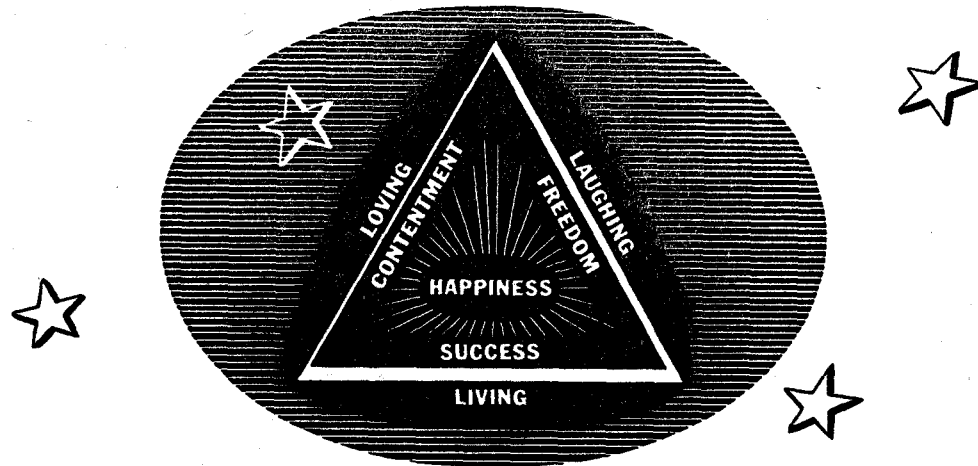


# Problems in Living



by **WILLIAM MOULTON MARSTON**

**I**T IS TIME to report results. Here's how some of our Clinic members have solved their problems. The solutions reported are selected from many, with the hope of helping those who have sent in similar cases.

This seems to be marriage-question month, and our first discussion is intended especially for Clinic members who have asked that most important question — *Shall I marry now or wait for better times?* (E.T.C., Florida; Miss A., Cleveland; R.M., Toronto; Esther W., Massachusetts; E.D.S. and "Bewildered Girl," California).

## MARRIAGE IS WORTH NOT WAITING FOR

**A** CLINIC MEMBER, whom I call, at his own suggestion, "simply Ed," graduated from college two years ago and holds a clerk's job at \$35 a week. Ed became engaged, last year, to Grace Brooks. Grace works for the same company at precisely the same salary. They are genuinely in love and well suited to each other. Grace wished to marry and go on working. But Ed's pride rebelled. He didn't want his wife to work and he felt that he could not support her adequately on his present salary. So he wrote me suggesting that I *advise Grace to wait until Ed got a better job.*

Instead, I wrote Ed the following history of another couple who put off marriage two and a half years.

The man in that case insisted that he must be able to support his wife decently at home before he married her. The girl, as girls so often

do, gradually changed her point of view to agree with his. She came to believe that a wife should be supported. But time went on, and the man's salary remained about the same. Then, quite suddenly, the girl married a very wealthy man. Psychologically, her former fiancé was responsible. He had changed her whole concept of marriage. She had come to think of it not as a love union which was worth any effort or sacrifice to achieve but as a semi-business partnership in which the woman's duty was to run the house and keep up the man's pride and social connections. If this was marriage, she reasoned in her feminine way, why not take the best man she could get for that sort of a husband role? She did.

Ed discussed this case with Grace; they argued about it for a week. Then they were married — and Grace went on working. Both of them have written me, since, that they are "wonderfully happy."

Ed says:

I must have been crazy to let a little thing like masculine pride stand in the way of marriage. We are very comfortably fixed with the money we both earn and we have so much fun together! All our friends envy us. This is **LIVING!**

The right kind of marriage is the core of harmonious activity, the very heart of life itself. Marriage shouldn't be entered into lightly, impulsively. I have never advised anybody to rush into marriage — it is too serious a proposition. There are many items beside passion that have to be added and subtracted

## PROBLEMS IN LIVING

before deciding on marriage — temperaments, personalities, family obligations perhaps or previous entanglements, and always the question of a practical plan for adequate finances. But, once these things are set, marriage is worth the effort of sweeping minor barriers into the rubbish heap. What are pride, prejudice, and social trivialities compared with the happiness of a home of your own? If you can have that happiness today, it is a crime against yourself and against the person you love to postpone it, with arbitrary willfulness, until a tomorrow which may never come. It is like gambling diamonds against peanuts.

Marriages of well-mated people are put off for so many silly reasons. Here are just a few from my files.

A girl had been taught by her mother that she should "have fun, gaiety, freedom" for two years before she married. Her fiancé concluded that she was a frivolous fool and married somebody else.

