy*: "Fear of intimacy and loss of control concerning vaginal penetration, poor self-esteem, sexual ignorance and misinformation, intrusive gynaecological examinations, physical or sexual abuse during childhood and clumsy male partners are just a few of the contributing factors to vaginismus".

In order for you to be helped you should undergo a comprehensive assessment where detailed history taking is done. Thereafter, appropriate therapy can commence. The success of the treatment will require the full co-operation and motivation of both partners. You can get help by contacting the Southern African Sexual Health Association, an organization that assists both men and women.

Their help-line number is 0860-100-262. They will refer you to a therapist in your area.

Psychologist

182.

Dear Guru

Every fortnight I read your column and I would like to thank Post for carrying it. I am a 19 year old Tamil female and have tried my best to please my parents in every way. I matriculated, got an exemption, a driver's licence and am currently studying. I do not smoke, drink, do drugs or go out like other girls. In other words, I have done everything my parents have told me.

Last year I met this Christian guy with whom I went out for a month. I found out that he had made three girls pregnant. Knowing this, I still went out with him. I kept this from my family until recently. My parents did not want me to convert.

After a couple of months my mother's friend introduced me to her son. I did not like him, but because my mother liked him so much, and apart from the fact that he is

Tamil, I went out with him to please my mother. My parents did not know that this Tamil guy is an alcoholic.

Now, I have finally met someone I really care about, but my parents do not want to accept the fact that he is my boyfriend just because he is 16 years old and Hindi-speaking. They think I will fall pregnant.

When I went out with this Christian guy, I could have fallen pregnant, but I did not. My parents don't realize that I am 19. They think I am still in school. In my parents' eyes, the guys might seem to be decent, but when I get to know them, I don't like them. My parents want me to find a nice Tamil guy but the qualities I want in that Tamil guy are present in my Hindi boyfriend.

It seems my parents don't want me to go out with guys because they think Mr. Right is every guy. They don't want me to search for Mr. Right. If they choose my partner for me, my life will be miserable. What am I to do with my parents? Sometimes I feel like killing myself or running away. But I don't run away from my problems, its just that I don't know how to face them.

What can be an eye opener for them? They don't realize that they are hurting me in the process.

Heart-sore.

Dear Heart-sore

We are pleased to note that you follow the column regularly. Congratulations on your achievements and sobriety. Your lifestyle should make you feel proud, confident and motivated to continue doing well in the future.

This talk of marriage and Mr. Right seems premature. The notion of marriage should not be considered at this time. After all, you guys are still in your teens. Explain to your parents that you have girlfriends and boyfriends. Boyfriends should not be regarded as prospective husbands. Inform them that socializing with both male and female friends is important for teenagers as it helps in their social and emotional development. Caution your parents about a mistaken perception that your marriage to a Tamil guy does not necessarily imply a perfect match. You are correct when you state that the person's inner qualities are more important.

The success of any marriage will depend on these qualities, not on one's religious affiliation. Your parents are well meaning, and I am sure that they care for you. Therefore, if you are sure of yourself, you should reassure them that you are capable of conducting yourself in an appropriate manner and that you have the maturity to be able to determine a guy's intentions namely, whether they are sincere or whether you are just being used.

Psychologist

183.

Dear Psychologist

I am writing my matric exams and am beginning to panic. I always have this feeling that my mind might just go blank while answering the questions. I get so worked up that I find it difficult to study. I worry about what my parents will say if I fail. My teachers also expect me to do well because my trial and June exam results were good. What if I let them down?

My other concern is whether my parents will be able to pay my varsity fees next year as only my father works and he does not earn very much. I cannot sleep well at night and I do not eat with the family. I just nibble whenever I am hungry. Please advise me what to do as this exam seems like a dreaded disease to me.

Matric Student

Dear Matric Student

It's normal at this time of the year for matriculants to become anxious. The expectations of teachers, relatives and friends sometimes serve to increase this anxiety. You must remember that anxiety and panic can be disabling. Anyone who has a high anxiety level has problems in concentration and attention. The lack of concentration and attention can impact negatively on your studies and writing of your examinations.

Relax! Do not stress yourself. Just do the best you can. Your previous examinations are a fairly good indicator of your future results. So if they were good, there is a high likelihood that you would do equally well in this examination. At this time matriculants need to attend to their health. Sleep and nutrition are essential. So ensure that you have a balance of both.

University fees are a concern. However, there are options of bursaries and student loans that you can explore. There is also the option of studying part-time if you find a full-time job.

Focus fully on your studies right now and you will be pleasantly surprised at your results.

Psychologist

213.

Dear Psychologist

I have this big problem. I was single until I fell in love with a widower about eight years older than me. He has two children who are 18 and 22 years old. We got engaged about six months ago and his family supported us, and his children. A couple of months ago he stopped calling me. I tried to phone him, but his phone was off. I was extremely worried because he always contacted me.

Then, one day he called and told me things were not going to work and that it was over between us. I questioned him and he said his children did not approve of me. After a couple of days he phoned my dad to explain himself and said to him that his wife had died because of his drinking problem.

When we got engaged he was the happiest person with no worries. I question myself time and time again. How can he get engaged and then make excuses? I feel he is one confused man with no feeling and blood in his body. Although he has hurt me, I hope he does not hurt someone else. I don't think he knows how I feel. I am suffering from stress and depression.

Depressed and in Love.

Dear Depressed and in Love

It is clear that this man is not in love with you. By referring to his children's disapproval and his drinking problem, he may be making excuses for not wanting to continue the relationship with you.

You need to become strong enough to turn your back on this relationship and move on in your life. It's not worth hurting and being depressed over a person who is not worthy of your love.

The positive aspect of this problem is that you discovered his negative qualities before you married him. It would be more complicated, long-drawn and painful to end the relationship if you were married to him.

Start focusing on the positive aspects of your life. Use this time and space for yourself. Relax more. You would soon find that life has much happiness to offer for those who seek it.

Psychologist

221.

Dear Psychologist

I am never going to be as pretty as my sister. That's what I've been told my entire life by my family and friends.

So, it may not have been in those exact words, but I knew what they felt every-time they commented on her good looks and ignored me.

My mum and dad are so proud of her. They give her anything she wants. She knows this and uses it to her advantage.

I am not the ugly duckling or anything, its just that I have a limp- one leg is shorter than the other. I know they love me, without doubt, but why do I feel so insecure about myself?

Maybe they are not to blame and I am just insecure. They are not nasty to me, but a distinction between us seems so evident to me. They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder. But does a physical disability make me any less of a person?

Unbalanced.

Dear Unbalanced

Avoid making comparisons because there will always be greater and lesser persons than ourselves. Count your blessings and you would be amazed at how much you have.

You need to feel more secure, confident and increase your self-esteem which seems to be low. Remember physical looks are ephemeral, but true beauty, that which lies in the heart and mind, endures beyond the constraints of time.

Believe in yourself and focus on achieving success at whatever you do. This would give you satisfaction and soon issues such as the “beauty” of your sister and your parents’ attention to her would not really matter. I can categorically say that your physical disability does not make you any less of a person.

Read these words from Desiderata by Max Ehrmann, as it inspires all who may doubt themselves.

Here is a selected quote for you:

“If you compare yourself to others you may become vain or bitter for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars. You have a right to be here.”

Psychologist

230.

Dear Psychologist

I am a qualified engineer and a month ago I lost my job because of my excessive gambling. I am married and have a three year old daughter. My spouse and my child are dependent on me. My wife was a nurse, but she left work after our daughter was born because I insisted she become a full-time mother. Although she refused, she gave in and I became the sole breadwinner. Now, we are both without jobs.

I applied to numerous companies and am waiting for a response. My wife wants to go back to work, but I don’t want her to. She should remain at home. The first few years of a

child's life are important and I want one of us to be there. I don't want a nanny taking care of our baby.

Although I have some money in the bank, it is difficult for me to start from scratch. We maintained a certain lifestyle and have returned to our humble beginnings. I became lavish with money after I qualified and secured a good job. I was finally able to purchase the things I wanted. Now, my financial situation is strained. My wife thinks my attitude stinks. She said times have changed and women are working mothers. I know that. What do you think I should do? We do need a regular income.

Dilemma.

Dear Dilemma

You do seem to be in a dilemma. You don't want your wife to go back to work, yet you remain unemployed. It is true that the first few years of a child's life is important and all parents would like to be with their children at this time. However, not all parents can afford to do this due to financial circumstances.

Mention is made in your letter that you wanted either your wife or yourself to be at home with your daughter. But the situation now is that both of you are at home! Did you consider the fact that while you are unemployed and at home, your wife could work? After all she is a nurse, a profession that is in great demand.

You should also reflect over the possibility that your wife's earnings can make a difference in the type of lifestyle you lead. Even your child would be able to benefit from a better life and perhaps a better education.

Your wife's resumption of work will help raise you from your "humble beginnings" that you seem to have returned to. Do not wait until your money runs out, or you become unemployable due to factors such as illness or your addiction to gambling.

It would be wise to also use this free time of yours to seek help for your gambling. Remember, if you are not cured of your addiction you could lose your job again when you do find one.

Psychologist

233.

Dear Psychologist

I read your previous article about the woman who became infected with AIDS as a result of her relationship with three different boyfriends. She stated she was not sure whom she contracted it from. I found your article enlightening and I am sure it must have been of assistance to many readers.

I need some advice with regard to my girlfriend. She is a nurse and works shifts.

At times she goes out with her friends and returns late. I am worried that she might be meeting other guys and perhaps becoming intimate with them.

