

# THE IOWA HOMEMAKER

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## If Mother Always Does It . . .

By Lydia V. Swanson

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### She's Wrong, Say Experts

IN THE present crisis we see adults who are unable to face difficult situations. There are others, who, amid bank failures, no market for produce with the stock market on the downward slide, have been able to adjust their mode of living and working until life goes on for them quite smoothly and happily. To withstand disappointments of various kinds and not become disgruntled is indeed an ability to be cherished. Can we help children to learn to face everyday difficulties?

From the time the infant learns that when he cries he will not be picked up, he is facing difficulties. As he grows older he cannot take his place among his playmates unless he can face difficulties fairly and squarely. One four-year-old at the nursery school cries and whines when others bump into her. Her playmate showed his disgust when one occasion he turned to Sally and said, "If you just didn't cry about everything."

One child at the nursery school hides behind, "I can't," and "Ma-ma always does it," when the suggestion is made that he put on his wraps for play out of doors. His attitude was portrayed in the washroom also. The teacher turned the faucet on and showed him how to turn it off. He refused to meet the difficulty when the washbowl became full of water, by crying, "I can't, you do it." When the teacher

again showed him how to turn the faucet off, Jack finished his "I can't" with "I'll just let the water run on the floor."

Some children avoid difficulties by sweetly and helplessly begging for help, or they just good-naturedly assume that someone will protect them, since someone always has in the past.

Other children are so graciously appreciative that people are glad to do hard things for them. Or we do the unpleasant things because "Jack is so sensitive and I don't mind doing things for him." There are adults like this who get along comfortably and even quite happily, but they contribute little to the richness of their own living or that of people around them. How can we help the young child to learn to face difficulties so that he is able to adjust himself to life as he meets it?

There are many instances in the daily

life of the young child which prove to be trying and difficult. Take, for instance, the matter of parents leaving the child at the nursery school or elsewhere. We are unfair and do not add to the child's ability to care for himself when we wait until the child is happily engrossed in some activity, then sneak off without an explanation or farewell. The parent who tells the child something like this, "I am going now, I'll be back after you've had your nap," is helping the child to face the situation squarely. Tears do ensue and parents dislike the scene, yet this child has faced the problem; and the parent has been on the square. In the nursery school the child quickly adjusts to such leave-takings, and comes to accept it as a part of life.

To accept a situation exactly as it is with the difficulty neither minimized nor exaggerated is a useful thing for the child to learn. So when the child goes to the doctor for vaccination or inoculation, tell him that it will hurt, perhaps a great deal, but that you know he is brave and can stand to let the doctor do it. In some cases it is necessary to secure the cooperation of the doctor. Some doctors divert the child's attention with bright toys or stories and then surprise them as they insert the hypodermic needle. One wise doctor helped a three-year-old to face this situation by painting a man on the



Never Too Small to Tackle a Job

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## Those Buy Buy Blues

By Margaret McDonough

**H**AVE you ever bought a hat and afterwards bitterly regretted the momentary weakness which doomed you to wear the thing for the entire winter? Then perhaps thereafter you will take a little time to plan your shopping rather than do it on the spur of the moment, in a haphazard fashion.

It is a good idea to keep a shopping list in some handy place so that you can jot down things needed, from time to time. You can always eliminate items if there is not enough money to go around, but it is not so easy to remember everything on short notice.

Window shopping is a delightful pastime and may help to recall things you intended to buy, but it also has an irritating way of creating a desire for the unattainable. Watching the advertisements is another good way to check up. It also informs you when there are bargain days at the stores.

If you have a budget it is a good thing to budget the money for your shopping too. Set a definite limit for each article and don't exceed that amount. Then you will never have the sad experience of trying vainly to make purchases and cash on hand agree with purchases and cash before hand. It is easier not to buy things than it is to take them back or keep them and scrimp for the rest of the month.

**G**OOD judgment is a decided asset in shopping, and contrary to general belief, it is not a God-given gift, but can be developed. Learn to know materials, to look things over slowly and carefully so that there will be no chance of getting poor quality or defective workmanship. Watching friends do their shopping is often an excellent way to get pointers on how to shop.

Develop a sales-resistant front. It is easy to be persuaded by an attractive, pleasant salesman to buy something for which you have no earthly use. Oftentimes you recognize the old familiar line but somehow or other it has you hypnotized and you may go out of the store with an Empress Eugenie atop a wind-blown bob. Or you'll buy something else chiefly because of the grand promises made in an advertisement. Utterly ridiculous, you say. But it is one of the reasons why the market is flooded with gaudy, useless objects.

On the other hand it is not necessary to be rude to the salesperson in order to convince him that you do not want to buy what he has to offer. A little courtesy on the part of both customer and salesman will make shopping a joy.

Only long experience will give you knowledge of the quality of goods and size of stock the different stores have on hand.

