



Kim Schimke graduated from Sonoma State University with a Psychology degree and with honors. She was Vice President of Psi Chi, the national honor society in psychology, interned in the Human Resources department at Kaiser, and was a peer guidance counselor at her high school. She has plans to obtain her Master's Degree. Send your questions for Kim to editor@petalumapost.com or Petaluma Post, P.O. Box 493, Petaluma CA 94953.

EVERYDAY ADVICE

Diet, Making Friends, and Solo Travel

by Kim Schimke

Care and Concern

My sister and I are both mothers who love our children very much. Though my sister tries to be a good mother, she is enabling her son who is medically obese with his eating habits. I am concerned for his health, but I don't know how to approach this issue.

-Debbie

This situation is addressing two very touchy subjects, weight and questioning parenting. As a sister and aunt, you have the right to be concerned and can approach the subject, however it needs to be done cautiously and wisely. First, do not talk to her about this issue with her son present. Do not use the word "enabler." That will elicit a defensive response. Though you are family, you still should be respectful of your sister as the mother. Discuss healthy menus with her. If you are going to bring this issue up, you need to be prepared to help out and assist her. You can also teach your nephew good habits when he is around you and take him for hikes and bike rides. With that said, you must remember that she is his mother and the parenting is ultimately her job. Tell her you love her and your nephew and you just want them to be healthy and around as long as possible.

Making Friends

I just started a Master's Program and I have met some great people. I would like to hang out with them outside of class but feel silly asking.

Will I seem desperate or will they think it's weird asking?

-Kenya

Carpe Diem! Why not ask them to hang out? By no means will they perceive you as weird or desperate. Also, if you are in a master's pro-

gram, I would hope everyone in it is mature enough to be friendly to their fellow classmates. I am sure they will find it cool that you asked them to do something away from the educational part. I too am in a master's program and have already made some great friends because we got to know each other outside of classes. Suggest something like going out for cocktails or a picnic on campus. Or you could do something you and they have never tried such as a cooking class or taking swing dance lessons. The work that comes with pursuing higher education requires some fun for balance and maintain-

ing sanity, and you and your classmates can provide that for each other.

One Woman Show

I have been saving for a trip by myself and I am ready to go, but I still have not decided where. Do you have some ideas of where I could go that is safe for a woman alone?

-Shauna

Traveling alone can be very peaceful and relaxing but scary at the same time. I think it would be fun to travel the United States to parts you have never been. You could see main sights but also small towns and scenery you other-

wise wouldn't. By staying in a country you are familiar with, you do not have the worries that come with overseas travel, such as not knowing the language or laws, unfamiliarity with culture, and confusion over transportation systems. So many people have traveled the world, yet the one undiscovered terrain is their own backyard. We have the idea that it is always available and convenient, so we can do it whenever we want -- but most of us never get around to it. America offers a lot of diverse cities, cuisine, scenery, shopping, sites, etc. What better way to appreciate it than be a native of the country?

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