She has her own cellular phone and would not allow me to scroll through calls she receives. I know I am not a saint myself. I do go out with my friends and sometimes end up with a girl I meet at the club.

Because of pressure from her parents we got engaged last month. The wedding is set for early next year. Now, I am having second thoughts about the marriage because of the fear of AIDS.

My girlfriend would be heart-broken if I call off the marriage, but these suspicious thoughts are driving me crazy. What shall I do?

Suspicious Mind

Dear Suspicious Mind

You must be very troubled by your perception that your girlfriend may have AIDS because you suspect that she may be intimate with other guys. Put an end to your troubles by having a reality test. Test yourselves for HIV. You could substantiate this suggestion by referring to the proposed marriage and also the fact that as a nurse she may have been exposed to infected blood.

In the long term you need to change your lifestyle and suspicious way of thinking. If you are committed to your girlfriend, you should not "end up" with a girl you meet at some night- club. This is infidelity and it has no place in a relationship based on love. If you are both proposed then it implies loyalty to each other. You should trust your girlfriend unless you have strong reasons not to. Remember, the cellular phone is a personal item. Not allowing you to scroll the calls does not imply that she is guilty of some affair.

You would be relieved of your suspicious thoughts if you go for professional counseling. Couple counseling before marriage is vital in view of the many marriages that breakdown due to misunderstandings and incompatibility.

Psychologist

265.

Dear Psychologist

I am from a Hindu religious background. I broke up with my Christian boyfriend two months ago because of his controlling attitude. I was not able to go anywhere without him. As soon as I got back from work I was expected to phone or SMS him.

There were days when I was delayed and he would shout at me and accuse me of meeting another man.

When I received calls he wanted to know who the caller was and actually took the phone from me to hear who it was. I could not have friends visit home. I could not even shop alone. His possessive controlling was suffocating me and I ended the relationship, I am now pregnant, but my parents don't know about it.

My boyfriend suggested we marry and I am considering this for the sake of the unborn child. We are both staunch in our faiths. What religion would the child have to follow? My parents always expected their grandchild to follow our faith and my boyfriend and his family would expect the same.

I am at the crossroads and don't know what to do.

Miss Crossroads

Dear Miss Crossroads

You seem to be pressured to make decisions because circumstances beyond you. The strange aspect of religion is that it can either unite or divide us. It is sad that some people have robbed, killed and gone to battle in the name of religion. The simple truth is that affiliation to a particular religion does not necessarily guarantee that the individual will grow to be law-abiding, moral and a follower of positive values.

It is the up-bringing and the innate qualities of the child that will determine the type of person he will turn out to be.. After all, criminals are found in every single religion. Let us consider the answer to your question about what religion your unborn child would follow. The emphasis should be on the type of upbringing, inculcation of positive values and the kind of loving and nurturing environment, rather than on the battle of the choice of religion. Often, parents of different backgrounds settle on religion but fail to bring up their children according to the tenets of that religion. The teachings are more important than a blind affiliation.

The other equally important question is one of marriage. You do not have to get married because you are pregnant. Marriage should be a carefully considered one to a partner, who is loving, caring and tolerant. Your boyfriend is controlling and dominating.

Unless there is a sudden and dramatic change in him, he is likely to continue in the same way after marrying you. In fact, it can get worse because he might feel "licensed" to control. Discuss your dilemma with a counselor. A decision about marriage is a major one, not to be taken lightly because it will affect your entire life.

Do not marry in haste and regret at leisure.

Psychologist

274.

Dear Psychologist

I have an eating disorder. I'm anorexic. I've never realized it until I overheard my best friend's brother call me withering heights-because I am thin. I did not get the joke at first. I was in denial.

My mum and dad don't even know about my disorder. I refuse to eat a full meal and would rather nibble on veggies all day. Some days I can survive on just water. When I go out with friends I order the salad with feta and a glass of fruit juice. Then I get upset with myself afterward for eating such a large meal. I am just bones.

I know this can't go on any longer. I have been reading books on eating disorders and made several attempts to sit at the table with my family and eat a plate of mum's cooking but I can't do this every day. Even my skinny clothes are getting loose. Is there any help out there for me?

Skin and Bones.

Dear Skin and Bones

You may have the eating disorder called Anorexia Nervosa. However, it would be wise to conduct a full medical evaluation and psychological assessment before diagnosis could be confirmed. A person with the disorder has a disturbed body image and imposes severe dietary limitations on himself or herself.

According to the DSM IV Manual a refusal to maintain body weight at or above a minimum normal weight for age and height is one of the criteria. Anorexics also have a fear of gaining weight or becoming fat even though they are underweight .

A further sign is the influence that the body weight or shape has on their self-evaluation.

The medical evaluation will determine whether there is any other condition leading to weight loss (e.g. cancer or gastro-intestinal disorder). It would be advisable to also screen for substance abuse as stimulant abuse can also lead to weight loss.

Since anorexics are often depressed, one needs to also assess for depression. Treatment consists of psychotherapy or a combination of psychotherapy and anti-depressants.

The duration of treatment would depend on the severity of the condition and the co-operation of the patient. There is help but you need to be willing to seek it and to realize that the disorder can be life threatening if left untreated.

Psychologist

305.

Dear Psychologist

I am depressed because my two brothers and sister don't seem to care about my mum and my family. I am the youngest daughter and my mother, 64, lives with us.

My husband and two children are fond of her, but my brothers and sister don't bother about taking her to live with them.

I am not complaining about supporting her but surely they should also do something for her. I take her to the government hospital every month for her check-up and medicine. She has high blood pressure and is diabetic.

My brothers and sister visit us often and stay for supper. But they seldom invite us over. The other problem is about the house. After my father died the house was transferred to my mother.

My husband and I have been paying the rates, lights and water. Recently the topic of the house came up. My second sister-in-law suggested my mother sell the house and live with them because they have an outbuilding.

I didn't say anything but felt that this was unfair. Is she scheming for the money or is she worried that my mother might leave the house to us?

Please advise me what to do, as my family seem to talk the most but do the least.

Depressed Sister.

Dear Depressed Sister

You must be feeling depressed because nobody seems to show any appreciation for the care you take of your mother. She is at an age when she should be given the best her children can afford in terms of love, care and support.

But they are not doing this as much as you are. There are issues that require clarification. These include your mother's health, rotation of visits and the future of the house. It would be advisable to call a meeting of your siblings to discuss the above issues.

Your mother's health is a priority. Consider medical aid for her. In this way you would avoid joining queues and spending the whole day at hospital. In addition she could get attention from specialists in a much shorter time. If your mother cannot afford medical aid, the four of you could each contribute towards the premium. Also discuss with them the idea of inviting your mother to visit each home.

They should have a system of rotation of visits if hosting her is a problem. The future of the house is often a sore point in families. As the owner of the house, only your mother can decide what she wishes to do with it.

However, your brothers and sister should not disregard the fact that you are paying the rates, lights and water and maintaining the house. Even if the house is sold, it is reasonable to request that some provision be made to compensate you for this. Your family should advise your mother to draw up a will, to avoid speculation. Be honest and frank in your discussions and hopefully these issues will be clarified.

Psychologist

315.

Dear Psychologist

My daughter, who is in Grade Four, performed poorly at school. The teacher called us in to explain that her homework was not always done, she daydreams in class, and does not complete work given to her.

Although my husband and I work, we try to help her when we get home. But she is still not improving. When we scold her she cries and says she does not like school. Because of the teacher's complaints my husband and I often end up quarrelling. He blames me for her performance and says I don't help her enough. But I am also working, just as he is. Surely he must also help with our child's homework?

She is our only child and hopes to attend university one day. What can we do to help her?

Concerned Mother.

Dear Concerned Mother

At this time of the year, many parents and children are upset when they read school reports to find that poor academic performance is indicated. The responsibility of supervising children's homework should be shared by both parents. In this way more time is spent with the child and supervision becomes more effective.

However, supervision of homework alone cannot lead to the child's progress at school. Neither should parents assume the business of education should be left to educators only.

The following are some ways in which parents or members of the family can help children improve at school:

1. Read to your children and listen to them read to you. Keep interesting magazines and books in the house. Encourage them to identify words wherever you go. Ask them to write notes or letters to relatives or friends.
2. Be selective about the T.V. programmes your children watch and the hours of viewing. Discuss educational programmes with them.
3. Establish a routine at home for study and homework. Ensure there are no distractions, such as T.V. being on, or loud music.
4. Keep in touch with the teachers so you are aware of your child's performance throughout the year and not only at the end.
5. Have high but realistic expectations of your child. Be authoritative rather than permissive in bringing up your child so he understands the borders of his behaviour.

6. *Promote self-esteem and confidence so he believes in himself and strives to do his best. As primary school is the formative period of a child's life, ensure you build a strong foundation for him or her.*

Psychologist

325.

Dear Psychologist

In last week's POST I read a letter by "Tormented and Abused" of Chatsworth headlined "Save me from this abuse" I offer this assistance. The letter published (January 5-9,2006) Read as follows:

I am in an abusive marriage and at my wits' end trying to get out. Will I make it or die in it?

I need help, advice, assistance or whatever I can get to free myself and my children. The threats have intensified, the physical abuse has stopped but I don't know when it will start again. The emotional and financial abuse continues.

I cannot seek refuge with my family as my husband creates problems with them. He repeatedly tells me the law cannot stop him from doing what he wants to. He owns a firearm and threatens me.

At present he is unemployed and sponges off me. I have to pay all the bills, including the bond. He consumes alcohol regularly and does not have money to buy bread.

