



The Family Room

By: Dr. Roy Don Whitehead

What is Normal?

I know a woman who blow-dries her lawn mower. Yes, that is correct. She blow-dries her lawn mower. Is this woman normal? What is normal anyway?

Actually the woman who blow-dries her lawn mower is very normal and also very smart. Her lawn mower will not start when it is cold, but when it is warm it starts easily. Rather than waste energy in a futile attempt to start it when cold, she brings her blow dryer, warms it, and then starts it right away. She admitted to me that she does this on the back patio, rather than out in the yard where the neighbors might see. She does have some fear that they might question her sanity if they saw her.

What is normal is sometimes difficult to define. Something may look abnormal (blow drying a piece of lawn and garden equipment, for example) but have a perfectly rational explanation. The reverse is also true. Someone washing his hands may look very normal unless it is known that he does it hundreds of times each day in a vain attempt to keep the germs away.

"Are my actions normal?" Here are my answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

"Is it normal to be angry?" Yes,

anger is a normal human emotion.

Everyone gets angry at times. If this seems unbelievable to you, consider how you would react if someone attempted to harm one of your children. More than likely you would be angry, a very normal response.

"Is it normal for couples to fight?" The answer to this question depends on what is meant by "fight." All couples have disagreements and tense times. This is normal. Two people cannot live together and always be in harmony. Not all couples however fight physically. Nor do all couples verbally cut each other to shreds with angry words and accusations. That is not normal.

"Is it normal to cry?" Yes. God gave you the ability to cry so that you might rid yourself of painful emotions. Grief, sadness and loss are best expressed with tears. Tears help to wash away the pain that you feel inside. What is not normal is the absence of tears in very sad situations.

When you go for a month after the death of a loved one and shed not one tear, something is not going right.

"Is it normal to talk to myself?" "Is it normal to answer myself?" Yes and yes. Talking to yourself does not make you crazy. Talking to yourself is, instead, a way to preserve sanity. Saying positive things over and over serves to counter the negative messages that may live in your

head from days past. You may be one of many people who carries on a constant dialogue in your head about what is going on around you. That does not make you crazy.

"Is it normal to fantasize about hurting someone who abused me?" I hear this question often from adults who have been victims of childhood abuse and from women who are victims of domestic violence. Yes, it is normal to think about hurting the one who hurt you, but it is not normal to act on those thoughts. While it may be OK to think about revenge, actually hurting someone only puts you on their level. As the victim works through the feelings of being abused, the desire for revenge usually goes away.

"Is it normal to want to be happy?" This may seem a strange question to some, but I have been asked. It is often accompanied by the comment, "Maybe I should just be satisfied with my unhappy life." Yes, it is normal to want to be happy. No one need feel condemned to misery.

Religion, Domestic Violence & Depression Class

This fall Dr. Don Whitehead, pastoral counselor from Somerset, is offering three classes that are open to the public: Winning Against Depression, Domestic Violence: How Can We Help, and When Religion Gets Sick. All classes will meet at The Center for Rural Development in Somerset. To register for any class call 679-4134 or 1-877-PASTOR-8.

Dr. Whitehead will teach Winning Against Depression on Tuesday, October 15, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Dr. Whitehead has studied depression and counseled with families for more than 17 years. He has presented his ideas about depression to audiences across the state. He is a minister who blends a spiritual approach with current scientific research.

"Depression strikes many people, and yet most of us know so little about it," Dr. Whitehead states. "Depression can be fatal, because some of its victims will commit suicide. Even when not fatal, it is a painful illness that can make a person and a family miserable. Insomnia, overeating, low energy, anxiety, guilt and hopelessness are just some of its many effects."

"I have had some personal experience with depression," Dr. Whitehead reports. "I know what it feels like to be depressed, and I know it does not feel good at all! I would like to help some of those other depressed persons out there. Come to this semi-

nar and you will find out how you can beat depression. You will learn that depression is very treatable. You will find that there is hope!"

In this seminar Dr. Whitehead will explain the causes of depression. "Also you will learn to recognize depression in its many forms," he adds, "and you will find out about the treatments for depression that really work."

The second seminar is Domestic Violence: How Can We Help, presented on Thursday, October 24 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and this class will teach participants what they can do to help someone who is being abused. Bethany House Abuse Shelter is sponsoring this class and there is no charge.

"Are you or someone you know caught in domestic violence and abuse?" Dr. Whitehead asks. "Physical, verbal and sexual abuse are happening to someone you know. This seminar will learn more about domestic abuse and how we can stop it. This could be important for you or a family member."

