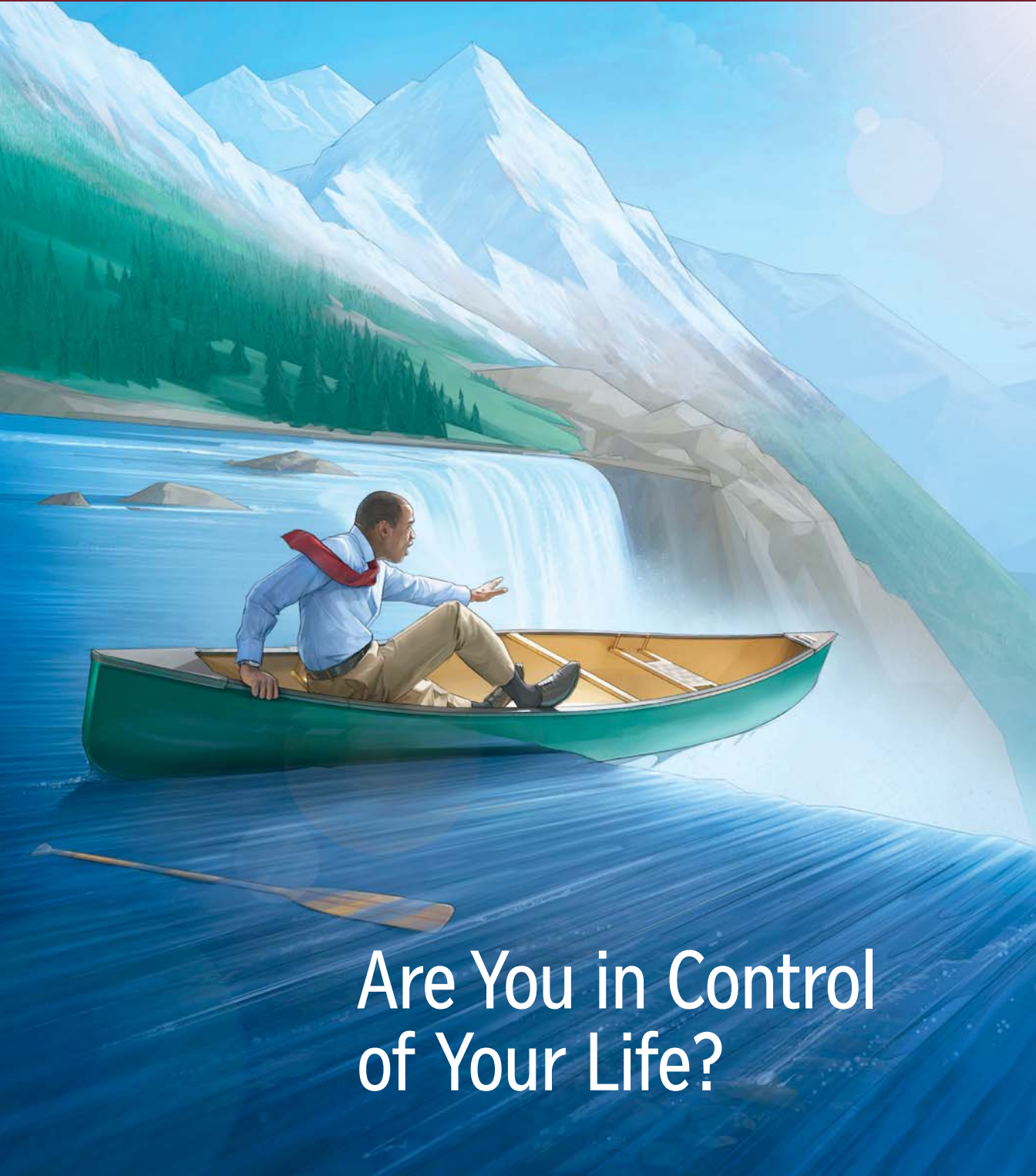


Awake!

JULY 2015



Are You in Control of Your Life?

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YOUNG PEOPLE ASK

How Can I Stop Being So Sad?

This article provides three suggestions that will help you battle negativity.

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)

VIDEOS



BECOME JEHOVAH'S FRIEND

Stealing Is Bad

In this video for children, Caleb wants something that does not belong to him. What helps Caleb make the right decision?