I work hard and earn enough to take care of myself and my children. I feel so down, demotivated and live in fear. Is there anyone out there who can help me get out?

Tormented and abused.

Dear Tormented and Abused

You are clearly in an unhappy situation where you state that you have experienced physical, emotional and financial abuse from your husband. He takes from you without contributing in any way. Your husband will not end the abuse, because he is gaining from it. The only person who can end the abuse is you.

Women stay in abusive relationships for various reasons. These include fear of the husband, low self-esteem, concern for the welfare of the children, embarrassment and the belief that she is helpless. It appears some remain content in the role of victim because they don't have to do something about the abuse. You must realize you have the option of separation from your husband or remaining with him for the rest of your life.

Separation will free you from the abuse. Domestic violence is a wheel that turns continuously. The husband will start with verbal abuse. If he finds his wife is not protesting strongly enough, he will proceed to physical abuse.

This will continue indefinitely if the wife appears afraid and powerless. If she does something about it (e.g. seek outside help), he will move to the phase of remorse and apologies. This period does not last long before he starts all over again. You need to break the cycle.

You are not going to miss much if you separate from this man. In fact, you will be able to accord your children a better life. Start by obtaining a Protection Order from the Magistrate's Court. Your husband's firearm may be confiscated by the police because he threatened you with it. Then proceed for a separation or divorce. Confront your fear and free yourself now.

Psychologist

327.

Dear Psychologist

I read your column (POST January 5-9) "Wife thinks I am cheating" with interest. My husband and I are having sexual difficulties and we are in our 40's. I was married previously, but the relationship lasted three years.

I was abused in that marriage and still carry the emotional scars. My present marriage is fine. But after losing my mother last year I was put on anti-depressants because I could not cope with her death.

Although I am coping better now, I still take the medication. My husband complains that I show no interest in him or myself. He says I have gained weight and don't care about my appearance.

I am not sure if the medication is having an effect on my relationship. My husband and I had an argument last week. He said if I did not change I should leave because both of us are lonely in this marriage. Can you tell us about sexual difficulties and their effects on men and women?

What can we do to bring back the spark in our marriage?

Lonely in Marriage.

Dear Lonely in Marriage

Your difficulties include emotional scars from your previous marriage, the death of your mother, effects of anti-depressants and your self-esteem. These could result in low libido or desire. You need to begin by obtaining a psycho-medical assessment. A treatment programme could then be worked out by your therapist and you could bring back the

spark in your marriage. Responding to your request for information on sexual difficulties, you would find the following helpful. The talk was presented by Dr Frans Kob and published in the New Therapist dated July/August 2001.

In summary he outlined the following points about sexual difficulty:

1. The prevalence of sexual dysfunction is high. Studies have shown the prevalence in the region of 43 % among women and 31 % among men in the general population. It is estimated that it occurs in 35-80 % of people diagnosed with depression.
2. The most common types of sexual dysfunction, as defined in the DSM Manual IV are: Women (as % of general population) –low sexual desire 22 %; problems in arousal 14% and pain during intercourse 7%. Men (as % of general population) – premature ejaculation 21%; erectile dysfunction 5 %; low desire 5 %.
3. Drugs commonly play a role in the development or maintenance of sexual dysfunction. Anti-androgens and anti-estrogens are common among those affecting women's sexual functioning.
4. Key psychological factors impacting on sexual performance include previous traumatic sexual experiences; expectations of failure or concern about sexual performance; work –related stress and anxiety; worries and ruminations; depression; marital discord; unresolved sexual orientation; and pain.
5. Erectile dysfunction can be caused by therapeutic agents (anti-convulsants and sedatives); chronic disease (cardiac, renal or liver functioning); vascular diseases; athero-sclerosis; primary neurological disorders; spinal cord injury or surgery (prostate biopsy).
6. Depression and sexual dysfunction are related. Between 25% and 90% of men who suffer erectile dysfunction also experience depression. Erectile dysfunction creates additional depression, loss of self-esteem, anxiety, tension and other emotional and relational difficulties which further increase difficulties in achieving an erection.
7. Sexual dysfunction as a result of the use of anti-psychotic medication is also high. Erectile impairment, ejaculatory impairment, orgasmic dysfunction and diminished arousal and libido are common side effects of the medication.
8. It is also a side effect of anti-depressant medication.
9. Women experience decreased libido, while men experience delayed or no ejaculation. You need not continue to deny yourselves happiness. Seek professional help and overcome your problems. The Southern African Sexual Health Association (SASHA) is an organization that helps people with sexual difficulties. The help-line number is 0860 100 262.

Psychologist

338.

Dear Psychologist

Three months ago I went for a job interview at an acclaimed public relations company for the position of personal assistant.

At the interview the employer became very forward and instead of questioning me on my abilities as a worker, asked me personal and intimate questions, which I found offensive.

I walked out of the interview and never spoke to anyone about it. It has affected me ever since and now I cannot even date a guy.

I have a habit of generalizing and therefore this had a psychological effect on me..It has reached such a state that when I go on job interviews now, I recap every moment of the horrible interview and then lose all confidence in myself and my interviews then tend to go terribly wrong. What can I do to change my mindset?
I am unemployed and 24 years old.

Doubting Men.

Dear Doubting Men

It is unfortunate that your experience has affected the social and occupational aspects of your life so significantly.

Your first step should be to report the matter so that some action can be taken against the individual involved. Reporting the complaint will not only facilitate the release of your anger, but may lead to ensuring that others may not be subjected to the same traumatic stress.

The second step is to realize that life gives one choices. You can choose to allow this person to continue to affect you or you can choose not to.

You have no ties to this person as in a close relative or friend. Therefore he is not significant.

This realization will help free you from the emotional baggage imposed on you by this person.

The third step is to stop generalizing. It would be naïve to assume that all men are the same. Stereotyping is prejudicial and can blind you to the positive qualities in other men. The danger of generalizing can be observed in the negative way it affects your relationships and your opportunities at interviews.

If your trauma is so deep set that you have difficulty in overcoming it, you should seek psychological counseling.

You deserve the best life can offer. So don't let negative memories of your past cloud your positive expectations of the future.

Psychologist

350.

Dear Psychologist

After 15 years of marriage my husband revealed his homosexuality. It happened after I returned home from a shopping trip last week. I was dumbfounded when I found him modeling in front of the mirror in one of my dresses. He revealed everything about his homosexuality and his secret liaisons with other men.

I feel betrayed and cannot understand how he could be gay because he has been so loving throughout our marriage. Thank God we don't have any children! Guru, how does one handle this situation? Neither of us wants to end our marriage!

Dumb –struck

Dear Dumb-struck

Your accidental discovery that your husband was unfaithful to you must have come as a shock. The fact that he kept this information a secret from you for so many years must have left you traumatized because of the deceit and the double life that he was leading.

A marriage is supposed to be a union in which both partners pledge and remain faithful to each other. If any one spouse has a secret liaison with a third party, irrespective of the gender, it is infidelity.

A person's sexual orientation is his or her personal preference and therefore not really the issue here. However, deceit in marriage, as in the case of your husband, is the issue.

In this situation, irrespective of whether the third party was a man or a woman, your spouse was unfaithful to you.

As far as how you are going to handle the matter is concerned, you have options. If your husband expresses regret and intends remaining faithful in the future, marriage counseling may be a choice.

If you feel betrayed and come to an assessment that he might continue this way, you could separate. Whatever your decision is, it must not bring you unhappiness and disempowerment. You have the right to independence and happiness and it is in your power to exercise that right.

Psychologist

352.

Dear Psychologist

My sister discovered she was HIV positive four months ago, but she only told us about it last month. She is 29 and is single. Besides our parents she has only me to count on. I am 25 years old.

Since her revelation our house is like a funeral parlour. My dad is in early mourning, my mum has become withdrawn and my sister feels guilty for putting them through this. She is healthy despite her status and she takes all her medication. Should we inform the rest of our family of her status?

The situation at home has become tense. How do we deal with this?

Sister G

Dear Sister G

Your family must be going through a trying time knowing that a member is ill with HIV/AIDS. Usually, diagnosis is preceded by pre-test counseling, followed by post-test counseling so that the person is able to cope psychologically with the situation.

If your sister is not receiving counseling, please advise her to do so. Living and caring for a member of a family with HIV/AIDS, requires knowledge, understanding and emotional strength. Your family may lack this. Therefore. It would be advisable for them to seek the assistance of an HIV/AIDS counselor.

Encourage your sister by emphasizing living a positive life. Diet, regular exercise, adherence to medication and a positive frame of mind will play a significant role.

HIV/AIDS cannot be spread through contact such as hand-shaking, hugging, coughing, using the same crockery and cutlery, swimming in the same pool, etc.

People contract HIV through the following three main ways: unprotected sex with an infected person; blood to blood contact-as in transfusion or sharing needles to inject drugs; and mother to child- in the case of an infected mother during pregnancy, during delivery or breastfeeding.

HIV/AIDS carries a stigma that may lead to depression. Therefore, it is important that your sister receives support from family and friends. This can make a crucial difference to her self-esteem and morale.

As in any other illness, maintaining a consistent positive attitude, helps. [Divulging her status to the rest of the family should remain your sister's option.] If she chooses to inform the rest of the family, ensure that adequate counseling is received so that she is also able to deal with their reactions.

Psychologist.

354.

Dear Psychologist

I am in love with a married man. He has two children. I am married with two kids also. This man claims to love me. Is it true? I don't know what our future holds. Will our spouses ever find out about our affair?