## If Mother Does It

(Continued from Page 1)

child's arm with mercurochrome. Then when it was necessary to insert the needle the doctor said, "Now I'm ready to give that man a drink and when I do it will hurt. Can you stand it?" Jane said "Yes," and though tears rolled down her cheeks she watched the procedure with interest. This child ran into the doctor's office with a smile, for the three remaining inoculations.

**T**O HAVE a precious plaything fall to pieces is a problem for the child to face. Sarah had made a clay man. In attempting to paint it one leg came off. She was a little disappointed, then commented, "I could play he was lame and I could use his leg for a rolling pin." There were no tears or wails. Sarah had met the situation graciously.

Children are often willing, but do not know how to meet difficult situations. In

the matter of dressing themselves, we find children cooperative and interested if we but take time to show them how the button fits into the button hole, or that by holding the leggings ready to crawl into, they can be managed very well.

The teased child often resorts to crying or whining just because he doesn't know what to do. Let me illustrate by

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an instance at the Nursery School. Catherine and Henry were climbing in the apple tree. Catherine was standing on a branch near the trunk of the tree while Henry was standing farther out on the same branch. Henry discovered that he could rock up and down on the branch, so sat down and proceeded to enjoy himself. Catherine, on the same branch near the trunk of the tree, felt a little uneasy as the branch moved up and down, so started screaming, "Henry, quit that." Here was a difficult problem, and Henry, discovering that the rocking brought cries in addition to the rhythm, enjoyed the

game more than ever. One might have asked Henry not to rock the branch since it made Catherine uncomfortable, but one could also explain to Catherine quietly that if she didn't scream Henry wouldn't think it so much fun and soon cease rocking. Catherine cooperated. She closed her mouth with effort, and with a sparkle in her eye she watched to see what Henry would do. He looked back at her, rocked a time or two, then said, "Catherine, let's play with the wagon." Catherine had been helped to face this difficulty. She had refused to perform when teased.

Eating the right kind of food sometimes becomes a difficult situation for the young child. There are a number of ways of making eating more interesting. If we serve only attractive, well-cooked, properly balanced food in the right amounts, and take care of physiological habits such as rest, sleep, outdoor play and eliminations, food problems are reduced to a minimum. The adult does need to set a good example, expect the food to be eaten, and create a happy, calm atmosphere at meal time. In addition, certain children need actual assistance in learning to eat necessary foods. One little girl at the Nursery School, who has disliked creamed foods, now eats them, and while so doing keeps up her courage by saying, "I'm learning to eat this." The teacher on previous occasions had explained to her that she could learn to eat custard by eating it.

Certain food textures or consistencies seem to be more difficult than others to eat. Children often eat all of one food before attempting another, hence consistency may prove to be a difficulty. The child who finds eating spoonful after spoonful of creamed peas a difficult problem, may be helped to face it and solve it by showing him how to take alternating bits of other food such as toast.

Meeting small bumps and falls is another difficulty every child meets. Calm

and poise on the part of the adult makes the child feel that the matter is less serious. The introduction of a bit of humor, or a bit of verse such as "Baby Bumble" will help the child to take bumps gracefully. Sometimes the comment, "Up we jump—we don't mind bumps" helps the child to master injured dignity and feelings. Frances at Nursery School fell from the lower branch of the tree. She wasn't hurt, but she cried vigorously. The teacher calmly walked up to her and said, "Can't you keep Frances from falling? Help her hold on tightly." She giggled and, amid tears, crawled up in the tree again and called, "I'm holding tight." She was facing her problem squarely and was sensing responsibility for care of self. We often teach the child to avoid the issue in the case of bumps and falls by spanking the floor or the ground for hurting the baby.

A big difficulty encountered by the young child is that of assuming his place in the entertainment of guests in the home. Oftentimes we are chagrined because the four-year-old performs by doing stunts and otherwise making all concerned uncomfortable. Here is a difficulty which he doesn't know how to meet. One parent solved the problem by giving the child tasks to do such as opening the door when the bell rang, passing napkins and serving cookies. In the course of time when Paul had fulfilled several responsibilities, he sat down in his small chair with the comment, "Now I wonder what I can do to make you happy." He had a real problem on his hands and he was learning to meet it very adequately.

THE responsibility of abiding by decisions is often difficult for the young child. For instance, when the child has an allowance to spend as he pleases, if he decides to spend it for candy he should not be given a ball after the candy is eaten. The excuse that "he is so little, just this once we'll help him out," is probably not a way to help him to meet difficulties. If he made a poor decision he'll learn this by suffering the consequences. He shouldn't be allowed to evade consequences because they are distasteful.

Learning to face difficulties probably should not be put off, for children would benefit from forming the habit of facing difficulties. We as teachers and parents can be of assistance to children in the process of learning to face difficulties if we make use of the numberless opportunities. The child needs to gain satisfaction from these experiences if learning is to take place. The adult may contribute here by seeing that the child meets with success, approval and appreciation. And the calm, cheerful adult who meets his own difficulties graciously will do much for children with whom he comes in contact.

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