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > CHILDREN)

Vol. 96, No. 7 / Monthly / ENGLISH

Printing Each Issue: 51,788,000 in 103 Languages

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

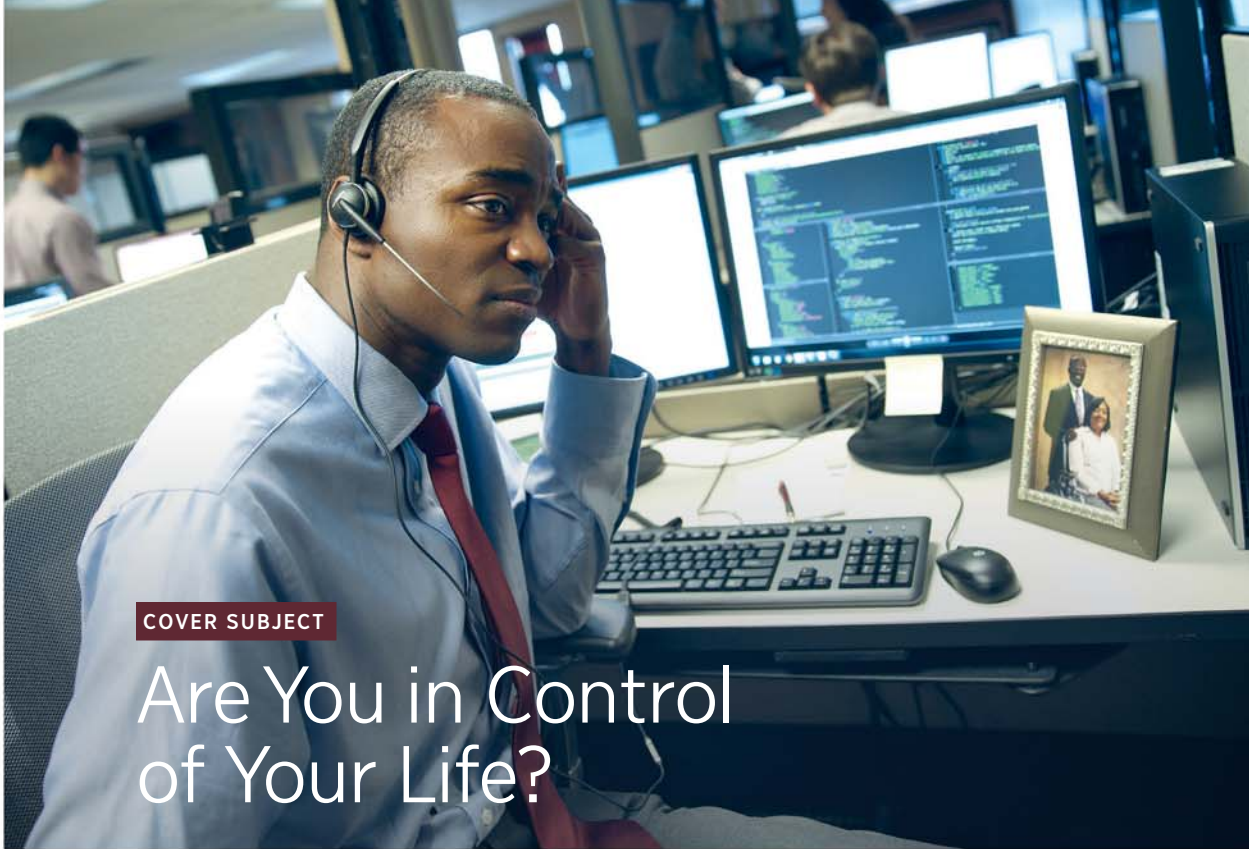
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Awake!* 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299.

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COVER SUBJECT

Are You in Control of Your Life?

WHEN you were younger, what were your life goals? Perhaps you wanted to marry, perfect a certain skill, or pursue an exciting career. But life does not always turn out the way we plan. Unexpected challenges can throw life completely off course. That is what happened to Anja, Delina, and Gregory.



Anja, in Germany, was diagnosed with cancer at age 21, and she is now almost completely housebound.



Delina, in the United States, suffers from a neuromuscular disorder called dystonia. In addition, she cares for three disabled siblings.



Gregory, in Canada, copes with a crippling anxiety disorder.

Despite their circumstances, Anja, Delina, and Gregory have been able to take control of their lives. How?