Walk into my Life.

Dear Walk into my Life

You seem to be in a complicated relationship not only because both of you are married, but also because both of you have children. The term love implies commitment, honesty, respect, fidelity and such values. Physical attraction or infatuation is not true love. Often people respond to attention and flattery and confuse this with love.

Your spouses are bound to find out sooner or later about your relationship. It is almost impossible for both of you to conceal a secret relationship from your spouses. All of you, including the children, would be traumatized once this relationship is exposed. Can you both afford this cost emotionally? You are not free to continue to love somebody else while still married to your husband. If your boyfriend and you love each other and not your respective spouses, why stay in the marriage? Loving each other implies not being in love with your spouses.

If both of you were not in love with your spouses, divorce would have been the logical step to take. But you didn't do this. It would therefore seem that your current relationship with this man is not based on true love.

You need to also consider that this man may be enticing you to gamble with your heart. Reflect on this scenario: You openly declare your love for this man and shack up together only to find after a while that he just walks out of your life!

Picking up the pieces of one's life after such an incident may be too traumatic for you to live with.

Psychologist

Appendix B

DR RM NAIDOO

Practice Number 86619921

Ed. D. [Kansas]; M. Ed. [Natal]

Educational Psychologist

Clinical Hypnotherapist

Certificate in Clinical Psychopathology

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Evaluation of a Selection of Newspaper Advice Columns as per attached schedule

Introduction

Periodicals and newspapers publish regular advice columns that usually follow the format often referred to as *Ann Landers* and *Dear Abby*. These columns are a popular because they cover a wide range of topics and issues that are pertinent to the community. The issues vary from relationship issues, marriage and divorce, parenting skills and challenges, health and career concerns.

The general format in newspaper advice columns includes a problem posed by a reader to which the columnists responds in a specific capacity such as psychologist, consumer rights advocate or a legal representative. These columns serve a significant community need because they provide knowledge and information that relate to the problem presented. As this information and knowledge is applicable to other similar situations they help to disseminate information to wider a community. They also serve an important educative purpose.

Problems and responses evaluated

Thirty selected problems and the responses to them were critically evaluated for their content, style and presentation. The problems related to boyfriends, girlfriends, infidelity, care of children, parenting styles, health issues such as HIV Aids and anorexia nervosa.

Generally the problems were psychological in nature and the responses showed relevant responses in terms of empathy and understanding. The style of responding showed an appreciation for the reader's level of comprehension and the information provided was relevant and appropriate.

A certain rapport between the readers and the columnist was also evident. For example in the problems 118, 182 and 233, the readers express their appreciation to the columnist and even comment on how information has benefited them. It would appear that the column has attracted regular readers of the column.

Some responses included extensive research included in the response indicates the columnist's concern for the issue as well as the generalizability of the information to other situations. In this way the advice column serves an important community psychology resource.

Conclusion

The problems and the respective responses in the articles evaluated indicate that the advice column is an integral part of the newspaper which is a widely accepted form of knowledge base for the community. The responses also provide a basis for teaching of life skills in classrooms as well. The problems and responses can be used to initiate discussions and debates on several issues that affect the community. These columns serve a meaningful purpose in raising psychological problems which require specialist psychological expertise to address them and the articles evaluated in this exercise fulfil this purpose.



R.M Naidoo

08 August 2006

DR SONIA ROOPNARAIN

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Psychometrist

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RE: EVALUATION OF A SELECTION OF NEWSPAPER ADVICE COLUMNS
AS PER ATTACHED SCHEDULE

Pertinent issues are discussed which are relevant in the community and real e.g. family feuds; AIDS, failed marriage; pre and extramarital affairs, relationships, eating disorders, career advice, etc. A reader is able to use the advice as a repository of knowledge.

The advice that the psychologist offers is both empowering and enlightening. One is able to use dire information and help oneself-thus it is an important step in self- emancipation and liberation - especially those in UA, who can't afford the exorbitant services of a professional psychologist, which is often the case in Indian communities. The problem is outlined in easy to read terms, with which the psychologist offers advice that is understandable

- The psychologist does not use the academic jargon, as is the case with Professionals.
- Even a layperson is able to use the column.
- This is an important point in conversation, where the content is not lost,
- Very conversational tone.
- No disapproving, authoritarian, the psychologist is totally objective, sensitive, supportive, empathetic and unbiased towards the clients
- The advice is very balanced and client centered.
- I personally think it is important because it does not offer a tone line approach.
- He lists alternatives and the reader is able to choose, hence making them take charge of a situation, the advice is facilitative rather than prescriptive.

The advice column is integral and conveys the important goals of psychology: helping to emancipate and empower the client to achieve their goals in a reachable manner and resolve their problems autonomously.

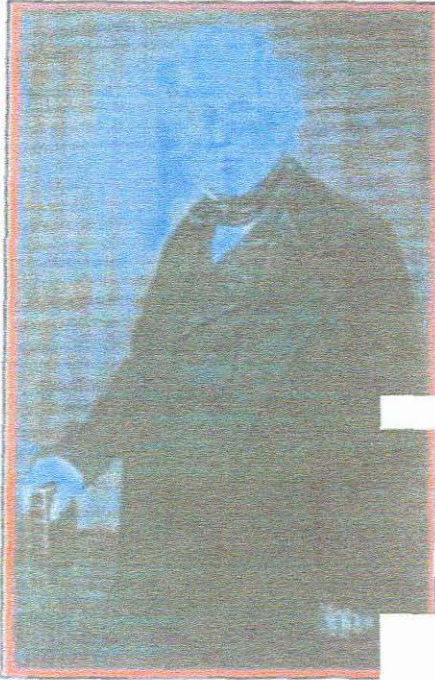
Yours sincerely



Or Sonia Roopnarain

24th August 2006

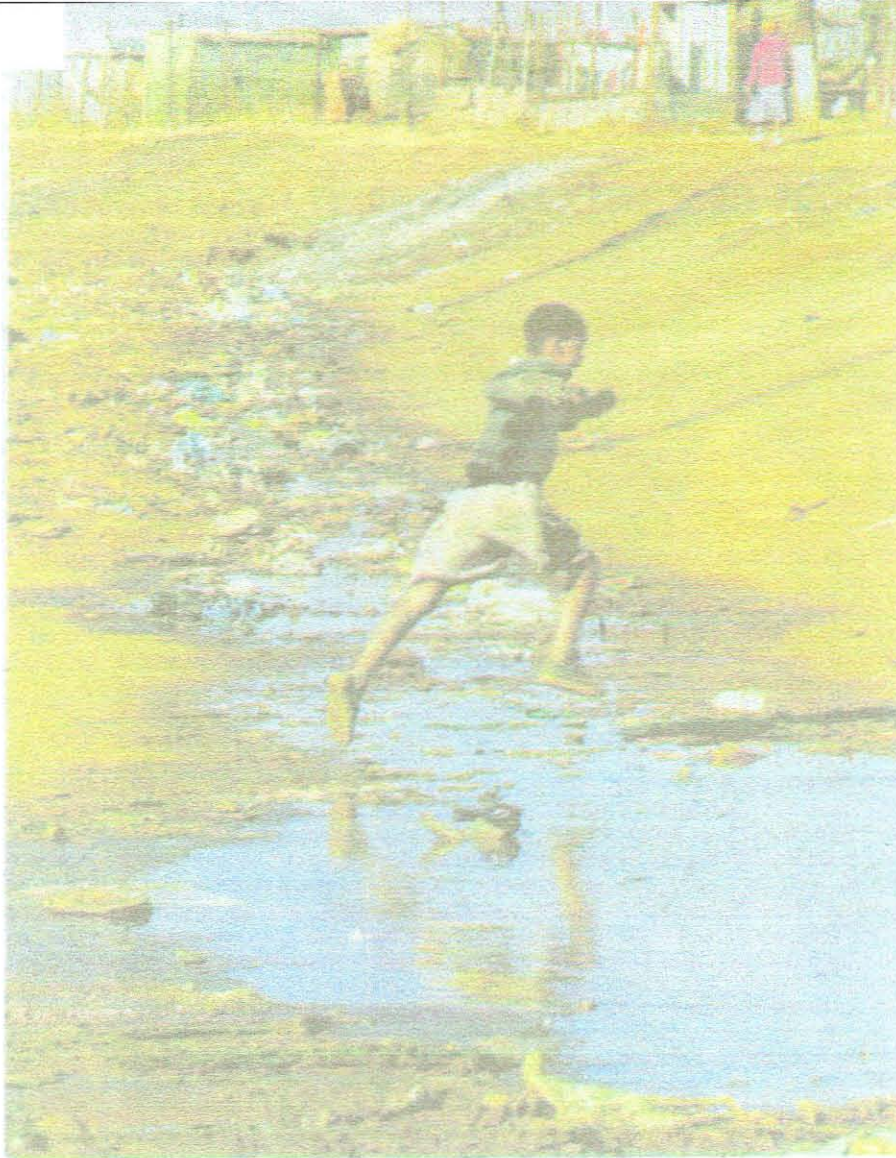
LORD MACAULAY'S ADDRESS TO THE
BRITISH PARLIAMENT 2 FEBRUARY. 1835



இத்தருணத்தில், சுமார் 170 ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முன்பு பிரிட்டிஷ் நாடாளுமன்றத்தின், பிரபல உறுப்பினரும், பிரிட்டிஷ் அரசாங்கத்தில் பல முக்கியப் பதவிகளை வகித்தவரும், 1834-ம் ஆண்டு பிரிட்டிஷ் அரசு அமைத்த 'சுபரீம் கவுன்ஸில் ஆஃப் இந்தியா' என்ற அமைப்பின் முக்கிய உறுப்பினருமான மெக்காலே பிரபு நான்காண்டுகள் நமது நாட்டைச் சுற்றிப்பார்த்துவிட்டு ஆங்கிலேய அரசுக்கு எழுதியதைக் கீழே தந்துள்ளோம்.

