

April 8, 1986 Helen
Optimism-A Way of Life

There are many people who are optimistic. They show a hope. They show a certain courage. I know a certain person, her name is, Anna. She has not uttered a word that did not have hope. She has recently broken her knee cap. I went to visit her in the hospital. She greeted me and my friend with a bright warm smile. I signed her cast, wished her well and left. Not once did she complain about the pain, or the cast, she just kept smiling and saying, "It will heal, I am going to get better".

I could never honestly say that I am a true optimist. I don't think anyone could honestly say that. All optimists have had bad experiences. Being an optimist does not mean that life is perfect but that we should keep OPTIMISM as our goal.

Many people have said very good things about optimism. One of the best quotes is from Norman Cousins. He says, "Optimism supplies the basic energy of civilization. Optimism does not wait on facts. It deals with prospects. Pessimism is a waste of time." When you think about it optimism is an energy. Optimists are energetic people pessimists are usually mentally paralyzed. They have their "mind-set" on pessimistic ideas.

Too many people look at teen-age problems and think about them like all teens are the same. Tome that's looking at problems such as drugs, alcohol and suicide like they don't really matter. Or don't exist.

Usually, teens get mixed up with drugs and alcohol for many different reasons. If they are lucky they learn how negative these things are just by observing others. Or they may realize the dangers of these things after trying them once. Other teens NOT so lucky are under peer pressure. They are getting bad grades in school, they are not popular or they are just not happy in general. Drugs and alcohol are then the only way to *be* "cool". Five thousand (5,000) teens die each year by committing suicide. Most of the time they are in so much trouble, taking their own life is the only way out. But how do they get into so much trouble? By wanting to be "cool". That's where peer pressure comes in. Who teens think of as their "friends" are not mature enough to talk them out of it. It's not always the teen's fault though. Sometimes their parents drink or take drugs and teens think then that it's O.K. They look up to their parents and that's their image of "what's O.K." or "how to act grown-up." Does drinking or taking drugs really make you look or act more grown up? NO! It's not a sin to want to be popular, be cool, or have good grades. But when those things don't work out and you turn to liquor or cocaine because of it you are ruining your life instead of making it better.

So, what kind of hope do teenagers have?

¹ They have their faith in God. If He holds the future we shouldn't have to worry!

Teens should look at all the good and hopeful opportunities. When I feel down or a friend feels low I tell them look at all the good opportunities!

A good school, a loving family, good friends and we are healthy. But that's just feeling down. We are not thinking about committing suicide. But when teens are thinking that then they should consider that (1) there are so

many challenges in life and by taking your own life or ruining your life by drugs or alcohol you are missing out on those challenges. There are also discoveries. Places to see and a hopeful future.

In conclusion I would like to summarize optimism. Optimism is a hope, a courage, an energy. The results we get from optimism are good opportunities, a hopeful outlook and new discoveries. Can you imagine what life would be like with out optimism? It probably wouldn't be too great. We need optimism to keep us going. We need optimism to help the world around us keep going also. It is not easy being optimistic with all the problems our world has but we can all still at least try to look at the bright side.