A Bible proverb states: “If you become discouraged in times of trouble, your strength will be meager.” (Proverbs 24:10, footnote) The implication is clear: *Attitude makes a difference*. People who succumb to negativity relinquish the little control they still have, while those with a positive mind-set often summon the strength to put themselves back in the driver’s seat.

Consider how that proved true for Anja, Delina, and Gregory.

THE CHALLENGE:

Unchangeable Circumstances

HAS your life been taken over by a chronic illness? a divorce? the loss of a loved one? When confronted with unchangeable circumstances, you may feel unable to do anything but wish your situation would change. How can you regain control of your life?

BIBLE EXAMPLE: PAUL

The apostle Paul traveled extensively as a zealous first-century missionary. But his travels came to a halt when he was unjustly arrested and then confined to a house under soldier guard for two years. Rather than succumb to despair, Paul focused on what he *could* do. He gave spiritual help and comfort to all who came to visit him. He even wrote several of the letters that are now part of the Bible.—Acts 28:30, 31.

WHAT ANJA DOES

As mentioned in the preceding article, Anja is housebound. “Cancer has influenced every aspect of my life,” she says. “I can’t afford to risk infection right now, so my secular work and social life are all but nonexistent.” How does Anja cope with her unchangeable circumstances? “Creating a new routine was the key for me,” she says. “I prioritized what was most important to me and made a schedule with my limited abilities in mind. This has given me a sense of control.”

WHAT YOU CAN DO

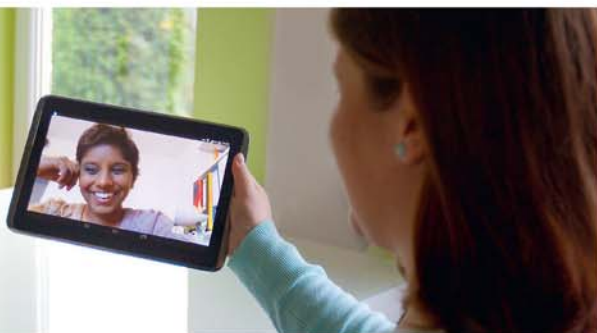
If unchangeable circumstances seem to be controlling your life, try the following:

- Focus on what you *can* control. For example, you may not have full control over your health, but can you exercise, eat healthful food, and get sufficient rest?
- Clarify what you would like to accomplish in life. Break it down into small steps. Try to spend at least a little time each day working toward your goals.
- Do tasks, even small ones, that give you a sense of control. Clean the kitchen table, and wash the dishes. Dress neatly. Do the most important tasks first thing in the morning.
- Look at the possible benefits of your circumstances. For example, does your situation give you greater insight into ways of coping with difficulties? Can you use this insight to help others?

Bottom Line: You may not be able to control your circumstances, but you may be able to control your response to them.

“I have learned to be content regardless of my circumstances.”

—Paul’s words at
Philippians 4:11, footnote



THE CHALLENGE:

Overwhelming Demands

THE children need your attention—now. So does your employer. Your spouse is calling. All this while you are trying to care for your ailing parent. This is not the life you planned, but it consumes you every day. “What can I do?” you ask. “People need me!” Responding to their every demand may not be in your best interests—or theirs. How can you regain control?

BIBLE EXAMPLE: MOSES

By acting as sole judge of Israel in Bible times, Moses may have felt he was simply doing what was needed. But his father-in-law told him: “What you are doing is not good. You will surely wear out.” He suggested that Moses delegate much of the judging to capable men who would, in turn, bring only the hardest cases to Moses. The result? Moses’ father-in-law assured him: “You will be able to stand the strain, and everyone will go home satisfied.”—Exodus 18:17-23.

WHAT DELINA DOES

As mentioned in the opening article, Delina suffers with dystonia, a neuromuscular disorder. She also cares for her three disabled siblings. “I’ve found that taking one day at a time and avoiding procrastination reduces stress,” she says. “Being open about my situation has resulted in my receiving assistance from others, including my husband. Also, I take a little time each morning for gardening—something that brings me a lot of satisfaction.”

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If overwhelming demands control your life, try the following:

- See if you can enlist the aid of others. For example, do you have children living at home who can help? Are there family members or friends living nearby who could give you assistance?
- Make your needs known. For example, talk to your employer if his demands are unreasonable. That does not mean you have to give him an ultimatum. Simply make him aware of what you are up against. He may be willing to adjust your load.
- Keep track of the number of demands you face in a week. Can any of them be delegated to others?
- Be selective about accepting social invitations. If you cannot attend because of a lack of time or energy, kindly say no.