I have travelled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which

is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own. they will lose their selfesteem, their native culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation"



GREAT DIVIDE: Researchers have underlined the fact that millions of black South Africans still live without the most basic of services.

Picture: GREG MARINOVICH

Commission rips into state of the nation.

Researchers underline failure to deliver on Constitution's promises.

Sunday Times July 23 2006

Exposing the dark side of the 50s

RIASON NAIDOO

HENRY Nxumalo was the reporter behind some of the most daring exposes involving social injustice in the early 1950s.

For one such story, he went to a Bethal farm notorious for its mistreatment of workers and experienced first hand the brutal treatment of workers. Photographer Jurgen Schadeberg was taking pictures from a distance.

The Bethal coverage made black people sit up and take notice of *Drum* as it appeared to be representing their interests.

Spurred on by Manilal Gandhi's reports of degrading conditions in prison during the Defiance Campaign of 1952, Nxumalo again caught the attention of readers in 1953 with *Mr Drum goes to Jail*. Mr Drum was a pseudonym used by the magazine's investigative journalists "under cover".

Nxumalo volunteered to reveal the poor treatment of black prisoners by getting arrested himself. After many unsuccessful attempts, he eventually found his way to jail by behaving as if he was drunk and unruly on a busy Johannesburg street. A famous photograph by Bob Gosani, of naked prisoners jumping high in the air as

CHILD workers on a Natal sugar farm

Picture: Courtesy ofBAHA



ordered by the prison warders, was captured from a flat with a view of the Old Fort courtyard.

Child workers

Maintaining this tradition of annual exposes, *Drum* one year focused on the conditions of Indian child workers on the sugar farms of Natal. This was the scenario he created: "It is 4.30am in the small sugar town of Tongaat. Ganas Kistensamy, one of nine children of a sugar worker, is still fast asleep. Near him, also asleep, is his younger brother who goes to school. The mother stalks up to Ganas and gently shakes him out of bed. She whispers in his ear - she has to whisper as she does not want to wake up her younger son - 'get up son, it's time to go to work'. The kid turns in his dilapidated bed and rubs his eyes. He looks at his younger brother still peacefully asleep and creeps out of bed. He washes his face, puts on his old tattered clothes and downs a cup of black coffee and a slice of un buttered bread. With his sister close on his heels, he sets off for work. And this was for 'A penny farthing an hour; ten pence per day of eight hours'."

The excerpt illustrates how fiction and reality worked hand in hand in *Drum*. John Matshikiza points out in his introduction to Michael Chapman's book *The Drum Decade* that one couldn't really separate the two as much of the fiction of the day was informed by social reality and people's own experience.

It is not clear who wrote this story Nxumalo had been murdered a few months earlier.

However, it did much to reflect the poverty and conditions among Indians and challenged the notion of the wealthy Indian.

The Daily News 24 July 2006

US clergyman impressed by rehabilitation work



SISTER Petra Luna and the Reverend Lyndon Harris comfort a 10-year-old girl who fled to the city's Life-Place Care Centre after a relative planned to rape her PICTURE: PURI DEWEE

When a visiting American clergyman hailed a taxi from his beachfront hotel and asked to go to Durban's Point area, the driver turned around and warned that "it's a very bad place".

But the Reverend Lyndon Harris - a chaplain at Ground Zero in New York - said "That's why I'm going."

Harris, who has been attending the YMCA World Council in Durban recently, was dropped off at the International Doctors For Life Life-Place Care Centre mission in Pickering Street, where he met fellow American Sister Petra Luna a social worker-missionary, who has managed to get more than 300 prostitutes off the streets. Harris heard about Luna during the conference and was keen to see exactly what she did. As well as meeting prostitutes and pimps - some of them who have quit the business - he was also astonished to be introduced to a 10-year-old girl who had run to the safety of the care centre after a relative was about to rape her.

The girl was first raped when she was five and had to turn to prostitution to fend for herself. But now, she was ready to quit and Luna was ensuring she was safe and keeping an eye on her, said Harris yesterday.

Harris, who helped Luna counsel pimps and prostitutes at an HIV clinic at the centre, said he was impressed by Luna's work. "I am enthralled by what she is doing. It takes a lot of courage," he said.

Harris, the chaplain of St Paul's Anglican Chapel, across the road from one of the Twin Towers, led the post-9/11 relief operation that saw more than 5000 volunteers from all walks of life and faiths serve up more than half a million meals to workers as they continued to dig in the rubble for survivors.

He has called for countries to create Gardens of Forgiveness and said before flying back home that there was a strong possibility for at least one being created in South Africa. It would be one more manifestation of the truth and reconciliation process, he said.

Boy dies after mall beating

CHRIS MAKHAYE

Sunday Tribune

July 23 2006

More than a fortnight after a schoolboy was allegedly beaten to death by security guards and cleaning staff at a popular Durban shopping centre, police have yet to make an arrest, despite the alleged offenders being suspended from their jobs.

Makhosi Ngidi with a picture of her dead son, Simphiwe.



Violence gives SA the blues Sunday Tribune July 23 2006

JANI MEYER

VIOLENT crime in South Africa is taking its toll on the country's psyche, with one out of every five people suffering from violence-related mental problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

The South African Society of Psychiatrists (Sasop) said it was "gravely concerned" at the psychological, psychiatric and sociological impact of the current levels of violence. The society called on the government to acknowledge publicly that violent crime has taken on proportions of a national disaster.

According to police figures, every day last year 51 people were murdered, 150 rapes reported, 3836 people seriously assaulted and 347 armed robberies executed.

The country's suicide rate is also higher than the international average with about two people ending their own lives every hour.

A paper by Dr Margaret Nair, Prof Brian Robertson and Prof Clifford Allwood, posted on Sasop's website, said the government was failing to uphold people's constitutional rights. The loss of these rights threatened the mental health of South Africans and was having a negative impact on the country's ability to transform and rebuild.

The government's apparent lack of commitment to acknowledge the crime problem had been highlighted when Minister of Safety and Security, Charles Nqakula, said in parliament that those whining about crime should leave the country.

Fear

He later qualified the statement saying it was aimed at specific politicians and not the general public. However, the comment had fuelled many South Africans' suspicions that politicians did not care about their welfare or the rampant crime rate, the paper said. "The majority of people are



SOUTH AFRICANS are increasingly suffering from depression and other mental health problems as government fails to uphold our basic constitutional rights, say our top psychiatrist, Prof Soraya Seedat (above right).

two in the local newspaper," the statement said.

A Medical Research Council school survey in the Western Cape, looking at the extent of trauma exposure and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder found that more than 80% of pupils, surveyed reported exposure to violent trauma.

Prof Soraya Seedat, director of the Medical Research Council's Anxiety and Stress Disorders Research Unit at the University of Stellenbosch, said the most common types of trauma exposure were: witnessing violence in the street, neighbourhood or school, being robbed or mugged, being physically hurt or attacked and sexually assaulted. More than 20% of children had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Hypervigilance

She said some medication was very effective in reducing anxiety, fear, nightmares, sleep problems, flashbacks, irritability, hypervigilance, and avoidance associated with the disorder, but there were few specialised trauma services for youngsters. "Among the youth's we've seen who have been exposed to violent trauma, more than 60% have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder," said Seedat.

According to Sasop there was a dire shortage of mental health professionals in South Africa. The country had just a third of the psychiatrists it needed with fewer than 100 state psychiatrists responsible for about 440 000 patients. The private health sector has a ratio of 1 to 33 000.

"The absorption of others' terror, agony and frustration on a daily basis, with little hope of improvement in the situation, slowly destroys the capacity of the helper to help, and leads many to seek employment in other countries where the levels of professional stress are perceived to be lower. This adds further, burdens to those remaining, and freezing of vacated posts is bringing the mental health services to the point where total collapse will be inevitable," Seedat says.



Sunday Tribune August 6 2006

ABOUT 20 000 women under the banner of the Federation of South African Women marched to the seat of the government in Pretoria 50 years ago to protest against pass laws for women. Rahima Moosa, Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph and Sophie Williams were the delegates selected to deliver the protest petition to Prime Minister J G Strijdom

Picture: JURGEN SCHADEBERG

Strike this rock and regret it!

