

FATHER KNOWS BEST

ROSS BRUNDRETT HELPS YOU SOLVE SOME IMAGINED, YET TRICKY, FAMILY PROBLEMS

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Q I'VE made a fabulous life for myself in the world of fashion, in particular because of my stunning looks. Up until now, my biggest worry was that people took more notice of my body than my brain. But now I've had a very public wardrobe malfunction, you know, like Janet Jackson, and I'm worrying what it will do to my career.

Just Jen, of Sydney

A Well, I can almost sympathise, though I really have no idea what you are worried about. My idea of a wardrobe malfunction is when the door doesn't close properly or one of the shelves has gone askew. Anyhoo, the important thing to remember is that if people like your body as much as you say, then seeing a little bit more of it probably isn't going to hurt your career. Of course, if you really want people to notice your brain more you might want to try exposing a bit more of that in public from now on, you know, instead of a breast.

Q MY car has 13 airbags, that's right 13, including the new curtain ones, and I am a very safe driver and yet I got pulled up the other day by a policeman because I had my seven-year-old son in the front passenger seat. He told me that it was a safety hazard and that my son should have been seated in the rear. I admit I got angry and started reciting all the safety features of my vehicle, but he just waved his finger and told me I risked getting a ticket. Then I read in the paper about this English eight-year-old who is strapped to the top of a biplane to set a record as the world's youngest "wing walker". Where were the police and how come that's not a safety hazard?

Volvo driver

A Not sure if this is the sort of advice I'm here to dispense Mr V but, off the top of my head, it's hard for police to monitor the air as well as the roads. And the kid was pretty well strapped on.

Q FOR the past couple of years I have been aiming for one particular triumph and some people have suggested I have even become obsessed by it. But at the very last hurdle, my team succumbed to the English for a combination of reasons. My boys didn't perform at their best, there were some bewildering decisions made out on the field and the pitch was an absolute, unmitigated disgrace ... sorry, where was I? Oh yeah. I must admit I've struggled to come to terms with the loss of the Ashes. The trouble is I am used to succeeding in life and now there is such a huge letdown. How do I get up again? Should I retire now? Is Tony Greig right when he says I should have demanded a spinner?

Ricky, a Roos fan

A The prouder the person, Ricky, the greater the fall. So it's only natural that someone responsible for losing to the old enemy, well, would feel terrible. Let's face facts, it's a complete disaster. Quitting, emigrating from Australia, possibly changing your name and identity, these are all options. Or, Ricky, you could just get some more steel and have another dash. As for that last question, no, Tony Greig is never right.



RICKY PONTING COMING TO TERMS WITH THE RECENT ASHES LOSS

PILLOW TALK

LYNDA CARLYLE ANSWERS YOUR SEX, LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS QUESTIONS

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Q I'm in a new relationship and every time my man and I go to have sex, he loses his erection. What am I doing wrong?

A Firstly, if a man loses his erection, it generally has nothing to do with you and everything to do with him. If you weren't attractive to him, he wouldn't be with you.

Men are under immense pressure to perform - from society, their peers and themselves. They have to make the right moves, become erect on command and maintain that for as long as necessary for their partner to be ecstatically fulfilled.

Everything is hinged on a penis. A poor performance impacts on his manhood and opens him up to ridicule if anyone hears about it. He doesn't know you that well and wants to impress. Sex with a new partner can produce intense feelings of anxiety.

For a start, be sensitive to his feelings. Tell him not to worry about it, and mean it. If he senses you feel disappointed,

insecure or totally jacked off, chances are that's not going to help.

Suggest a way he can pleasure you that's not dependent on his erection. Who says penetration has to be on the menu today?

If the problem is the distraction of putting on a condom, think about how you can make it less disruptive. Have it ready, close by or practice how to put it on with your mouth. Continue kissing and caressing so it doesn't become the entire focus.

Make it part of the erotic experience. Just because he's not hard doesn't mean he can't feel pleasure. Invest in a good lubricant (massage oil will do externally but shouldn't go inside the body). Dispense with the idea that men like manual stimulation the way you shake a cocktail shaker.

Get him to close his eyes and slow things down - I mean SUPER SLOW. Focus on the delicious sensation of getting to know every millimetre of him. You never know what might pop up.

PARENTING

Dads in danger

DIY dads are a great help around the house, but they need to take care. Tragedy is just a slip away

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SICK DADS

Common emergency department diagnoses 2008/2009

OPEN WOUND TO HAND
590 males
263 females

OPEN WOUND TO FACE
409 males
142 females

OPEN WOUND TO HEAD
307 males
112 females

* Males made up 57 per cent of same-day acute admissions

* Males made up 60 per cent of multi-day acute admissions

* Combining same-day and multi-day acute admissions: 38,000 males, 26,000 females

* Source: Alfred hospital

I CRINGE whenever my husband climbs his ladder on to the roof, fiddling with broken tiles and leaf-filled gutters.

No amount of warning will stop him, despite knowing two family friends have become quadriplegics after falling off ladders.

One of them had two children and, though he coped amazingly, their lives were changed forever.

DIY dads are great for saving money and getting things done, but experts warn many do not consider their safety or the consequences of serious injury.

With Father's Day tomorrow, it is a good time to take stock of what we have and what we could lose as families.

Alfred hospital emergency and trauma director Prof Peter Cameron says such risk-taking in men is probably genetic.

There are exceptions to every rule, but he says from birth boys are more prone to take risks and have accidents than girls.

"I think it's innate in males from the time of birth. From the time they can crawl, basically males take more risks," he says. "They'll be the ones who fall off the scooter and jump off the swing."

"In general, mums are sort of much more sensible and think about these things."

This is so true. My son, before he started school, had already had two operations for injuries caused by accidents that were much more serious than his older sisters ever had.

As a pre-schooler, Ben somehow managed to put a curtain hook all the way through his cheek, then close a stepladder on his thumb and cut it almost to the bone. Yuck.

Though awareness and safety procedures have cut the overall rate of industrial and household accidents, men are still over-represented in hospital trauma wards.

They are four to five times more likely to be assaulted than women and twice as likely to have a hernia.

Many are the fathers whose families are thrown into disarray during long hospital stays, or changed forever if the injury is serious or permanent.

Spinal and burns patients can spend

many months in hospital and many more in rehabilitation, forcing their partners to single-handedly look after the children and in some cases the husbands as well.

Cameron, who is helping promote the Alfred's annual Father's Day Appeal, says though dads love their children, many don't think or care about their own safety. He sees the results, when many are shockingly injured or even killed.

"There's a sort of a lack of appreciation of the risk," he says. "It's just that impulsiveness."

Workplace accidents are now rare because of strict safety procedures and equipment, which is great. But too many dads still take unnecessary risks at home.

These include not using goggles with power tools, playing with electricity, climbing dodgy ladders and putting petrol on fires.

"When they go home in the unregulated environment, they do all sorts of things," Cameron says.

"They get home, get up on the roof and run around and it's just crazy stuff. The older they get, the more dangerous they are."

A father of three adult children aged 17-23, Cameron admits he slips up sometimes.

"I probably shouldn't talk too loudly because I've probably done a few of these things myself," he says.

So what can we do? We all know blokes can be stubborn and even pig-headed, and getting the message through is not easy.

Cameron urges men to apply the same safety procedures at home as they do in the workplace.

If this happened, injuries would drop dramatically.

"It's not just you," he says. "It hurts the family."

* The Alfred hospital's Father's Day Appeal turns 10 this year. It raises money for lifesaving equipment and building projects. This year's appeal will contribute to a specialist gastro-enterology clinical service centre. Visit www.alfred.org.au