Bottom Line: If you try to do *everything*, you may render yourself unable to do *anything*.

“There is an appointed time for everything.”

—Ecclesiastes 3:1

THE CHALLENGE:

Negative Feelings

DO STRONG feelings—perhaps sadness, anger, or resentment—consume you? If so, you may have little time or energy to pursue what is truly important to you. What can you do about it?*

BIBLE EXAMPLE: DAVID

King David was subject to a wide range of emotions—including anxiety and sorrow. What helped him to keep functioning? David left matters in God’s hands. (1 Samuel 24:12, 15) He also wrote his feelings down. And as a man of faith, he prayed frequently.†

WHAT GREGORY DOES

As mentioned in the opening article, Gregory suffers from an anxiety disorder. “My excessive worrying was out of proportion and out of control,” he says. How did Gregory regain control? “To get perspective,” he says, “I accepted the kind help of my wife and friends. I also sought professional assistance and learned more about my condition. After making some lifestyle changes, I began to feel that I was in control of my condition, not that it was in control of me. Although I still experience bouts of anxiety, I now have a better sense of what triggers them, and I know how to manage my disorder.”

* Some negative emotions can be the result of a health problem that may need professional treatment. *Awake!* does not endorse any particular approach. Each individual should carefully evaluate his or her options before making a personal decision.

† Many psalms in the Bible are prayers of David, which he put into writing.


WHAT YOU CAN DO

If negative feelings control your life, try the following:

- Write down your feelings in a journal.
- Express your feelings to a close relative or friend.
- Challenge your feelings. For example, ask yourself, ‘Is there really evidence to support such a negative view of myself?’
- Do not hold on to anxiety, anger, or resentment. Redirect your energies to something more productive.*

Bottom Line: Often, negative feelings are not the result of our circumstances but of how we view them.

* For more information, see the cover series “How to Deal With Anxiety,” in the July 1, 2015, issue of *The Watchtower*.

A photograph of a man wearing a brown hat and a dark jacket, looking upwards towards a waterfall. The waterfall is cascading over rocks in a lush, green forest. The man is standing on a wooden walkway or bridge. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

“A joyful heart is good medicine.”

