

Awake!

APRIL 2013



An End to Domestic Violence



An End to Domestic Violence

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TEENAGERS



YOUNG PEOPLE ASK . . . **WHAT IF I’M BEING BULLIED?**

“I’ll never forget the names they called me or the things they said,” says 20-year-old Celine. “They made me feel worthless, unwanted, and good for nothing. I’d rather have been given a black eye.” This online article answers such questions as: Why do kids bully? Who are most likely to become the bully’s targets? What can you do if you’re being bullied?

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS/TEENAGERS)

CHILDREN



Read illustrated Bible stories. Use the activity pages to help your children improve their knowledge of Bible characters and moral principles.

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS/CHILDREN)

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UNITED STATES

During the week of October 29, 2012, New York City experienced a dramatic decline in murders, felony assaults, and robberies compared with the same five-day period in 2011. The reason? Hurricane Sandy, a fierce storm that ravaged the East Coast of the United States, causing massive power outages. "After a natural disaster or large-scale catastrophe like [the terrorist attack that occurred on September 11, 2001], we see conventional crime come down," said New York Police Department spokesman Paul Browne. There was, however, an increase in burglaries because of looting, which did not surprise Browne. "There are a lot of unlit areas," he said.

NETHERLANDS

An 83-year-old woman was **the first recipient of a prosthetic titanium jawbone** produced on a 3-D laser printer. The patient, whose jaw had been destroyed by a bone infection, can now eat, breathe, and speak normally. The laser printer fused titanium particles, layer by layer, to re-create her jawbone, which was then surgically implanted.



GERMANY

Within a year of a partial **ban on smoking** in some public areas in Germany, hospital admissions for angina pectoris among one group studied declined by 13.3 percent; for heart attacks, by 8.6 percent.

ANTARCTICA

Scientists worry that Antarctica's **native ecology is being threatened by invasive nonindigenous species**. It is estimated that the tens of thousands of visitors to the continent each year inadvertently carry with them an average of 9.5 seeds each, often attached to their boots or bags. Populations of alien plant species have already been found in the Western Antarctic Peninsula.





How to Avoid Hurtful Speech



THE CHALLENGE

Each time a conflict arises, you and your spouse unleash a torrent of criticism at each other. Hurtful speech has become so common in your marriage that it is now your “normal” style of communication.

If this is happening in your marriage, you *can* stop the pattern. First, though, you need to consider the causes and why it is in your best interests to make changes.



WHY IT HAPPENS

Family background. Many husbands and wives were raised in homes where hurtful speech was common. One or both spouses may be repeating the type of language they heard from their parents.

Influence of entertainment. Film and television comedies turn rude speech into a laughing matter, leaving the viewer with the impression that it is harmless—or even funny.

Culture. Some societies teach that “real men” are domineering or that women need to be fiercely aggressive so as not to appear weak. During a conflict, spouses with such attitudes may view each other as adversaries rather than allies and use words that hurt rather than heal.

Regardless of the cause, hurtful speech can be a predictor of divorce as well as a number of health problems. Some even say that words can hit harder than fists. For example, one wife who was both verbally and physically battered by her husband says: “I found the insults harder to bear than the violence. I would have preferred that he hit me rather than say such hurtful things.”

What can you do if you and your spouse have let hurtful speech erode your relationship?



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Show empathy. Put yourself in your spouse's position, and try to understand how your words make him or her feel. If possible, think of a specific circumstance in which your mate felt that your speech was hurtful. Do not be sidetracked by what you really said; the issue is how your spouse *feels* about what you said. Can you think of ways that the hurtful speech could have been replaced with kind expressions? The Bible says: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up."—Proverbs 15:1.

Observe respectful couples. If negative role models have influenced your manner of communicating, look for good examples. Listen to married couples whose pattern of speech is worthy of imitation.—*Bible principle: Philip-
pians 3:17.*

Hurtful speech is more often a problem of the heart than of the mouth

Revive the feelings you once shared. Hurtful speech is more often a problem of the heart than of the mouth. So strive to nurture positive thoughts and feelings about your spouse. Reminisce about activities you once enjoyed together. Look at old photographs. What made you laugh? What qualities drew you to each other?—*Bible principle: Luke 6:45.*

Use "I" statements. Rather than verbally attack your spouse, express your concerns from the standpoint of *how you are affected*. For example, "I feel slighted when you make plans without consulting me first" is much more likely to elicit a positive response than "That is just like you—always making plans without consulting me!" —*Bible principle: Colossians 4:6.*

Know when to stop. If tempers are beginning to flare and speech is getting out of hand, it might be best to postpone the discussion. Usually, there is nothing wrong with walking away from a heated argument until the discussion can be handled more calmly.—*Bible principle: Proverbs 17:14.* ■

KEY SCRIPTURES

"Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies."
—Ephesians 5:28.

