

Suffering anxiety? Talk yourself well

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Talking to yourself can be considered a sign something is seriously wrong. But a Minnesota psychiatrist says it's a good way to overcome anxiety.

Instead of prescribing tranquilizers, Dr. Richard O. Anderson of Minneapolis teaches patients who suffer anxiety attacks and phobias to talk common sense to themselves in their imaginations.

"If you can get the healthy part struggling against the unhealthy part, you can make progress," he said. "There's no pill in the world that will do the job as well as learning to talk to yourself."

The patients he teaches are those who have no medical reason for their anxieties and who do not fit the patterns of classic mental illnesses.

They have severe attacks of panic, perhaps accompanied by shaking hands, rapid heartbeat or perspiration, when confronted with certain normal situations like entering an elevator. Or, there may be no specific cause for their upset.

In an article for the Consultant medical magazine, he said his technique is a modification of transactional analysis, which postulated people's personalities have three components: parent, adult and child.

Anderson says he teaches patients to listen to the adult and child. The adult is the one with the common sense; the child is responsible for the neurotic and fearful feelings.

He then questions patients to pin down their ultimate fear. The pounding heart may make them fear a heart attack or death; they may fear the nervousness will grow so severe they will crack up.

If a patient fears the pounding heart and racing pulse of an anxiety attack will cause a heart attack or death, he asks them how many anxiety attacks they've had and if they've died yet, or had a heart attack. The answer, he says, is inevitably no.

He says the patients can learn to ask themselves the same questions or talk common sense to their "child" when the next anxiety attack occurs. This helps them realize phobias and anxieties are uncomfortable, but not life-threatening.

One patient told Anderson after he had learned to control his panic whenever he felt the old jitters coming on, he told himself, "Here comes that dumb kid again. I'm not going to let him run my life anymore."

Anderson says it takes discipline and drive to make this technique work, and some people look for an easy way out.

"When an anxious patient

starts shaking, the path of least resistance is to give in to that child, go to an emergency room or reach for some pills or alcohol," he says.

"If I give you some pills and you continue taking them for 40 years I'm going to be your worst enemy. You'll be hooked. You're going to be this inferior person who can't deal with elevators, for instance."

"I don't doubt the medicine works and I have some patients on it," he said in a telephone conversation. "But I tell my patients if that's all I do, I'm doing them a disservice."

Similarly, he says, science may well prove someday that the amount of anxiety a patient suffers is related to the patient's biochemistry. But that's no excuse for a patient to say, "This is the way I was born, I can't help it," and ask for a drug, he says.

Anxiety attacks can happen to anybody, he says, at any age, no matter how at ease they appear in life or how successful.

"We all have that potential child in us," he says. "Your neighbor who staggers through life and never has anxiety is about 20 percent of the population."

"But it's called luck."



staff photo by Eric Evan Lee

A natural way to go

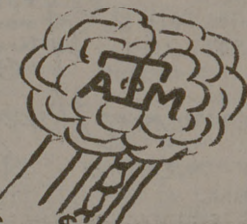
Click East, an English sophomore from College Station sells his all-natural knapsacks Tuesday in the Memorial Student Center. East is being

sponsored by the Whole Foods Club. East's customer is Rawat Chantong, an animal science graduate student from Thailand.

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TV dinners have image upgraded

United Press International
In their 30th anniversary year, TV Dinners have changed a lot. So have occasions for eating them.

An informal study indicates both tray packs and boil-in-bag items are catching on as hot lunches for working people.

Early advertising for the first Swanson TV Dinners 30 years ago implied they were suitable for eating while watching television, an evening pastime then sweeping the country.

They became products everyone joked about.

"We're trying to dump that image," said Steve McNeil, general manager for Swanson Frozen Foods, in an interview at a recent press lunch introducing the company's new Le Menu frozen dinners.

McNeil said the changes are in response to consumer research, which showed people "didn't like soggy French fries (or) peas and carrots. They liked corn, crisp vegetables, better seasoning, moist, tender meat and poultry. Light, subtly seasoned sauces and no heavy gravies."

"I really think it's a trend toward restaurant-style eating at home," said Tony Adams, Swanson's market research director.

"It's an upsurge of very, very quality-oriented products," said Al Rosenfeld, publisher of the trade magazine, Frozen Food Age.

To a Dallas-based freelance writer, it's a mixed blessing. David Seeley ate frozen prepared dinners for two weeks in preparing an article for the July issue of Texas Monthly.

He praised the vegetables in

one meal but downgraded it for low meat content, runny sauce and chewy pasta.

He said the plain white rice in another "had an awful cardboard aftertaste, as if it had been wrapped in newsprint and left out some place overnight," the enchiladas in a Tex-Mex dinner were "greasy invitations to a night of agony."

He liked a chicken dinner from Stouffer's Lean Cuisine line of single-serving frozen entrees that are, in fact, one-dish meals of 300 or fewer calories.

Trade sources and competing companies said Stouffer's, of Solon, Ohio, sets standards for the industry.

Early TV Dinners featured such entrees as pot roast, fried chicken or roast turkey with stuffing.

They were packed in divided aluminum trays. Now, micro-

wavable containers such as paperboard trays and reusable, heavy gauge plastic plates and trays are gaining ground.

Familiar entrees are still popular, but so are fancy, sauced foods and international and American regional specialties.

Weight Watchers' lasagna outsells its southern fried chicken, the No. 2 item, by better than two to one.

Teriyaki steak and Swedish meatballs are among the 15 varieties in the Armour Dinner Classics line.

Between 1972 and 1982 frozen dinner sales rose from \$419 million to \$543; frozen entrees, from \$376 million to \$1.46 billion.

"We're selling about two and a half times as many units (of the new Le Menu dinners) as we originally expected," said Catherine Chang, an assistant marketing manager for Swanson.

A telephone survey Miss Coccari's company made last fall of 100 Cleveland-area firms found most have refrigerators and/or microwave ovens so employees can heat frozen prepared food for lunch.

Miss Coccari and Stan Darger, general manager of marketing for Weight Watchers' frozen foods, attribute the huge success of the calorie-reduced meals in part to increased health consciousness.

When Gilbert C. and Clarke Swanson introduced their first commercial frozen prepared dinners in 1953, consumers were looking mainly for convenience and affordability.

Some still sell for about the price value industry-wide, but today "recurrent inflation and recession are making people value conscious instead of price conscious," publisher Rosenfeld said.

Westmount Enterprises, a new subsidiary of Swanson Corp., is test marketing the most expensive. Also, Feast for One products, complete dinners, sell for \$7.50.

Marketing director Rink said the portions are standard size, some as much as 22 ounces, compared with 12 ounces for most brands.

Asked to describe typical consumers, industry executives say they are relatively well-to-do, affluent, single or members of a two-person, two-income household.

They tend to be urban, highly educated and to eat out more often than other people.

They own modern appliances such as microwave ovens and food processors.

The group also includes many working (single) women and working wives and single parents.

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