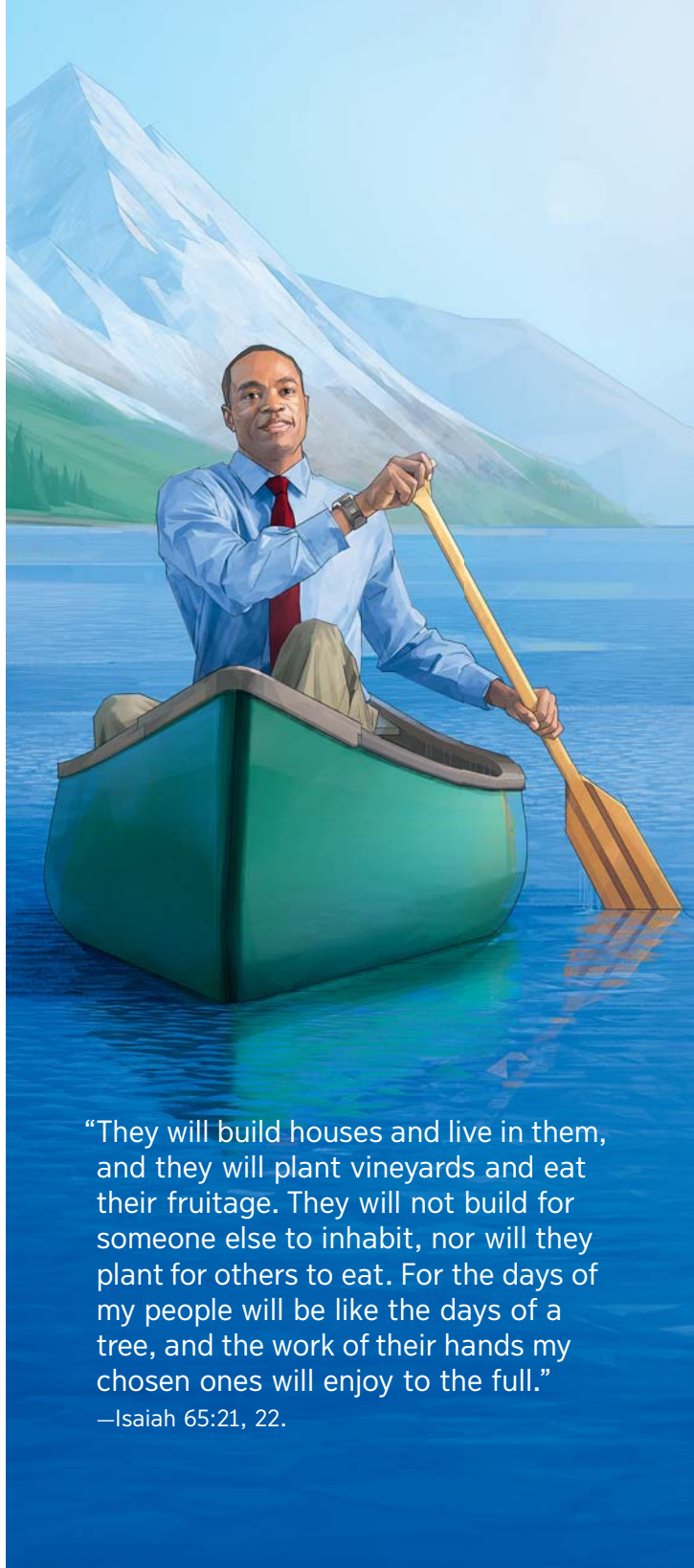
—Proverbs 17:22

Can You Control Your Life?

THERE is a saying, Life is not a matter of holding good cards but of playing a poor hand well. Today, no one has been dealt a perfect set of circumstances. Often the secret to gaining control is learning both to accept those circumstances and to work within the limitations that they impose. If you can reclaim some control of your life despite unfortunate circumstances, that is good. If your circumstances eventually improve, that is better. But the best is yet to come.

The Bible promises a time when all people will be able to have a satisfying measure of control over their life. They will be able to live to their full potential, uninhibited by frustrating circumstances, daily pressures, and negative feelings. (Isaiah 65:21, 22) The Bible refers to this as “the real life.”—1 Timothy 6:19.

Can you be part of that future? Can you be confident that it will come? For more information, visit our website at www.jw.org. ■



“They will build houses and live in them, and they will plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build for someone else to inhabit, nor will they plant for others to eat. For the days of my people will be like the days of a tree, and the work of their hands my chosen ones will enjoy to the full.”

—Isaiah 65:21, 22.



A Visit to Mongolia



GENGHIS KHAN, a fearless warrior of the 12th century, laid the foundation of what would become the great Mongol Empire. A mere fraction of the original size of that empire, Mongolia today is landlocked between Russia and China and is one of the most sparsely populated countries in the world.

The landscape of Mongolia consists of rivers, streams, towering mountains, rolling grasslands, and vast stretches of grassy steppes. In the south lies the Gobi Desert, renowned for its well-preserved dinosaur remains. Perched at an average elevation of 5,200 feet (1,580 m) above sea level, Mongolia is referred to by the locals as the “Land of Blue Sky.” The name is well-deserved, as Mongolia has more than 250 sunny days a year!

Mongols live in a climate of extremes. In summer, temperatures can soar to 104 degrees Fahrenheit (40°C), while in the winter they can plummet to minus



Snow leopard

The two-humped Bactrian camel can be seen carrying loads even in frigid temperatures



Cakes of curdled milk, or *aaruul*, are dried in the sun



Mongols live in portable tentlike dwellings called *gers*

40 degrees Fahrenheit (-40°C). Nearly one third of those living in Mongolia are nomads. The day begins early in the morning for the men and women as they milk their goats, cows, camels, and mares. The Mongolian diet usually consists of dairy products and meat, mutton being a favorite.

Mongols are a hospitable people. They keep their round *gers*, or portable tentlike dwellings, unlocked so that any passerby can rest and eat the treats left there for them. Warm milky tea with a little salt is often served to guests.

Buddhism retains a strong foothold in Mongolia today. There are traces of shamanism, Islam, and Christianity among the population, while many are nonreligious. In Mongolia, there are more than 350 of Jehovah's Witnesses, who are currently teaching the Bible to well over 770 people. ■

FAST FACTS

Population: 2,713,000

Capital: Ulaanbaatar

Language: Mongolian, Russian, and Turkic

Main exports: Copper, coal, gold, and cashmere

Leopard: Image © Volt Collection/Shutterstock; camel: Robert Harding/Tuul; curdled milk: © imageBROKER/Alamy



When a Courtship Ends



THE CHALLENGE

“I thought I had found the right person for me. ‘I could spend forever with this guy,’ I told myself. But after two months of dating, I had to break up with him. I couldn’t believe that what started so great could end so fast!”