"The wife should have deep respect for her husband."
—Ephesians 5:33.

"Let all . . . screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you."—Ephesians 4:31.

WHAT IS "ABUSIVE SPEECH"?

The Bible says: "Let all . . . screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you." (Ephesians 4:31) Why did Paul distinguish "screaming" from "abusive speech"? The original-language word translated "screaming" (Greek, *krau-ge'*) refers to raising the voice. In contrast, "abusive speech" (Greek, *bla-sphe-mi'a*) describes the content of the message. What does this mean? That abusive speech may not always involve shouting. Really, any speech that is malicious, demeaning, or insulting is abusive—even if it is delivered in a low voice.



“I Am Convinced That Life Was Designed by God”

Brett Schenck is a retired environmental consultant in the United States. He studied the interdependency of plants, animals, and the environment. Why does he believe in a Creator? *Awake!* asked him about his science and his faith.

What is your background?

My father was a mechanical engineer. He often talked enthusiastically to me about math and science. As a boy, I was fascinated by the plants and animals in the creeks and pools near my home in New Paris, Ohio, U.S.A. So when I went to Purdue University, I chose to study ecology.

Did religion interest you?

Yes, it did. Dad encouraged me to study our Lutheran reli-

gion. I studied Koine (common) Greek, one of the languages in which the Bible was first written. I developed deep respect for the Bible.

How did you view the theory of evolution?

My church accepted it. My colleagues believed it. So I never questioned it. But I also believed in God. I had a foggy notion that the two beliefs were compatible. Although I respected the

Bible, I didn't think it came from God.

What made you change your view of the Bible?

Two of Jehovah's Witnesses, Steve and Sandy, visited my wife, Debbie, and me. They showed us that the Bible, though not a science textbook, is scientifically accurate. For example, it says of God: "There is One who is dwelling *above the circle of the earth.*" (Isaiah 40:22) It also says: "He is . . . hanging the earth *upon nothing.*" (Job 26:7) At that time, I was using satellite photographs to study ecology, so these scriptures impressed me. They were written long before anyone photographed the circle of

'The resilience of the entire system of life on earth convinces me that life was designed by God'

the earth hanging on nothing. As my wife and I studied the Bible with Steve and Sandy, I learned of prophecies that had come true, advice that works, and explanations that satisfied me. Gradually, I became convinced that the Bible is the Word of God.

When did you change your mind about the origin of life?

Eventually, Steve showed me the Bible's clear statement: "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground." (Genesis 2:7) The first man has a documented life history. This raised the question: Is the Bible in harmony with scientific facts? Steve encouraged me to research the matter, so I did.

What did you learn about evolution?

Many things. To mention just one, the evolution theory attempts to explain the origin of species. Living things are made up of efficient organs, such as the heart, lungs, and eyes. Also, at the microscopic level, we see marvelously designed 'machines' within cells. Where do the designs for those come from? Evolutionists claim that the best mechanisms are automatically se-

lected because the living things that have them survive better. But that idea does not answer the question: Where do the mechanisms come from? I learned that many scientists do not believe that the evolution theory answers that question. A professor of zoology confided to me that he did not believe any of the theories of evolution. However, he did not air his views for fear of losing his job.

Does your knowledge of ecology strengthen your faith?

Yes, it does. My work involved studying how living things depend on each other. On earth, all living things depend on something else. Consider flowers and bees, for example. The color, fragrance, nectar, and structure of flowers are designed to attract bees and to sprinkle them with pollen. Bees are designed to extract nectar and to take one flower's pollen to another plant for fertilization. Clearly, the flowers and bees are designed to supply what the other needs.

In an ecosystem, we see interdependence on a vast scale. An ecosystem is an environment with a community of perhaps thousands of types of animals, plants, bacteria, and

fungi. All animals depend on plants for food and oxygen, and most flowering plants depend on animals. Although ecosystems are exceedingly complex and the organisms in them are fragile, they may continue surviving for millennia. Even after damage by pollution, once the source of pollution is gone, a complex ecosystem soon develops again. When I think about the resilience of the entire system of life on earth, I am convinced that life was designed by God.