"Trying to help someone you know caught in domestic violence and abuse?" Dr. Whitehead asks. "Physical, verbal and sexual abuse are happening to someone you know. At this seminar you will learn more about domestic abuse and how we can stop it. This could be important for you or a family member."

"Trying to help someone in a domestic violence situation can be very frustrating," Dr. Whitehead adds. "Often the victim will return to the abuser. This is very normal behavior, and in this class, I will help you understand why this happens. You will learn more about the causes of domestic violence and what you can do to help. This class is for victims of domestic violence and for those who try to help them."

The third seminar is When Religion Gets Sick, to be presented on Thursday, November 14 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. "Religion continues to be a source of strength for many people," Dr. Whitehead says. "Unfortunately, religion can sometimes be harmful as well as helpful. Religion each teach unnecessary guilt, rigid legalism and rule worship that has little in common with what Jesus or the prophets taught."

"People come to me for counseling who are victims of unhealthy religious teaching," Dr. Whitehead says. "The effects of this kind of teaching can last for years. I am interested in helping people trade in the guilt and shame for a religion of freedom and joy."

"You will come away from this learning experience understanding the difference between sick religion and healthy, healing religious belief," Dr. Whitehead continues. (WARNING: Rumor has it that Dr. Whitehead will play guitar and sing at some point during this workshop.)

Dr. Whitehead has counseled people about personal, marriage and family problems since 1985. His newspaper column appears in six area newspapers. He can also be heard on Clear Channel Radio in Somerset. As a minister and a counselor, he has a unique insight into the human condition. He has been married to Sharon since 1971 and they have two sons and a daughter-in-law.

To register call 679-4134 or 1-877-PASTOR-8 and have your VISA or Mastercard ready.

"Court News"

(Cont. from B-2)

Misty Hacker: Unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, 30 days in jail/conditionally discharged 12 months.

Patsy Kaye Haling: Possession of marijuana, \$100 fine and costs.

Jason Hamblin: Fines due (\$100.85), bench warrant issued for failure to appear.

Douglas N. Henderson: No insurance, \$500 fine and costs/suspend \$450.

Jimmy Houk: Harassing Communications, 30 days in jail/conditionally discharged one year.

Angie L. Kirby: Operating on suspended license and other charges, bench warrant issued for failure to appear.

David W. Mahaffey: Fines due (\$201.85), bench warrant issued for failure to appear.

Valeta J. Hayes: License not in possession, \$50 fine and costs; Failure to produce insurance card, \$50 fine.

Michael S. Mills: Failure to yield right-of-way, \$100 fine and costs; Failure to produce insurance card, \$25 fine; License not in possession, \$50 fine.

Virginia Montjoy: Failure to use child restraint and other charges, license suspended for failure to appear.

Carla R. Perkins: Speeding and other charges, license suspended for failure to appear.

Dusty M. Perkins: Speeding and License to be in possession, license suspended for failure to appear.

Jackie M. Rayburn: Improper registration plates and other charges, license suspended for failure to appear.

Jennifer M. Reed: Operating motor vehicle under influence alcohol/drugs, \$200 and costs, \$250 service fee, \$10 victim compensation fund, \$10 vto serve 2/30 day operator

license suspension.

Gregory S. Richardson: Operating vehicle w/expired operator's license, \$100 fine and costs; Failure to produce insurance card, \$50 fine.

Ralph Lee Silvinski: Fines due (\$121.35), bench warrant issued for failure to appear.

Ralph H. Stewart: Fines due (\$97.50), bench warrant issued for failure to appear.

Dennis K. Sullivan: Speeding, \$30 fine and costs.

Teressa Willis: Theft by unlawful taking/Shoplifting, \$250 fine and costs/suspend \$200 of fine on condition.

Mabel L. Bianchi: Speeding, paid \$60 fine and costs.

Chris D. Bland: Speeding, paid \$52 fine and costs.

Arthur J. Brown: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

Paul D. Chaney: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

Richard D. Cook: Defective equipment, \$75 fine and costs.

Johnny L. Farris: Speeding, \$36 fine and costs.

Michael R. Hubbard: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

L. Michael R. Hubbard: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

Thomas Richard Hungford: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

Jesse A. Johnson: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

William B. Johnson: Speeding, paid.

Karl A. Kahrs: Speeding, paid.

Paul F. Lesage: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

Douglas F. McGinnis: Speeding, paid.

Tommy S. Norton: Speeding, paid \$156 total fine and costs.

Lamont Vincent Provost: Speeding, license suspended for failure to appear.

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