—Anna.*

“It seemed as if we couldn’t be more alike. In my mind, I already had us married. As time passed, however, I began to realize how different we were. When I saw what a huge mistake I was making, I broke up with him.”—Elaine.

Have you been through something similar? If so, this article can help you deal with the experience.

* Names in this article have been changed.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

A breakup can be painful, even for the person who initiated it. “I felt terrible!” says a young woman named Sarah, who broke up with her boyfriend after six months. “One minute this person was in my life and in my future; the next minute he was gone. Then I’d hear songs that were special to the two of us, and that would remind me of the good times we had. I’d be at places that were special to us, and I’d feel the pain of his absence. I felt all of this even though I was the one who initiated the breakup!”

A breakup, though painful, can be a good thing. “You don’t want to hurt the person,” says Elaine. “On the other hand, you realize that eventually it would hurt *both* of you if you were to pursue a courtship that just isn’t working.” Sarah would agree. “I think if you aren’t happy with someone when you’re dating him, you probably won’t be happy married to him, so breaking up is for the best,” she says.

A breakup does not make you a failure. Really, a successful courtship ends in a *decision*, not always in *marriage*. If either you or your partner has serious misgivings, the right decision may well be to break up. If that happens, the fact that the relationship has failed does not mean that *you* have failed. You *can* move on! How?



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Acknowledge the pain. “I lost more than just a friend; I lost my *best* friend,” confides Elaine, quoted at the outset. When you break up with someone who was that close, a period of grieving is normal. “A relationship has ended,” says a young man named Adam, “and there’s always some pain involved in that, even if you know it’s for the best.” You might feel similar to King David of the Bible. “All night long I soak my bed with tears,” he wrote during a period of anguish. (Psalm 6:6) Sometimes the best way out of pain is *through* it, not *around* it. Acknowledging the reality of your own feelings can be the first step in healing.—*Bible principle: Psalm 4:4.*

Associate with people who care about you. Admittedly, that may not be easy. “At first, I didn’t even want to see people,” admits Anna, quoted earlier. “I needed time to recover, to go over everything in my head and make sense of it all.” In time, though, Anna saw the wisdom of spending time with close friends who could build her up. “I have a better frame of mind now,” she says, “and the breakup isn’t as devastating to me as it was before.”—*Bible principle: Proverbs 17:17.*

Learn from what happened. Ask yourself: ‘Has this experience revealed any areas in which I need to grow? What, if anything, would I do differently in my next relationship?’ “After time passed, I could better analyze what happened,” says a young woman named Marcia. “However, I had to wait until I could look at things rationally rather than just emotionally.” Adam, mentioned earlier, feels similarly. He says: “It took a year for me to get over the breakup. It took even longer for me to turn the experience into something constructive. What I went through taught me a lot about myself, the opposite sex, and relationships. I feel *much* less pain now about the breakup.”

Pray about your anxiety. The Bible says that God “heals the brokenhearted; he binds up their wounds.” (Psalm 147:3) While he is not a celestial matchmaker—nor can he be blamed when a courtship ends—God has an interest in your well-being. Pour out your feelings to him in prayer.—*Bible principle: 1 Peter 5:7.* ■

KEY SCRIPTURES

“Be agitated . . . Have your say in your heart, upon your bed.”
—Psalm 4:4.

“A true friend . . . is born for times of distress.”
—Proverbs 17:17.

“Throw all your anxiety on [God], because he cares for you.”
—1 Peter 5:7.

“THE HEART DOES HEAL”

“When my boyfriend broke up with me, I felt guilty, confused, lonely, and even worthless. Being hurt at heart is one of the hardest things to deal with. But God didn’t create us with the ability to love simply to torture us with it. He also made us with the ability to heal. It takes time to fall in love with a person, and it takes time to recover when your relationship with that person ends. But it can be done. The heart does heal.”
—Marcia.

For more information, see chapter 31 of the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, Volume 1. The book is available for free download at www.jw.org. Look under PUBLICATIONS > BOOKS & BROCHURES.



