Panic attacks need professional help

Sylvia Rimm

DEAR DR. SYRETA — My son, age 8, has been experiencing several months in the past few weeks. He said his and his brother and me in school. He is vomiting in the morning and is extremely frightened. He is very tired and gets panic attacks when his head feels at fault. Even though he was not the cause of the problem. He never denied himself for what was going on. He found out he was not in your classroom, for he thought he was not in the wrong place. He got his lecture and his brother heard him and had to go to his, even though they both him physically and emotionally. He is scared to be in school. He was in his class and with his teacher.

My husband and I are extremely concerned about his behavior. We would appreciate your input and guidance on this matter. — Concerned Parent

DEAR PARENTS OF OVERANXIOUS CHILD — Panic attacks may or may not be caused by a child psychologist or psychiatrist. However, you will also want to meet with your child's teacher. It is possible that there are some classroom situations that may be contributing to his behavior. He may be able to explain better than your son what may be bothering him. For example, a child may be allowed to, or a school assignment may seem difficult. Sometimes, children have trouble tolerating adult's or their own expectations. They may not understand what he or she is expected to do or what he may be fearful about. Sometimes, children are able to tolerate a certain amount of fear and are able to handle it, but they may have to work harder to cope with their fears if the same situation occurs again. If your son has trouble coping with his fears, you may need to help him manage his fear and stress and maintain a healthy balance between his anxiety and his daily routine.

DEAR HIGH SCHOOL MOTHER — It's very important to be aware of your child's anxiety and stress levels. Help your child learn how to cope with stress and anxiety. Encourage your child to talk about their feelings and to seek support from friends, family, or professionals. Help your child develop healthy coping strategies, such as problem-solving, relaxation techniques, and time management. Help your child to manage their time effectively and to prioritize their tasks. Help your child to set realistic goals and to celebrate their achievements. Help your child to focus on positive aspects of their lives and to avoid negative thoughts. Help your child to develop a positive self-image and to build self-esteem.

DEAR MOTHER OF A YOUNG CHILD — You have been through a lot and it's natural to feel overwhelmed. It's important to take care of yourself and to seek support from friends, family, or professionals. Encourage your child to talk about their feelings and to seek support from friends, family, or professionals. Help your child develop healthy coping strategies, such as problem-solving, relaxation techniques, and time management. Help your child to manage their time effectively and to prioritize their tasks. Help your child to set realistic goals and to celebrate their achievements. Help your child to focus on positive aspects of their lives and to avoid negative thoughts. Help your child to develop a positive self-image and to build self-esteem.

The Mount Zion First Baptist Church in East Baton Rouge Parish, for generations has been regarded by the African-American community as the "mother church." Founded in the year of 1810, East Baton Rouge Parish was home to the Rev. John Palmer, a black man, and the Rev. John Bracy, a white man. "Rev. Palmer made his home from hence to house to get members of the church," said Lillian Harrison, a deaconess at Mount Zion. Little is known of the early years of the church, but that the first church building was built in 1830. The church was burned down, and Palmer was the first minister.

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Reader must apologize to former roommate for reunion

DEAR CAROLYN — I have a reunion coming up this summer in New York. During college I shared a room with a great student from a distant family. She cheated on her boyfriend — which I, being stubbornly moral, decided wasn't right. I told her she should get married, and she broke up with him. She never spoke to me again. I know it was the right thing to do, but I'm always thinking about the possibility of a reconciliation. Maybe if I reach out, she'll reconsider.

TELL ME ABOUT IT

CAROLYN HAX

MOUTH closed. Because it wasn't your business, except as an issue between you and your friend directly.

Your pain, I'm sure, was real and your moral outrage justified, yet you delivered the self-righteous package to the wrong address. When you're ready to admit this error — without editorial comment — call your roomie. Don't wait for the reunion. Your mutual friends will be unspeakably grateful to you for faking this out before you ruin your party, for one thing. And if you show your views has improved a bit when it comes to spotting errors, TELL ME ABOUT IT — you're a single, professional, well-employed guy, not self-absorbed. I commute by subway, and I see interesting women. What do you think the average woman-on-the-street's reaction is to being addressed by a stranger, when waiting for the train, getting hurt, whatever? — Washington D.C.