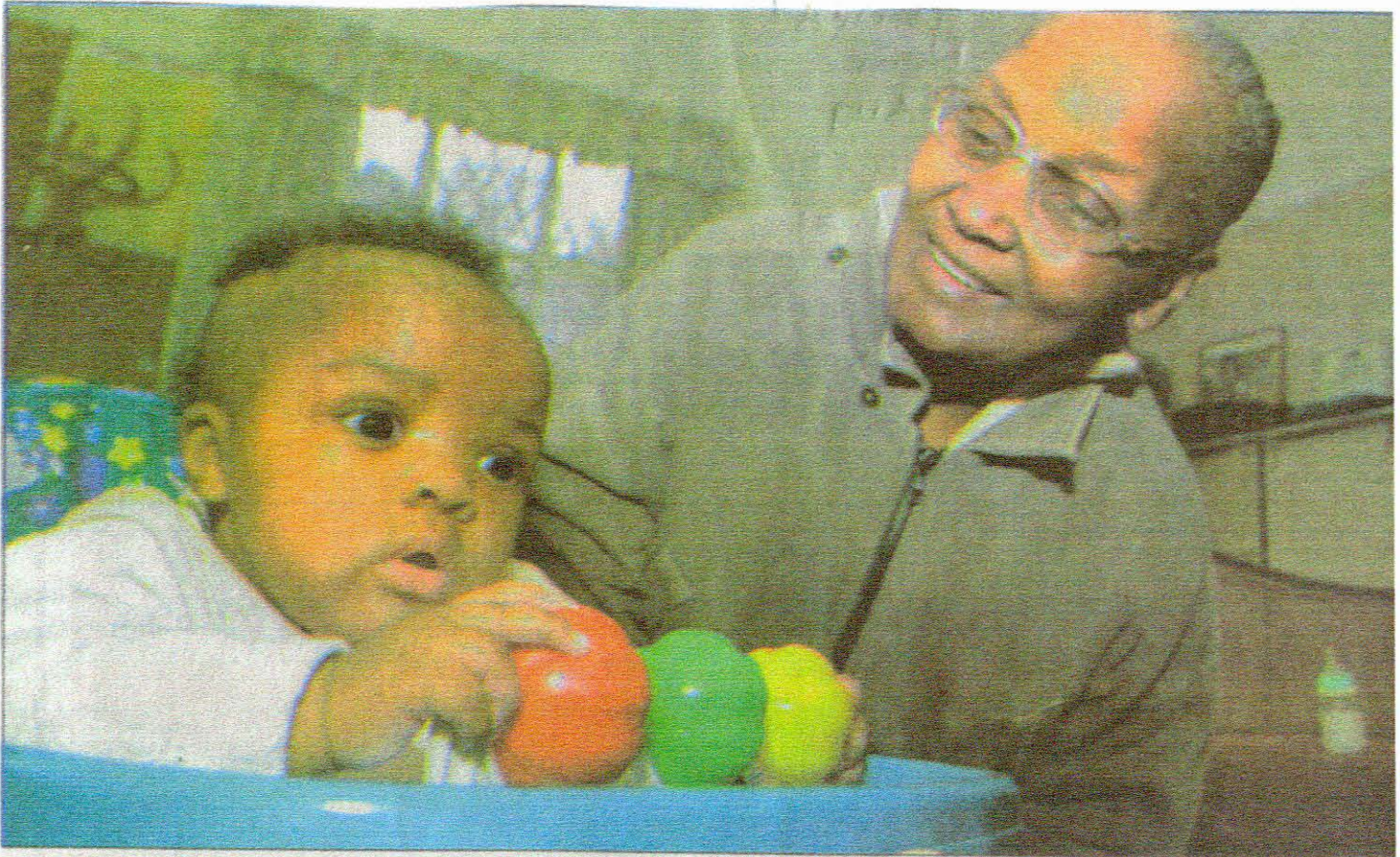
On August 9, 1956, more than 20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings to protest against oppressive pass laws.

Nomfundo Mcetywa spoke to one of the women on that historic march in her 'matchbox' house in Lamontville

Angel of mercy gives 46 orphans wings

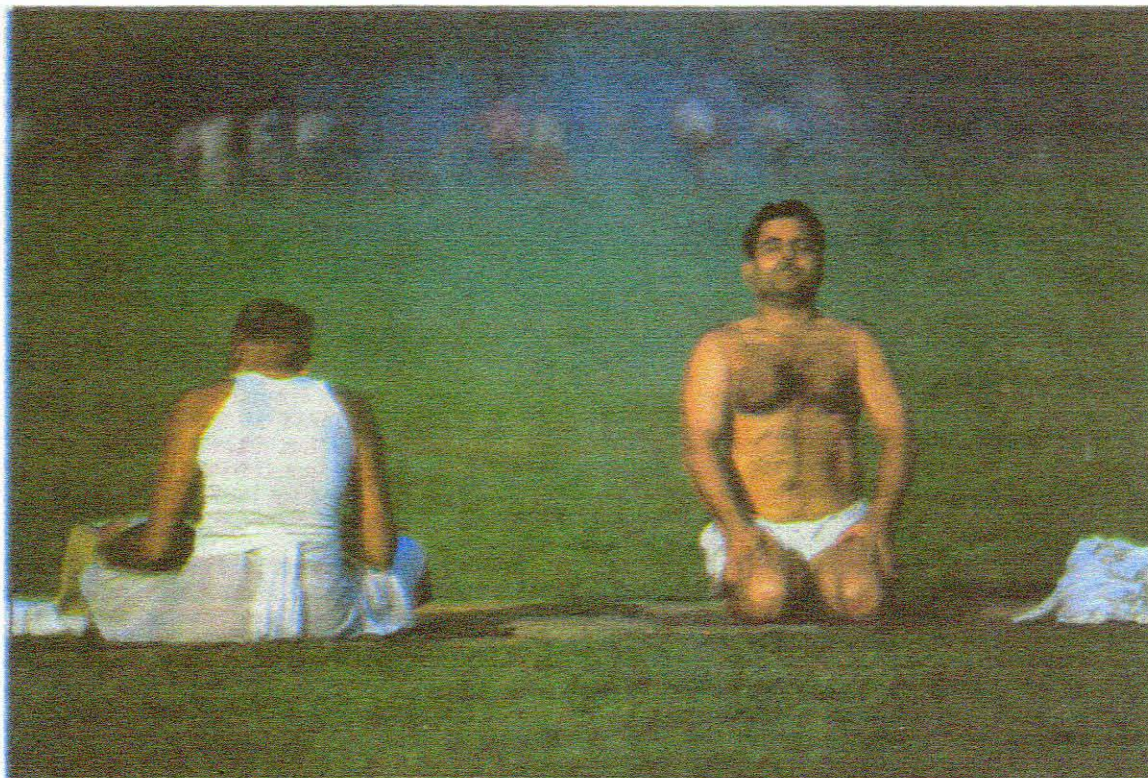
Sunday Tribune August 6 2006

Sister Abegail Ntleko spends time with 4 month old
Lerato Mohlakoane.



Stressed city dwellers turn to TV spirituality

July 23 2006



ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE: Jaded Indians are taking a deep breath and tuning in to inner peace

New channels help Indians cope with pressures of materialism and a booming economy

Empowerment is cemented by Lafarge

Building material company's RI.lbn deal will also see 1400 employees reap the rewards

Sunday Times July 23 2006



Appendix D

Completed questionnaires by readers

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Take a few of your columns that deal
1. ~~specifically with~~ young people's problems
and solutions to all schools. Encourage
2. English teachers to use the columns as
a part of their comprehension passages
in class. This would open up an
opportunity for thousands of youngsters to
start looking at your columns more
introspectively and can therefore only benefit
the youth in the long run.

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. I HAVE A TEENAGER AT HOME WHO READS THE
INTERNET. CAN YOU OPEN YOUR OWN COLUMN ON THE
INTERNET SO THAT MY SON COULD BENEFIT.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

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- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Why not encourage patients with similar problems to form support groups to discuss common solutions to common problems.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. END EACH OF YOUR COLUMNS WITH A SIMPLE, SHORT SPIRITUAL OR PHILOSOPHICAL MESSAGE
2. "A FAMILY THAT PRAYS TOGETHER STAYS TOGETHER"
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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4. agree
- ✓ 5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ✓ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

- CAN U PRODUCE YOUR OWN CD'S | CASSETTES WITH
1. QUESTIONS + ANSWERS SO THAT PEOPLE COULD
 2. PLAY IT AT THEIR OWN LEISURE AND LISTEN TO
 3. IT (IN ADDITION TO READING YOUR COLUMNS).

Sir /Madam

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4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- X 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

categorise your patients problems into levels of
1. urgency: eg. if you feel a certain patient
2. has a problem that requires immediate intervention,
3. label that particular letter has a 'code red' problem
red - denoting treat as extremely urgent
~~orange~~ denoting: urgent
yellow denoting: must take action soon
white denoting: not a train smash.

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

In addition to your column - why not print
1. testimonies of previous writers who were
2. successful in taking your advice - this would
3. reflect your success rate to any reader
who is sceptical about heeding your advice.

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you give more advice for sugar addicts
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. ASK PARENTS TO SPEND MORE QUALITY TIME WITH THEIR KIDS
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Where do I go to with my delinquent daughter.
2. Can you give details of your practice, how much
3. you charge and how long are the sessions

Sir /Madam

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4. agree
5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. People who heed your advice must come
2. back to you after a period of time
3. to say how they have progressed
— and you should report this
back to the readers.

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
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4. agree
5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. MAYBE YOU COULD BE MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHERE THE WRITERS COME FROM eg. CHADWORTH
2. RESERVOIR HILLS etc IN THIS WAY READERS
3. WILL KNOW WHETHER PROBLEM IS PREVELANT IN SPECIFIC AREAS / TYPE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AREAS etc YOU DO NOT NEED TO GIVE THE WRITER'S NAMES.

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. WHY DOES POST PLACE ANOTHER PSYCHIC'S
2. COLUMN NEXT TO YOURS? CAN YOU ASK FOR
3. YOUR COLUMN TO BE ON ANOTHER PAGE?
By PLACING TWO DIFFERENT COLUMNS
NEXT TO EACH OTHER, READERS GET
CONFUSED - WHETHER TO BELIEVE YOUR
CLINICAL ADVICE OR TO FOLLOW
AUNT "SO-AND-SO'S" ILLUSIONARY ADVICE,

Sir /Madam

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4. agree
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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. I can't stand the silly psychic / Ask Auntie So-and-So'
2. Columns in local papers - the are so misleading.
3. So can you please approach local papers with a view of them publishing your clinically sane column in their issues!