WORK

Although the Bible is an ancient book, its principles are timeless. What it has to say about work is as relevant today as it was when the Bible was written.

What is the proper view of work?

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY To survive in a competitive job market, you have to put your work ahead of everything else. That attitude has caused some to become so consumed with their job that they neglect their family and their health.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS The Bible promotes a balanced view of work. It praises industriousness and condemns laziness. (Proverbs 6:6-11; 13:4) At the same time, the Bible does not endorse workaholicism. Rather, it encourages us to enjoy reasonable

periods of relaxation. Ecclesiastes 4:6 says: “Better is a handful of rest than two handfuls of hard work and chasing after the wind.” So we should not become so wrapped up in our work that we neglect our family or our health. There is no merit in working ourselves to death!

“There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and find enjoyment in his hard work.”—Ecclesiastes 2:24.



*“My dad is very busy. Besides his secular job, he has responsibilities in the congregation we attend as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Yet, my dad has a good work ethic. He gets done what he needs to do, and he still has time left over for me, my sister, and my mom. My dad always has things to do, but he keeps it all in balance.”
—Alannah.*



Does it matter what kind of work you do?

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY If the pay is good, the work is good. That thinking, combined with the lure of easy money, has led some people to engage in dishonest business practices and even to take on employment that is illegal.

Others, fed with the ‘follow your dream’ and ‘do what you love’ philosophies, will accept only work that is constantly stimulating. If their job is not their “calling” in life or if it gives them anything less than an adrenaline rush, they consider it boring. As a result, they have a negative view of their work and exert only enough initiative to get by. They may even turn down good job opportunities because they feel that the work involved is beneath their dignity.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS The Bible does not approve of work that is dishonest or that contributes to harming people in any way. (Leviticus 19:11, 13; Romans 13:10) Good work benefits others and helps the worker “maintain a good conscience.” —1 Peter 3:16.

The Bible also teaches that work serves a noble purpose—not primarily to give self-fulfillment but to make a living and support one’s family. While it is certainly not wrong to enjoy our secular work, it should be a means to an end—not an end in itself.

True, inflation and rising prices can make us anxious about how we will make ends meet, but the Bible emphasizes moderation. It states: “Having food and

clothing, we will be content with these things.” (1 Timothy 6:8) Those words do not require that we become ascetics. But we should be realistic about what we can afford and reasonable about the number of possessions we acquire.—Luke 12:15.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU Be industrious at your work. Take a real interest in it. Even if what you do seems menial or is not the type of work you feel you were born for, endeavor to become skillful at it. Industrious work leads to a sense of accomplishment, and developing your skill might actually *increase* your job satisfaction.

At the same time, be balanced. Enjoy occasional rest and relaxation. These periods are even more enjoyable after we have worked diligently. Also, by earning our necessities, we build a sense of self-worth and win the respect of others—including our family.—2 Thessalonians 3:12. ■

“Never be anxious and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or, ‘What are we to drink?’ or, ‘What are we to wear?’ . . . Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.”—Matthew 6:31, 32.



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MALARIA

The World Health Organization estimates that in 2013, more than 198 million people were infected with malaria and an estimated 584,000 died as a result of it. Nearly 4 out of 5 casualties were children under five years of age. The disease presents a threat in about a hundred countries and territories throughout the world, putting some 3.2 billion people at risk.

1 WHAT IS MALARIA?

Malaria is a parasitic disease. Its symptoms include fever, chills, sweats, headache, body aches, nausea, and vomiting. The symptoms may sometimes recur every 48 to 72 hours, depending on the type of parasite involved and how long the person has had the disease.

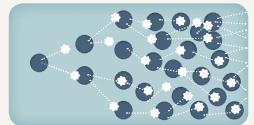
2 HOW DOES MALARIA SPREAD?

1. Malaria parasites—protozoans called *Plasmodia*—are introduced into the human bloodstream through the bite of a female *Anopheles* mosquito.