DEAR WASHINGTON — I think women want to think it's refreshing to be addressed by strangers, unless until they feel totally unneved to be addressed by a stranger. Or worse, hit on by one. Guys on trains, you can handle. No friends, no co-workers, no sweet yellow Lab — none of the social references we use to screen nasty people and serial killers. (Yes, we feel both equally.)

But that doesn't rule out some CRM customer. Clean-cut and good-looking, buy you some lemonade, pick up the newspaper, think we all deserve for some sidewalk civility. When fate hands you an opening in a too-packed train, a too-long delay — you can whip out a quip with minimal risk of restraining orders (especially if it's actually funny). Just push it a little — and if you tank, change cars and give up.

Carolyn Hax is a syndicated advice columnist. Write to her at "Tell Me About It" c/o The Washington Post, Style Plus, 1150 12th St., NW, Washington, DC 20001, or e-mail her at telmix@washingtonpost.com

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Church

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Bacoats were added by the Rev. Gardner C. Taylor, who served for five years until he became pastor of the First Baptist Church in New York, N.Y., in 1948.

Rev. Taylor's uncle, John B. Taylor, was chairman of the board of deacons at Mount Zion. He had met a young Rev. Theodore Judson Jerison, pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Denver, Colo., at the National Baptist Convention in Louisville in the latter part of 1945. John B. Taylor asked his nephew about him.

"If you can get him, that would be a plus," Rev. Taylor told his uncle.

Jerison had been called to the First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia, having received the most votes for pastor of the Philadelphia church in a split decision with two other ministers. Jerison's father, himself a prominent pastor, told his son, "You go to Pennsylvania."

That split never would have healed," Harrison said.

In June of 1949, Rev. Jerison became the sixth pastor to serve at Mount Zion, where he has preached for 50 years.

When church deacon Hilton White was a student at Capital University, his assignment was to visit Mount Zion with a group of students and write a report on the church. Most of the preachers were self-taught, said White.

"We wanted to hear Rev. Jerison, to hear a lecture rather than a lot of yelling and shouting," Rev. Jerison trained as a minister. He was a graduate of Virginia Union University in Richmond, said White.

At Capital, Jerison's role was that of a guide, since most of his eyes had been used in White's travels. He attended church at Mount Zion and was almost inaccessible," Harrison said.

"It is said that if you were ill, you couldn't make it" said J.W. Vaughn, a deacon in the church and a member since 1946.

"During the rainy season, by the time you got to church, out of your car and up the steps, you'd be wet to the bone," said White.

The church owned a building nearby where extra chairs were stored. Vaughn often helped bring the chairs to the old church if they were needed. He recalls that he had purchased an usher suit from Stein's for $50, a pretty hefty amount in those days. After unloading chairs on a rainy day, Vaughn said, the sleeves of his suit "drew up" above his waist.

"I shall never forget how anxious the people were for a place of worship," Jenkins said. The congregation held several rallies, and members contributed money for a new church.

"In one of our church rallies, we raised $100,000 in one Sunday," said Jenkins. "It was something like $20,000 to $30,000 or $40,000 in a Sunday. We were raising the money, they put so much on the table that it frightened me!"

In 1950, the congregation purchased the present church property for $32,000 from Mr. and Mrs. George Washington Jones; it was all donated. After the congregation purchased the property, they built the church at a cost of $265,000. A house originally located on the Wallace property became the parsonage.

Jenkins recalls that Louisiana National Bank would lend the congregation $75,000 but not the full $100,000 needed to build the new church. Jenkins, J.D. Young and Southern University President Emile G. Clark called on President W. Leroy Ward Jr. and board member Percy Roberts at Fidelity National Bank.

"Percy Roberts said if they want $100,000, they can have it. I'll stand for any amount they need," Jenkins said.

"This was the first time a black church was able to borrow $100,000 in East Baton Rouge."

On the first Sunday in June 1954, the congregation walked out of the old church and into its new home. It was very exciting," said Vaughn.

The new church contained two large stained glass windows on the first floor. The window that cost $30,000 at its installation, is now valued at more than $150,000. Above the altar is the baptismal window purchased at a cost of $18,000 and now valued at $44,000.

In 1960, the church paid off its indebtedness four years in advance.

The Morning Advocate for Dec. 17, 1960, reported that a congregational reorganization with a mortgage burning ceremony was conducted by the pastor with assistance from Julius L. Kinner, chairman of the board of trustees, singer, chairman of the deaconess board, and Jessie Jones, chairman of the deacon board. Each trustee received a photo souvenir of the occasion.