Why did you become one of Jehovah's Witnesses?

I was deeply concerned about the way human society is ruining the environment. I knew that although ecosystems are resilient, they are not indestructible. I learned from Jehovah's Witnesses that, according to the Scriptures, God will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Revelation 11:18) Those words were important to me. As I continued studying the Bible, I gradually realized that the hope that the Bible presents is sure.

I enjoy sharing my beliefs with others, and I have studied the Bible with some scientists. At age 55, I took early retirement to spend more time helping people to understand the Creator of life and his purpose for our magnificent earth. ■

An End to Domestic Violence

Scenario 1: Isabel's* parents have come for a visit. They share an enjoyable evening with their daughter and her husband, marked by pleasant conversation. What parent would not beam with pride at the man their daughter married? He is so kind to her.

Scenario 2: Frank is boiling with rage. Once again, he will take out his anger in typical fashion—which for him means hitting his wife in the face, kicking her, pulling her hair, or repeatedly knocking her head against the wall.

* Some names in this article have been changed.

IT MIGHT surprise you to learn that both of those scenarios are about the same couple.

Like many perpetrators of domestic violence, Frank knows how to put on a

“good-guy” pretense when he is in the public eye or with his wife’s parents. But when he is alone with his wife, Frank is terribly cruel.

Many men like Frank grew up in violent

Perpetrators of domestic violence often display two personalities





families, and as adults they think that their behavior is acceptable—even normal. But there is nothing normal about domestic violence. That is why most people are appalled when they learn that a man has battered his wife.

Still, domestic violence is disturbingly common. In the United States, for example, one survey found that during one day an average of over 16 calls per minute were directed to domestic-violence hot-lines across the country. Domestic violence is a worldwide epidemic, crossing cultural, economic, and social groups. Since many incidents go unreported, no doubt the situation is worse than statistics reveal.*

Reports of domestic violence raise the questions: How can a man come to the point of treating anyone—let alone his wife—so outrageously? Can men who batter their wives be helped?

Jehovah's Witnesses, the publishers of this magazine, believe that the Bible's practical advice can help violent spouses change their behavior. Is such a reversal easy? No. Is it possible? Yes! Bible education has helped many to replace a violent disposition with one of kindness and respect. (Colossians 3:8-10) Consider the experience of Troy and Valerie.

What was your relationship like at first?

Valerie: On the night of our engagement, Troy slapped me so hard that I had a bruise for a week. He apologized profusely and promised he would never do it

* Admittedly, a considerable number of men are battered by women. In most reported incidents of domestic violence, however, men are the perpetrators.

WHY DON'T THEY LEAVE?

Why do some wives choose to remain with a violent mate? A common reason is that they fear the abuse will get worse if they leave. Some husbands have threatened to harm or even kill their wife if she tried to escape. A number have carried out that threat.

Others have hesitated to leave because they fear that their friends and relatives would turn against them, refusing to believe that the situation at home was so severe. For example, Isabel, whose experience is referred to at the outset of this article, left her husband. She states: "My sister was angry with me and urged me to return to him—she did not believe that such a 'good' man could be so cruel. The entire neighborhood shunned me, and I was forced to move away with my children."

Still other reasons why some wives choose to stay are:

- They want their children to grow up with both parents.
- They worry about being able to support themselves and their children financially.
- They erroneously believe that they are to blame.
- They are ashamed to admit that they are being abused.
- They hope the situation will improve.

Jehovah's Witnesses hold to the Bible standard that the only ground for *divorce* is adultery. (Matthew 5:32) However, there are circumstances that might move some to *separate*, including the extreme conduct of a physically abusive mate.

again. In the years to come, I would hear those words many times.

Troy: Anything would set me off—late meals, for instance. Once I pistol-whipped Valerie. On another occasion, I beat her so badly that I thought I had killed her. Then, I tried to frighten her by threatening

to kill our son while holding a knife to his throat.

Valerie: I lived in constant fear. At times I had to flee the house until Troy calmed down. For all that, I found his verbal abuse even more difficult to endure than the physical violence.

Troy, had you always been violent?