Another girl postponed her marriage until she could go to Paris and buy gowns — she was killed in an automobile accident.

A man wanted to be sure the girl loved him — this happens oftener than you'd think, because men take their own futures so seriously — and the girl, hurt, broke their engagement.

Those who make marriage difficult or put a bounty on remaining single are committing a greater social wrong than they realize. The depression theory that married women should be denied jobs left scars that will never heal.

In Washington, D. C., a good many young women got divorces to keep their jobs.

In several firms I know of in New York and Chicago, the ban on married women started an undercover epidemic of clandestine affairs, leading to the habit of sexual promiscuity.

Many a young couple married and kept the marriage secret for years, not daring even to speak to each other in the office. The result inevitably — phobias, nervousness, neurasthenia.

What a shortsighted policy, to drive women insane and upset the characters of young men who could afford to marry only girls who also held jobs! Psychological sense is always against blanket rules that upset right living. Each case should be considered on its own merits. Marriage is a permit to live which should be denied no one and which is worth any honest price when available.

### YOUR ONLY SECURITY IS COURAGE

**M**ANY CLINIC members have written about security. They find themselves upset, disappointed, their lives thrown into sudden panic and confusion by unpredictable events in this hectic world. They want home security, business security, love security. And what they get instead is disaster and despair.

For them I give the case of Mrs. Gale, a correspondent whose solution of her own problem furnishes the true answer.

Ethelinda Gale was down, literally, to her last cent. She sold 2 3-cent postage stamps for a nickel for carfare home. The friend she lived with did not know, herself, where next month's rent was coming from. Mrs. Gale was 46; her husband was dead; the firm she had worked for had folded up. Nobody wanted a woman of Ethelinda's age and experience.

"Oh, my dear!" her friend cried, "I am so worried about you! You must be frantic."

"But I'm not," said Mrs. Gale. "I am not worried in the least. I managed to get home today. Somehow I shall manage to find work."

She did — by creating a job for which she was peculiarly fitted, in a hospital. The first month, she worked for board and lodging. The next month, she was put on a salary. Now, she is head of a growing department, her work regarded as indispensable.

Ethelinda Gale, in the darkest depths of her private depression, relied on herself and felt safe. She *was* safe, because she possessed courage which never failed her. Within her brain were resources capable of supplying all her needs. The event proved that.

Events will prove it for you, also, if you cultivate courage like Mrs. Gale's. Every normal human is equipped with power and ability to solve his problems. Any jam which you get into, in the ordinary course of events, you can also get out of. The only exception is a mental jam which is caused by your running away from the situation you have to master. So long as you face it and marshal your inner resources, you will pull through in the end with flying colors. Courage is the quality which makes you delight in battling problems — the tougher they are, the more fun to attack. And courage gives you the necessary drive to strain every nerve and muscle to the uttermost, until triumph is yours.

Love, health, home — none of these can be secure without courage. Security comes from within and not from without. It depends on self-reliance and not on outside assistance. It is an awareness of the trust which you place in yourself and it cannot be shattered by the lack of faith which others have in you, so long as you have courage.

### WE PASS THIS WAY BUT ONCE

**M**RS. WALLACE T., of Texas, reports the case of her young nephew, as follows.

"Look, Dad!" The boy rushed into the living room where his father was reading the paper. "I won the English prize for the best story in high school! Here it is — they let me bring it home so you could read it."

The father glanced up briefly from his newspaper with a frown of annoyance. "For heaven's sake," he snapped, "let me have a little peace — can't you see I'm reading? I'll look at your English paper later."

"Oh!" Young Tom turned toward the door, a look of utter disillusionment on his face. "All right, Dad." He went into the back yard, took off the cover of the garbage pail, tore his prize-winning story into many small pieces, and dropped them into the container. Then he clamped the cover on and rode off on his bicycle.

A week later, prompted by the boy's mother, Dad asked about the story.

"It wasn't any good," Tom muttered. "The heck with the prize."

His high-school grades in English began to drop. The last month of that school year, Tom received a failing mark.

"I'm no good at writing," he explained sullenly to his father. "I don't want to go to college next year, anyway. I'm going to work in a garage."

In vain his mother pleaded, and his father stormed. Tom's young spirit had somehow been twisted by the belittling of his great accomplishment. He had planned for years to be a writer — but never again. That path to self-expression had been definitely closed, and he was off on a long, lonely psychological detour.