That same year, the congregation bought another property in the block surrounding the church. In 1967, the church bought land on an addition containing a chapel, educational building and auditorium-gymnasium designed by the architectural firm of F.W. Rundle, Murrell and Woll and constructed by W.L. Eaton Construction Co. at a cost of $280,000.

The chapel with its faceted glass windows was dedicated in memory of Rev. Jerison's father, the late Rev. David Vivian Jerison Sr., past president of the National Baptist Convention USA.

Rev. Jerison recalls that the night the chapel was dedicated the city had a torrential rainstorm. Just a few people attended the dedication.

"I jotted down their names," he said. "I put their names on a plaque on the wall to show how important they are to us."

Behind the chapel is the Christian Hall of Fame with a collection of portraits of church leaders over the years.

The mortgage on the addition was paid in full in 1982. During Christmas week, the church burned the mortgage at a turkey dinner for the entire congregation.

Leading government officials and politicians have often visited Mount Zion and sought the advice and support of the pastor and his congregation. "Every politician trying to be elected comes here," Harrison said.

Rev. Jerison recalls a trip he made with the late Gov. Earl Long, who was using a speech in Ville Platte, "Gov. Long told the crowd, 'I must be a good man. I've got a colored preacher riding with me,'" said Rev. Jerison.

Members of the church are proud of the leadership role Rev. Jerison and Mount Zion played in the struggle for equal rights in this community. "Everyone emanated from here," said Jerison.

"When we had a boycott of buses two years before the Montgomery boycott," Harrison said. "The Martin Luther King Jr. and Rev. Jerison advocated for the students and the public."

"We came back to speak at the church in 1956," said Jerison. "You couldn't get into the church. People were standing outside. We had to put a loudspeaker outside."

While revives the days before integration when he worked on the church's Capitol High School Band. In citywide parades, the white paraders always paraded ahead of the black parades. The black bands had to march at the end of the parade. "By the time I got to North Boulevard, my shoes were ruined," White said.

"Rev. Jerison told the leaders that he wanted the black bands in the middle of the parade," said White. "He arranged it, he pulled us out of the parade and sent us home."

"I told them, 'The Negroes are not going to march,'" said White.

Rev. Jerison worked with community leaders including the late Mr. and Mrs. Shuler Sr., and late B.B. Taylor for a peaceful integration of public facilities. Four hundred local civic leaders signed a document urging the community to peacefully accept integration of the school system. The schools were desegregated without incident.

"Rev. Jerison kept down any violence," Vaughn said.

"Rev. Jerison put himself out in the community to help people. He's a peacemaker. He had a good job. "Once they integrated, they readily accepted us," Perkins said. "It was wonderful the way they accepted it, once they started it," said Jerison.

Mount Zion became the first African American congregation in an informal alliance of churches historically called the "Downtown churches." Over the years, many of the leading members of the community have worshiped at Mount Zion. "We have always had a high proportion of black members," Vaughn said.

Members included J.S. Clark, the founding president of Southern University in Baton Rouge; J.S. Clark's son, Fenton G. Clark, who succeeded his father as president; and Harrison Lawless, dean of the Junior Division at Southern and superintendent of Mount Zion's Sunday School for 32 years.

"You walked into church. You had to give everyone respect," Vaughn said.

In 1982, Jerison was elected president of the National Baptist Convention USA, the position held by his father. An editorial in the Morning Advocate Jan. 20, 1983, praised Jerison on the week he assumed the presidency.

"The position is quite an important one — Jerison has already been named 'the most powerful black man' in the country. Baton Rouge can be proud that someone from here — of T.J.'s Jerison's caliber — has been elected," the editorial said. Jerison remained president until 1994.

Today the membership of Mount Zion approaches 2,000 with about 1,100 members carrying on through numerous programs in the church and community.

Members of the church give spiritual gifts and services in an active ministry. The church maintains a welfare ministry through its Leo S. Butler fund that is located in a separate building. The church serves as advocates for troubled young people. One room of the church is filled with clothing for the needy. The church also provides advice and counsel to people in need.

"This is a neighborhood church," said Vaughn. "We give money to the homeless and the hungry. The church calls itself 'the church where the neighborhood became a brotherhood.'"

Vaughn attributes this outreach to Jerison, "If Rev. Jerison is a hands-on minister, he took his passion to the community. He's been here all of the time. He's taught us all," said Vaughn.