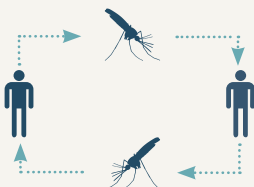
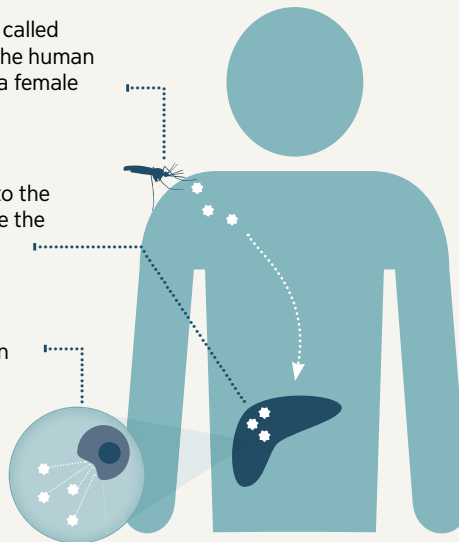
2. The parasites find their way into the infected person's liver cells, where the parasites multiply.

3. When a liver cell ruptures, it releases the parasites, which then invade the infected person's red blood cells. There, the parasites continue to multiply.

4. When a red blood cell ruptures, it releases the parasites, which invade still more red blood cells.



5. The cycle of red blood cell invasion and rupture continues. The infected person typically manifests symptoms of malaria each time the red blood cells rupture.



A human can get the malaria parasite from an infected mosquito. Conversely, a noninfected mosquito can get the malaria parasite from biting an infected human. Then the infected mosquito can pass the parasite to another human

3 HOW CAN YOU PROTECT YOURSELF?

If you live in a land where malaria is endemic . . .

- ▶ Use a bed net or a mosquito net. It should be
 - a. treated with insecticide.
 - b. free of any holes or tears.
 - c. tucked completely under the mattress.
- ▶ Use indoor residual spraying in your home.
- ▶ If possible, install screens on doors and windows, and use air-conditioners and fans, which may discourage mosquitoes from settling.
- ▶ Wear light-colored clothing that fully covers your skin.
- ▶ Whenever possible, avoid areas of brush, where mosquitoes swarm, and standing water, where they breed.
- ▶ **If you are infected, get treatment promptly.**

If you are planning to visit a land where malaria is endemic . . .

- ▶ Get current information before you travel. The type of malaria parasite common in one region may differ from that in another, and this affects which type of medicine is most effective. Also, it would be wise to speak to your physician about things you need to be aware of with regard to your personal health history.
- ▶ During your visit, follow the guidelines that are presented in this article for those who live in a land where malaria is endemic.
- ▶ **If you become infected, get prompt treatment.** Be aware that symptoms may appear between one and four weeks after infection.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children and pregnant women are most at risk of serious illness if they contract malaria.

In Africa alone, one child dies every minute from malaria.

In rare cases, people have contracted malaria through a blood transfusion.



IN AFRICA ALONE,
ONE CHILD DIES EVERY
MINUTE FROM MALARIA

WHAT MORE YOU CAN DO

1. Make use of government or community health-care programs.
2. Obtain medication only from authorized sources. (Poor-quality or imitation medication can prolong the illness or increase the risk of death.)
3. Remove mosquito-breeding sites around the home.

If you live in a malaria area or you have been in one, do not ignore the following symptoms of malaria . . .



- ▶ High temperature (fever)
- ▶ Sweats
- ▶ Shaking chills
- ▶ Headache
- ▶ Muscle aches
- ▶ Fatigue
- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Vomiting
- ▶ Diarrhea

Untreated malaria can cause severe anemia and can quickly become life threatening. Seek medical treatment immediately, before symptoms get worse, especially in children and pregnant mothers.* ■

* For more information, see *Awake!* issues of November 2011, pages 24-25, and November 2009, pages 26-29.



The Crocodile's Jaw



© Anup Shah/Animals Animals/age fotostock

THE crocodile has the most powerful bite ever measured for animals that are now living. For example, the saltwater crocodile, found near Australia, can bite nearly three times as hard as a lion or a tiger. Yet, the crocodile's jaw is also incredibly sensitive to touch—even more sensitive than the human fingertip. How can that be, considering the crocodile's armored skin?

The crocodile's jaw is covered with thousands of sense organs. After studying them, researcher Duncan Leitch noted: "Each of the nerve endings comes out of

a hole in the skull." This arrangement protects the nerve fibers in the jaw while providing sensitivity that in some spots is greater than instruments could measure. As a result, the crocodile can distinguish between food and debris in its mouth. That is also how a mother crocodile can carry her hatchlings in her mouth without accidentally crushing them. The crocodile's jaw is a surprising combination of power and sensitivity.

What do you think? Did the crocodile's jaw come about by evolution? Or was it designed? ■

