



The Family Room

By: Dr. Roy Don Whitehead

Too Much Anger May Signal Depression

John was an angry man. (All characters are fictitious.) He screamed at his children when they did not move as quickly as he thought they should. He screamed at his wife when she upset him. He kicked the dog when it got in his way. He even screamed at the lawnmower when it refused to start. A couple of times he had become so angry that he put his fist through a wall.

John did have a conscience and he felt bad after an episode of anger. "I don't know what causes me to do that," he tried to explain, "but it's like I can't help myself. My dad was the same way. Maybe I learned it from

him." David (also a fictitious character) had a different problem: he did not care about anything. When he was not at work, he spent most of his time on the couch watching television. At one time he had been an avid fisherman, but he had not had his boat in the water in six months. He did not want to go anywhere. It was all he could do to get himself to work each morning. His wife tried to interest him in family activities, but to no avail. "I don't feel like it" was his answer to every invitation.

David and John do share one thing in common: they are both depressed. Depression in men does not always look the same as in women. Sadness

does not always accompany depression in males. Two of the most common symptoms of depression for men are anger and apathy.

According to an article in a recent issue of Reader's Digest, 20 percent of all women suffer from depression and 10 percent of all men. Some question that latter figure, because men are more reluctant to seek help when depressed. There may be more men suffering from depression who have never been counted.

What causes depression in males? Some of the same things that cause depression in women: neurotransmitters (chemicals that relay messages from one brain cell to another), hormonal imbalances, negative life experiences, such as losing a job or childhood abuse, and alcohol. Major league pitcher Pete Harnisch became depressed when he quit chewing tobacco.

Depression can be fatal. Mike Wallace, CBS news correspondent for "60 Minutes," had suicidal thoughts when he became depressed. He checked himself into a hospital and was treated with antidepressants.

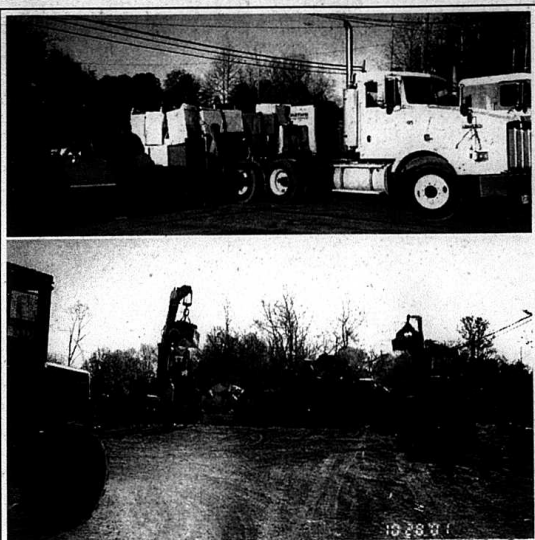
Depression can also shorten men's lives. A study by Johns Hopkins University found that men who have suffered from depression have twice the risk of heart disease as other men.

The anger that comes from depression can cause a tremendous amount of pain for the family. Harold (a fictitious character) was physically and verbally abusive to his wife. He would hit and kick her until she would bleed. She made several trips to the emergency room. Harold was depressed, and it was only when he got help that the abuse ended.

Treatment for depression is available and very effective. Medication, counseling and exercise are three treatments that are proven to help depression.

Men who seek help get better. Men who see depression as a sign of weakness and do not seek help continue to suffer.

[You are invited to a free community seminar that I am leading on Thursday, December 6, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Landmark Inn in Somerset. It is "Divorce Recovery: Making It On Your Own." To register call 679-4134 or 1-877-PASTOR-8 and leave your name and phone number. That is all it takes.]



The Rockcastle County Conservation District has just recently completed its 2nd Annual White Goods Drive. The district collected and purchased 1,970 appliances through a grant they received from the Division of Conservation. The district feels that this is a worthwhile program to help clean up illegal dumps and to prevent other appliances from being improperly disposed of. The district furthermore uses the drive to inform the public that many household materials can be recycled for some money rather than being dumped illegally. The district would like to thank everyone who participated in this program. Also, a special "thanks" to the employees at Mt. Vernon Scrap who worked so diligently during this event.

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