Troy: Yes, from my childhood on. I grew up in a violent atmosphere. My father regularly beat my mother in front of me and my siblings. After he left, my mother took up with another man, and he also beat her. He also raped my sister—and me. He went to prison for that. Of course, I realize that none of this excuses my behavior.

Valerie, you stayed in the marriage. Why?

Valerie: I was afraid. I thought to myself, ‘What if he hunts me down and kills me or my parents? What if I report him and the situation gets worse?’

When did things begin to change?

Troy: My wife began studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses. At first, I was jealous of her new friends, and I thought I needed to save her from this strange “sect.” So I became even more violent, not only toward Valerie but also toward the Witnesses. But one day our four-year-old son, Daniel, who suffered from seizures, was hospitalized for nearly three weeks. During that period, the Witnesses did so much for us—even to the point of taking care of our six-year-old daughter, Desiree. After working the night shift, one Witness spent the day with Daniel so that Valerie could get some sleep. The kindness of those people—the very people toward whom I had been so insolent—affected me deeply. I realized that I had seen true Christianity in action, so I asked the Witnesses if I could

HELPFUL BIBLE PRINCIPLES FOR HUSBANDS

Treat your wife with honor and respect.

—1 Peter 3:7.

Love your wife as your own body.

—Ephesians 5:28, 29.

Keep your love alive and growing.

—Ephesians 5:25.

Avoid abusive speech.—Ephesians 4:29, 31.

Cultivate self-restraint.—Proverbs 29:11.

Know that self-respect comes, not from controlling others, but from controlling yourself.—Proverbs 16:32.

Think of the consequences of your actions.

—Galatians 6:7.

If you feel you are going to lose control, it may be best to walk away.—Proverbs 17:14.

Learn to detest violent behavior.—Psalm 11:5.

View your wife, not as inferior, but as a capable partner.—Genesis 1:31; 2:18.



study the Bible with them. In the course of studying the Bible, I learned how a man should, and should not, treat his wife. I put away my violent and abusive behavior permanently. Eventually, I became one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

What Bible principles helped you to change?

Troy: There are so many. At 1 Peter 3:7, the Bible says that I should show my wife "honor." Galatians 5:23 encourages "mildness" and "self-control." Ephesians 4:31 condemns "abusive speech." Hebrews 4:13 says that "all things are . . . openly exposed" to God. So God sees my conduct, even if my neighbors do not. I also learned that I needed to change my associates, since "bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Corinthians 15:33) You see, my former friends actually encouraged my violent ways. They felt it was right to beat a woman to keep her "under control."

How do you feel about your marriage now?

Valerie: It has been 25 years since Troy became one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Since then, he has been genuinely loving, kind, and considerate toward me.

Troy: I cannot change the evil that I brought on my family, and my wife certainly never deserved the treatment I gave her. But I look forward to the fulfillment of Isaiah 65:17, when this dark part of our history will fade from memory.

What advice would each of you give to families that are afflicted with domestic violence?

Troy: If you are physically or verbally violent toward your family, admit that you need help, and get it. There is plenty of help available. For me, studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses and associat-



A study of the Bible has helped many men to make needed changes

ing with them helped me to overcome my deeply entrenched violent tendencies.

Valerie: Do not be quick to compare your situation with that of anyone else or to follow advice from people who *think* they know what is best for you. Although not everyone will have the same outcome, I am glad that I did not throw my marriage away, because we have been blessed with a good relationship now.

ENDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Bible states: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight." (2 Timothy 3:16) Like Troy, whose story is related above, many abusive spouses have applied the Bible's counsel and have been able to change their thinking and conduct.

Would you like to learn more about how the Bible can benefit your marriage? For further information contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally, or log on to www.jw.org. ■



A Visit to Indonesia



INDONESIA is made up of some 17,000 islands.

Its people are known for being exceptionally friendly, patient, polite, and hospitable.

Meals in Indonesia normally include rice along with other dishes—often spicy—and fruit. In some areas, families eat sitting on a woven mat, using their fingers to dip food into the rice. Many Indonesians claim that food eaten this way tastes better.

Indonesians love art, dance, and music. The anklong is a typical Indonesian instrument; it consists of bamboo pipes loosely mounted in a frame. The pipes are tuned to produce a particular note or chord when rattled. To play a tune, a number of players must cooperate, each shaking his anklong at the right time.