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Why not ask readers to listen to their favourite songs when they are alone - you will be pleasantly surprised to see the results of good music as a therapy
2. for troubled hearts and minds.
- 3.

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Always encouraging to read.
2. more cases to be discussed.
3. _____

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2. disagree
- ☒ 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Provide a social worker to consult with the patient
2. in order to follow through on your advice. Print
3. the name and number of the social worker in your
column.

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. *Why do so many Indian housewives say: "I don't know. I've got to ask my husband when he comes from work."*
2. *They don't even know who to vote for if they are not instructed by their husbands.*
3. *Can you dedicate a few columns on how women need to exercise their own will and rights?*

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1. strongly disagree
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3. neither agree nor disagree ☒
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5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Good advice given. What can be done to
2. check if the patient is in fact abiding by it
3. _____

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you print a list of all psychiatrists/health workers,
2. psychologists / social workers etc that are prepared
3. to give 1/2 a day a month at one centralised venue to assist all underprivileged/unemployed people who require help.

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2. disagree
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- ✓ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ✓ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you operate a SMS service whereby people
2. who are experiencing problems could SMS you and
3. you could answer promptly by SMS? This would
prevent a lot of suicides. Advertise your SMS
service in the Post so that all your
readers could access it.

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Well done Gur! Can you also allow your family members to comment on your guidance as a husband and father in your personal life - This would
2. show readers that you are also practising good values in your own home. In this way
3. more people will tend to believe in your column and practice your good advice each week.

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4. agree
5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Teach abused wives to exercise their rights to Protection Order.
2. _____
3. _____

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Tell us what your fees are for
2. private consultations and where
3. you are situated .

Sir /Madam

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3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. WHY NOT SPEAK TO OTHER NEWSPAPERS
2. AND GET YOUR COLUMN FEATURED IN
3. MORE THAN ONE PAPER.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Guru, DON'T YOU THINK THAT CHILDREN GETTING INTO CULTURAL DANCE CLUBS etc ARE SO GOOD. WHY DON'T MORE OF 2. OUR PARENTS TEACH OUR CHILDREN THE VALUE OF EASTERN DANCING etc AS AGAINST ALLOWING KIDS TO GO TO WESTERN CLUBS - REMEMBER THROB? SO CAN YOU PRINT A COLUMN PRAISING THE CURRENT LEADERS OF EASTERN DANCE AND GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO PARENTS TO PROMOTE CULTURE IN OUR YOUTH. THIS WOULD PREVENT TEENAGE DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR.

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. One of the fears that women have is that their husbands
2. will kick them out of the house if they stand up
3. for their rights. Write a column explaining to
women that they can also kick their husbands out
(if they are married in community of property) and
that they have recourse to 'Protection Orders'.
Give contact numbers of who they can contact
for help.

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. LOT OF OUR PEOPLE TAKE YOUR ADVICE BUT STILL
GO TO TEMPLES / PRIESTS / WITCHDOCTORS / TRANCE
FOR MORE MUTI MEDICINES TO CURE THEIR
PROBLEMS. WHY? CAN YOU WRITE A FEW
COLUMNS ON THE REASONS WHY AND
WHETHER THIS IS THE RIGHT THING
TO DO OR NOT.

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Can you perhaps explain in an article on what steps are the Assoc of Psychologists in Private Practice taking to highlight to the Health Minister and the Justice Minister that so many cases of domestic violence is prevalent in this country because of two things: free health care to the perpetrators (suspects) if they are injured during arrest - but little or no care for poor abused females and secondly for too lenient sentences for the perpetrators of domestic violence crime. I believe that a therapist's role should clearly include the above proposal, in addition to merely handing out advice to victims.

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree **X**

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree **X**

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. CAN YOU DO FOLLOW UPS : Eg. IF YOU HAVE GIVEN ADVICE OF A SPECIAL NATURE TO A CERTAIN CLIENT IN POST - CAN YOU FOLLOW UP
2. WHETHER THE PERSON HAS HEEDED YOUR ADVICE AFTER A FEW MONTHS - AND THEN CAN YOU WRITE AGAIN IN POST AND BRING THE READER'S ATTENTION TO THAT SPECIFIC COLUMN (AND DATE) AND STATE HOW THE PERSON IS PROGRESSING AFTER HAVING TAKEN YOUR ADVICE - OR HOW THE PERSON HAS FAILED MISERABLY ALL BECAUSE THEY DID NOT HAVE THE COURAGE TO TAKE ACTION AFTER YOU HAD POINTED OUT TO THEM THE SOLUTION? IN THIS WAY POST READERS WILL SEE FOR THEMSELVES THAT THERE IS GENUINE BENEFIT & CONTINUITY IN CLIENTS + PATIENTS TAKING YOUR ADVICE SERIOUSLY. AT THE MOMENT ALL WE READ ABOUT IS A ONE OFF STORY AND WE HAVE NO IDEA OF HOW THE WRITER HAS PROGRESSED.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Don't pamper your patients. If the patient is a jerk and
2. has only himself to blame for the problem - say so bluntly
3. and kick butt in your advice - so that results are
immediately forthcoming.

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. ☒ strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. ☒ strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. SET UP A "POST/GURU" TABLE / DESK AT ALL MAJOR SHOPPING CENTRES
2. WHERE YOU WOULD FIND POST READERS - PEOPLE WANT TO MEET
3. YOU PERSONALLY AND SHARE YOUR HAND- ADVERTISE THIS IN YOUR
COLUMN : VENUE DATE & TIME.

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Go on a tour of all senior citizens clubs
2. Women's club, youth centre drug clinic,
3. schools religious centres etc and give
talks on your field of expertise - free of
charge - you would learn that there
are many people who would want to
hear you and see you personally. Ask
the clubs via your column to contact you
if they want you to present a motivational
talk.

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved. *on your P.C.*

*1. Create a web site. Get people to access it
and open your own wap site on
3. your cellphone for your column*

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- X 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- X 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. why cant partners talk to each other first and foremost - print that out to the

2. _____

3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. ASK NEIGHBOURS WHO WITNESS THE ABUSE
2. TO SUPPORT THE VICTIM BY ACCOMPANYING
3. THEM TO THE POLICE etc AS A WITNESS.
LOTS OF PEOPLE MIND THEIR OWN BUSINESS
AND DO NOT LIFT A FINGER TO HELP. WE
MUST STAND AS ONE UNITED COMMUNITY AGAINST
ABUSE + VIOLENCE. TOMORROW IT CAN HAPPEN TO
THE NEIGHBOUR. WHAT THEN?

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree **X**

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree **X**
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. *Can you start up your own SMS*
2. *so that people can SMS you whenever they need help desperately.*
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. X make the english simpler - most people who buy post are ordinary factory workers, and cannot understand high english.
2. Please don't mind me saying this. Thank you Guru.
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Make the editor declare in the column that you are a professional, this would differentiate between
2. you and other fortune tellers | psychics | astrologers - readers sometimes don't want to look at these columnists
3. as they perceive all columnists of this nature to be a whole lot of hodge wash due to false prophecies of fortune tellers.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✕

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✕
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Reply to more letters if you can
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
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3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. More letters each week would be nice.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you report on previous clients
2. who wrote in but did not follow your
3. programme of wellness - and what
became of their fate? This would
encourage the doubtfuls of today
to take your advice seriously.

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
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4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. LET THE ED CLEARLY STATE THAT YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL
AND NOT ONE OF THOSE CLAIRVOYANTS WHO MERELY
2. WORK ON GUESS WORK -
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

- What about those who cannot read?*
1. *can you host a talk show or Radio on*
 2. *a regular basis as well?*
 3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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1. strongly disagree
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4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ☒
4. agree
5. strongly agree

C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. *Do you follow up personally on clients problems after a period of time to see whether they have improved or not? I think this is important. I can't just leave a client/patient with*
2. *just one letter in the Post and expect them to be taking*
3. *your advice - without any follow up*

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4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Publish more letters from readers each week.

2. _____

3. _____

Sir /Madam

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4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. OFFER YOUR SERVICES FREE TO THE PUBLIC BY HOSTING A TABLE ONCE A WEEK AT A BUSY SHOPPING CENTRE. THIS WOULD
2. ENABLE POOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ENGAGE YOUR SERVICES IN PERSON.
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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- ☒ 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Hammer home the point that if couples learn that
1. the golden rule is to choose the right partner in
marriage - all problems will not seem so serious.
2. most couples choose the wrong partner and
end up with a life of misery. Indians don't
3. usually separate or divorce early, so
they tend to rather live out a life of suffering..
So stress to your readers how important it is
to ensure that young couples take time to know
their partner very well (over a period of time)
before they dive into marriage -

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Dancing can be very good for the soul. Encourage
2. troubled young couples (and old ones) to
3. dance to their favorite tunes when
they are alone at home (or at
clubs). Togetherness in an atmosphere
of good music and emotional feelings
can go a long way in healing the
wounds of the soul.

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Visitation to schools to talk to senior pupils would
2. be nice.
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. When someone writes to you - they don't usually
2. tell others in the privacy. So can you encourage
3. them to call you on a personal cell no. or on your home line or a private line so that they get to hear from you personally - this will go a long way to take the exercise of you helping the person to a much more practical and fruitful level.