Tom's father would have given anything to undo what a few seconds of selfish irritation had accomplished. But human events had moved beyond his reach. He would never pass

that way again; the golden opportunity to praise and appreciate his boy's progress was gone forever. Tom can be helped — but on a new path, not the old one.

Human beings are dynamic, flexible creatures, continually in a state of evolution. They evolve this way or that, according to the little pushes and pulls of other people at crucial moments.

You who are bosses, who have men and women under your direction in business, carry a daily responsibility you little dream of. Here is a clinic problem that was solved with the help of an understanding chief.

Jerry B. had been going from dull to duller in his job. His ambition began to wane when a certain research report, on which he had expended the best efforts of his mind, soul, and body for six months, died in the president's office. The busy executive had remarked, "No sense in doing research on this subject," and had thrown Jerry's able analysis into the wastebasket.

When the youngster learned what had happened, he felt utterly defeated. "If the best I can do is no good," he wrote me, "what's the use of trying?" From that moment, he had been going downhill in his work.

But I felt he had not gone too far to recover. All he needed was a little encouragement.

The president was persuaded to read a carbon copy of Jerry's discarded report. He scribbled on it a few words that meant all the difference, to Jerry, between hopelessness and progress: "Fine piece of work, though subject not practical for present action."

That brief memo gave Jerry just the push he needed toward success and happiness. The young man's work now is improving steadily.

The president was just as fortunate as Jerry. He caught the opportunity before it passed and made an efficient, energetic employee out of a down-and-outer.

Whenever you contact a fellow human who craves your sympathy, your understanding, your encouragement, you are treading a path which may never open to you again. Don't ignore it. Don't let absorption in your own concerns make you blind to another's needs. We pass this way but once — let's give the other fellow the lift we too may need some day when destiny brings us to a crossroad.

# They Said I Was Mad

ANONYMOUS

**A**N UNUSUAL SEQUENCE of events led up to the story I shall relate, and that the whole account may be a strain on credulity I am well aware. Nevertheless I submit it in the hope that, in some way, it may assist those unfortunate enough ever to find themselves in like circumstances.

For some time I had been worrying over a number of business and personal matters. I had, for the first time in my life, been lying awake nights, going over and over the same ground mentally, until I seemed to have worn a path in my mind. My inability to get more than an hour or so of sleep out of the 24 continued for a couple of months, and I grew gradually more and more tense as hours on hours of wakefulness accumulated. I went on with my work at the office but I realized I was becoming high-strung and easily irritated.

The early part of April, an older brother, a physician practicing in a western city, wrote me that he was planning a visit to New York. As I particularly did not wish to be fatigued and run-down during his stay, I began taking a drugstore bromide. This, instead of having a quieting effect, seemed rather to stimulate me.

I went to work every day and, although I recognized that I was not exactly myself, I was not alarmed at my condition. But I seemed rather irresponsible after a couple of doses and do not know how much of the "safe" remedy I took or how often I took it. I believe no one noticed anything unusual in my manner, except that those most closely associated with me in business realized I was more easily stimulated and excited than usual.

A friend phoned me one morning about this time, and I told him I was much distressed over the illness of a sister. I recall feeling a tinge of unreality about this at the time, and, when I learned later that my sister's illness had no basis in fact, my only explanation was that it must have been a very vivid dream which I

confused with reality. I met my brother the day of his arrival and, after spending a couple of hours with him, I left for my office. I had said nothing to him about not feeling well; he had come to New York for rest and recreation, to get away from illness and complaints. On my way to the subway, I became suddenly so exhausted that, instead of going to the office, I took a taxi and went home to bed. I had eaten little or nothing for some days, and my strength was not sufficient to keep me going, except in spurts, when I got up and did quite unusual and unaccustomed things without taking time for thought or consideration as to their advisability.

My brother insisted on giving me amytal to relax and quiet my nerves, although, as had always been my habit, I protested against medication. I do not know whether other drugs were administered or not but I remember frequent dosing.

A curious commentary on my state of mind at this time is that I threw what I had left of the bromide down the incinerator without saying anything to anyone. I don't know whether I feared I should take too much of it or whether I wanted to keep my brother from knowing anything about it.

My mental activity increased by leaps and bounds. I was engrossed in more "original" ideas than I had had in years. I tried a number of times to get some of them down on paper but found my thoughts were scattered and I was too weak to sit at the typewriter for any length of time.

I began to lose track of events, except an isolated one now and then which impressed me particularly. At odd times of day and night I got up and dressed and went out. After I was out of the house, my purpose for leaving home would seem to fade into thin air, and, bewildered, I would try to get back.

Once, in the very early morning, I went out