Until the 15th century C.E., Indonesia was largely influenced by Hinduism and then Buddhism. By the 16th century, Islam gained a foothold in Indonesian culture. Europeans seeking spices arrived in the 16th century, and with them came the religions of Christendom.



Awake! is published in 98 languages, including Indonesian (also called Bahasa Indonesia)



The orangutan—common in the rain forests of Sumatra and Borneo—is the world’s largest tree-dwelling animal. A full-grown male may weigh 200 pounds (90.7 kg) and have arms that span 8 feet (2.4 m)

Durian fruit has a succulent creamy inside and is enjoyed by many despite its strong odor



Boy playing the *suling*, a bamboo flute that is common in Indonesia



Jehovah’s Witnesses, known worldwide for their Bible educational work, have been active in Indonesia since 1931. Currently, there are more than 22,000 of them in Indonesia, and they are making an effort to reach out to the deaf. Recently, more than 500 attended a special sign-language meeting held by Jehovah’s Witnesses to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.

FAST FACTS

Population: 237,600,000

Capital: Jakarta

Climate: Tropical

Exports: Palm oil, rubber, petroleum, coal

Languages spoken: Bahasa Indonesia, along with hundreds of regional languages and dialects

Religion: Primarily Muslim (88 percent)

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Which of these do you think Indonesia has?

- (a) 20,000 species of plants
- (b) the world’s greatest variety of mammals
- (c) the world’s largest flower
- (d) the world’s tallest flower

Answer: All four. The world’s largest flower is three feet (91 cm) in diameter, and the tallest flower is ten feet (3 m) high.



HEALTH

Does God care about how we treat our bodies?

“Do not come to be among heavy drinkers of wine, among those who are gluttonous eaters of flesh.”—Proverbs 23:20.

WHY DOES IT MATTER? The Bible is not a medical textbook; nor does it regulate every aspect of human behavior. Still, you can benefit from understanding God’s view of health as expressed in the Bible.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Numerous Bible passages shed light on how God feels about the way we treat our bodies. For instance, the Bible condemns harmful excesses, including drunkenness and gluttony. (Proverbs 23:20) God’s Law code given to ancient Israel included measures that would control and in some cases even prevent diseases. The Law also incorporated specific safety regulations for the prevention of injuries. (Deuteronomy 22:8) Clearly, the Bible encourages us to take care of our bodies and take reasonable measures to protect our health.



According to the Bible, why do we get sick?

WHAT PEOPLE SAY Many believe that sickness is simply a quirk of human evolution. Others think that mysterious forces, such as evil spirits, are the cause of our health problems.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS According to the Bible, we get sick as a result of the first human rebellion against God. (Romans 5:12) Before their rebellion, our first parents, Adam and Eve, enjoyed perfect health. They knew that they would die if they withdrew from God's loving care. (Genesis 2:16, 17) Still, they willfully severed their friendship with God and lost their perfection.*

The flawed nature of our rebellious first human parents has been passed on to us. Hence, despite all efforts to eliminate human maladies, we still get sick.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? The Bible teaches that if you become reconciled to God by obeying his wise principles, you will eventually enjoy perfect health in an earthly paradise. (Isaiah 33:24) God promises to eliminate pain, sickness, and death.—Revelation 21:3, 4.

* In this article, we use the words “perfect” and “perfection” to refer to the healthy state in which God created the first humans, unaffected by sickness, disease, and death.

“Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin.”

—Romans 5:12.

Does the Bible discourage medical treatment?

WHAT PEOPLE SAY Some promote spiritual healing (also known as faith healing) over medical treatment.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS God allowed health-care practitioners to operate among his people in Bible times. (Genesis 38:28; Colossians 4:14) There is nothing in the Bible that would indicate that God was displeased with their use of medicinal plants, ointments, prescribed diets, and other health treatments. In fact, Jesus acknowledged that “persons in health do not need a physician, but the ailing do.”—Matthew 9:12.

“Persons in health do not need a physician, but the ailing do.”—Matthew 9:12.

Yet, the Bible does not endorse the pursuit of health at all costs. For instance, the Bible does not endorse the modern-day practice of faith healing. And cures that involve spiritistic practices are not approved by God. (Galatians 5:19-21) Aside from practices that the Bible condemns, the sensible thing to do when faced with infirmities would be to seek appropriate health care promptly, if it is available. ■



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2 Open the app.



3 Scan the QR code.



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