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. CAN YOU PERHAPS GIVE OFF ONE DAY A WEEK
2. TO CONSULT FREE OF CHARGE TO ALL THOSE WHO
3. CANNOT AFFORD FEES? I WOULD APPRECIATE U FOR THAT.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. How much do you charge and how long is the session?
2. PLEASE INDICATE
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- ☒ 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. GIVE CONTACT NOS. OF AGENCIES THAT THE SUFFERERS
CAN CONTACT FOR ASSISTANCE IF THEY DO NOT HAVE
MED AID eg. CLINICS, KZNPA SOCIAL WORKERS, POLICE
ET

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Do Lawyers offer free services for those Housewives who
2. cannot afford to pay - if so can you state how they can
3. be reached?

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you repeatedly ask school teachers not
2. to embarrass pupils in class by demanding
3. school fees - after all that is the responsibility
of parents - You'll be surprised how many pupils
contemplate suicide because of embarrassment.

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. ~~agree~~
5. ☒ strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. ~~agree~~
5. ☒ strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Regular Feedback on advice that was
 2. given & how it was carried out & the
 3. consequences thereof.
- Have a longer column

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Follow up on Advice; are-consultation
2. inf enough; more details would help.
3. -fam + unite support-groups a not total reliance on + psychologiss.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. By providing more indepth info about client
2. (eg. background /age/culture/other psychological
3. problems) to avoid generalizations

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. lots of useful n.s. eg. SANCA; ADVICE DESKS;
2. SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION CLINICS; COUNSELLORS ETC.
3. FROM WHERE HELP CAN BE SOUGHT.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. BE A LITTLE MORE FORCEFUL IN YOUR ADVICE eg
2. DON'T SAY "YOU MAY WANT TO THINK OF
3. LEAVING HER AT SOME STAGE IN YOUR
LIFE'. RATHER SAY "DROP HER LIKE
A BOMB WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT OR
SHE IS GOING TO RUIN YOUR LIFE
BY TOMORROW".

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ✱ agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ✱ agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. NEED A LARGER COLUMN
2. FOR MORE COUNSELLING
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. NO REAL NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT.
2. MAYBE MORE CASES SHOULD BE DISCUSSED.
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Column is perfect. - no need for improvement
2. More cases should be disaussed
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. MORE SPACE FOR MORE CASES.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Different case studies should be discussed
2. Maybe a larger sized columns
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ④. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- ③. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Try to be more objective.
2. Show more empathy.
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- ☒ 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Better quality answers
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. MORE space for more ADVICE.
2. very good work keep it up.
3.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. NEED MORE SPACE.
2. FOR MORE ADVICE.
3. ALWAYS GOOD.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

- Your columns are too quick and too short. How does the reader know if the person asking for help has had their concerns answered adequately? There is no continuity or finality to your cases.*
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

Sir /Madam

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2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you avail yourself to go to senior
2. citizen clubs and talk personally to them.
3. There are so many elderly that are abused and neglected. Clearly state in your columns that you are available for this service and various clubs will then contact you.

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Corporal punishment worked well in our days. Comment on the
1. problems that face teachers when parents do not exercise
any punishment on their naughty kids - and worse
2. go to school and threaten teachers for being too
3. tough on their naughty kids

Sir /Madam

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3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. SPEND MORE TIME TEACHING ABSTINENCE AS AGAINST CONDOMISE.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ✓

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. PROVIDE CONTACT NUMBERS FOR VARIOUS DISCIPLINES / SERVICE PROVIDERS
WHERE READERS CAN ACCESS HELP.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

- STRESS TO YOUR READERS HOW IMPORTANT THE FOLLOWING
1. DISCIPLINES IN MARRIAGE & FAMILYHOOD ARE:
RESPECT, LOVE, BEING FRIENDLY, BEING HELPFUL,
 2. LOOKING ATTRACTIVE TO YOUR PARTNER, AND THE ART OF
STAYING LOYAL TO EACH OTHER. IF ONLY COUPLES &
 3. FAMILIES CAN FOLLOW THESE BASIC RULES, SO MANY
SILLY PROBLEMS WOULD BE AVOIDED.

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Encourage your patients who write to you to
1. Come and see personally - preferably as a
2. Couple or as a family unit - so
3. that you could address the problem as
a whole - rather than isolating the patient's
problem to a single person.

Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

WHY DOES CROSSMOOR SECONDARY
1. ENCOUNTER SO MANY SUICIDES?
2. IS IT BECAUSE OF THE VERY HIGH
3. ACADEMIC MATRIC STANDARDS THAT
THE PRINCIPAL SETS? SOME CHILDREN
JUST CANNOT COPE AND ARE TOO
EMBARRASSED TO LET THEIR PARENTS
DOWN BY FAILING - HENCE SUICIDE.
WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT THIS?
WHAT IS THE EDUCATION DEPT DOING
ABOUT THIS PROBLEM? WRITE A COLUMN
TO HIGHLIGHT THIS ISSUE.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- X 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Both wives realise that some of their partners are put off with their disgusting eating habits or dressing or snoring, and don't husbands realise that their partners can't stand their drinking, belching, late-night revelling etc. Why not highlight this in your column by dedicating a few columns on how a good marriage can work if only partners can simply respect each other's values and not irritate each other by practising silly and disgusting habits.

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ☒
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ☒
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Include some religious sayings to add value to column.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Say it simpler english for the factory workers to understand.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ✓ 5. strongly agree

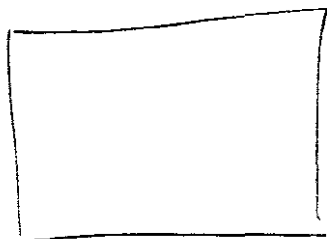
- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ✓ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Include pictures depicting the story - you don't have to use actual watch pictures - you could use
2. actors to pose for the picture. This gives the reader a better and more forceful idea of what the
3. nature of the problem is all about



Sir /Madam

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1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Be more forceful & practical with on-the
2. spot advice on what the writer can
3. do immediately to take action
rather than long term solutions

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ~~4. agree~~
- ~~5. strongly agree~~

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ~~5. strongly agree~~

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. VERY GOOD - CAN YOU INDICATE YOUR
2. PHONE NOS, ADDRESS etc AND YOUR
3. FEES FOR PNT + MED AND CONSULTATION
SO THAT READERS WILL KNOW HOW
TO CONTACT YOU.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Can you generally follow up
2. by personal consultation with
3. the affected person so that continuity takes place-rather than a once-off column in the paper.

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. ~~strongly agree~~

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. ~~agree~~
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. What about people who cannot write
2. about their problems - for example
3. people who report to police stations -
Can you go over and counsel them
and print their stories as well?

Sir /Madam

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Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree **X**

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree **X**

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. GIVE US THE PHONE NUMBERS TO CONTACT FOR HARASSMENT IN THE WORK PLACE .
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

Can you publish pictures of scenes from each story. This does not have to be pictures of the complainant. It can be staged photos. Reader get a clearer picture of the story by looking at the pictures. I know I will find this more interesting to view, than boring columns without pictures.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. ~~Whenever you advise an abused wife to leave her husband,~~
2. ~~the problem is that most Indian women cannot just leave~~
3. ~~their husbands because of the stigma attached by society~~
about where do they go to? What will people and neighbours think? So most Indian women rather suffer the abuse and remain with their husbands as they have no other house to go to - how best can you circumvent this problem?

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

- CAN YOU HAVE OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES ATTACHED TO
1. YOURSELF. IN THIS WAY IF YOU ADVICE A WIFE TO REFER
FOR EXAMPLE, HER HUSBAND TO GO TO A.A, CAN YOU
 2. HAVE SOMEONE WILLING TO ACCOMPANY THE HUSBAND
TO THE LOCAL AA MEETING, OR A DRUG COUNSELLOR
 3. WILLING TO SEE A PATIENT AT SHORT NOTICE etc.

Sir /Madam

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ☒ 5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Very good advice. A pleasure to read.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

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5. strongly agree

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I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. So far he's doing and excellent job
2. _____
3. _____

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Instructions:

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I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree ☒

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. no comments
2. Job well done
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
- ⑤ strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ④ agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Just keep it up.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. It is as good as it is.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- X 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- X 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. I find the column very interesting.
2. There is no room for improvement.
3. It is very informative.

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree ✓
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Declined to comment.
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- ☒ 3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
- ☒ 4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- ③ neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
- ③ neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Guru Kistnasamy

From: "Candice Soobramoney" <candice.soobramoney@inl.co.za>
 To: "Guru Kistnasamy" <kistnasamy@medis.co.za>
 Sent: Tuesday, August 22, 2006 8:37 AM

Sr /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. As the journalist for the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ****
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree *****
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. ___ response can be more can be more personalized for the reader, eg. I can understand what you are going through. ... _____

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2. ____response can provide an internet site on where to research a particular problem further

3. _____

Sir /Madam

I am conducting research for a Ph. D study. If you are a reader of the Post newspaper, your co-operation in completing the form below would be appreciated.

Guru Kistnasamy.

Instructions:

- A. Kindly indicate how you experience the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale with a cross.

I find the information in the advice column useful.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- B. Kindly indicate what you appreciate about the column by marking the appropriate response on the scale below with a cross.

I find the advice given answers the readers's concerns adequately.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree ✓
5. strongly agree

- C. Comment on how the column can be improved.

1. Include case studies of younger people.
2. Ask for feedback via column from those
readers.
- 3) Tackle issues such as abortions and the
impact it has on people.