The ABCs of being a transition person

By Laura Kavesh and Cheryl Lavin

he one role you don't ever want to have is that of the Transition Person.

Here's how it works: A is in love with B. B dumps A. A is devastated. A can't eat. A can't sleep. A thinks life is over. Then C comes along. C and A start to date. Life starts to look up for A. A regains some of the old self-confidence. A starts feeling pretty good. A realizes life has possibilities. Lots of possibilities. A meets D, E and F. A drops C. C is left out in the cold. C is the Transition Person.

Craig met Amanda in a bar. She was "perhaps the most beautiful woman I'd ever seen."

They went out once. They went out twice. On their second date, Amanda told Craig she was going through a divorce. They spent five hours discussing loss, pain and heartache. Mostly Amanda talked and Craig listened.

"I didn't preach or offer advice on how she 'should' feel or what she 'should' do," he says.

At the end of the evening, she gave him a hug. That date pretty much set the pattern for their relationship. They would have long, serious talks about loss and pain, Amanda would get weepy and then they'd hug.

And that was it.

One night as they were talking, Amanda asked Craig to hold her. She was a little embarrassed to ask, but Craig told her he had wanted to hold her for a long time, but he was trying to be sensitive. He didn't want her to think he was coming on to her.

But the truth was, he wanted to. As he learned her life's story, he became attracted to her "sensitive, emotional and somewhat vulnerable nature." He found her "incredibly intelligent, witty and bright."

And her looks rolled his socks.

"She had the unique ability to look like a cool, striking, raven-haired model one minute and then with a simple smile to become a warm, open girl-next-door. When we danced, I'd look off the dance floor and see every guy in the place watching her. I loved every single minute I was with her.'

The inevitable was happening. "I was falling in love with her." Amanda seemed to be falling, too.

They might have a date planned for Thursday night, and by Tuesday Amanda was on the phone saying, "Let's get together.

Then one night, after they had progressed from hugging to snuggling, Amanda suddenly said, "I don't want to hurt you.'

(Remember this: When anyone says, "I don't want to hurt you," bells should start ringing, lights should start flashing, hammers should start pounding you on the head. What the person really means is, "Are you in for it! You're going to taste blood before I'm through, with you!"

But Craig didn't think he could be hurt. He had lost his fiancé in a car accident several years before, and there was plenty of scar tissue protecting his heart. So they continued to get closer and closer and closer. And Amanda continued to get stronger and stronger

And then, like that, she pulled away. First, she got moody. Then she became distant. There were a few phone calls between them, but they weren't very pleasant. The last time they talked, Amanda told Craig that her divorce had become final. She also mentioned that she was seeing several other guys.

For a while, Craig felt "used and discarded." Then he realized he just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"If it hadn't been me, someone else would have helped her through her difficult time." And that guy's heart would have been broken.

As those wise old Greeks said several thousand years ago, we learn wisdom through suffering. That certainly applies to Craig. He has learned never to date a woman who has been divorced less than a year, preferably two.

"It's a rule I follow to this day."

Have you ever gotten revenge on an old flame? Send your tale, your name, address and phone numbers to Lavin & Kavesh, Tales from the Front, 435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.









Singles scene, News for you military style

here are 874 military installations in the continental United States, according to American Demographics magazine. They range from three-person Campion Air Force Base in Galena, Alaska, to the Norfolk Naval Air Station in Virginia, which employs 48,000 people.

These bases are primarily male bastions because, says American Demographics, 90 percent of active-duty military personnel are men ages 18 to 40

If, as some studies allege, there is a national shortage of bachelors, the Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News metropolitan area is aberrant. There, men outnumber women in every age category below 35, and in the prime marrying-age range—18 to 24 years old—there are 135 men for every 100 women.

So perhaps single women should consider moving close to a military base where 40 percent of enlisted men and 25 percent of officers are unmarried.

Overlooked problem

Wife beating is a nightmare, but within that form of abuse there exists an even more disgusting phenomenon. A recent study at a prenatal clinic in the Houston area showed that 12 percent of the pregnant women using the service had been beaten.

The March of Dimes says obstetricians and other providers of health care should pay attention to pregnant patients who repeatedly miss appointments, offer vague medical complaints and show such visible injuries as bruises and black eyes.

Vididiots redux

In recent years the home video game industry has bounced about like a pinball. Sales skyrocketed from less than \$100 million in 1978 to \$3 billion a year in 1982 and 1983, according to statistics compiled by video gamemaker Nintendo of America Inc. From 1981 to 1982, sales of home video games increased an incredible \$2 billion.

What spurred the boom initially was the game Pong in 1979. That year Atari joined the fray, and the race was on. In 1981 Mattel entered the market with \$250 million in annual sales, and a year later Colecovision came aboard with \$286 million a year in sales.

Then the market crashed like a gunned-down space ship, partly because of dumping and discounting. Sales dropped from \$3 billion in 1983 to \$2 billion in 1984. By late 1985 the bottom had fallen out; annual sales of home video games ran around \$100 million.

Now the industry has started to come back gradually. Sales industrywide rose to \$430 million in 1986 and are expected to reach \$825 million in 1987.

New, more sophisticated games that attract a wider audience helped fuel the comeback. Nintendo says that in the United States 30 percent of home video game users are more than 24.

Body beautiful

Barbie's measurements are 51/4-

Jim Spencer

After so many years, solitude is difficult

Continued from 1st Tempo page

Jewel salad bar.

He didn't have a clue to the logistics of looking for an apartment. In the world in which he grew up, wives searched for homes and later decorated and cleaned them while their husbands were at work

In his resentment and uncertainty, he knew only one thing: He wanted to stay in the

To the city dweller, living alone in the suburbs may seem like banishment. Rather than walking a ter blocks from home to shops, restaurants and bustling sidewalks, the suburbanite in search of society

has to drive to a shopping center. Klinsky, however, like many of the divorced men he knows, wanted to stay in the suburbs for the simple reason that his kids and his friends are there. He saw the city as too busy and a little dangerous. He worried that he would be trapped in frenetic hops from singles bars to health clubs and back.

So he would sit at the kitchen table or in front of the TV, trying to decipher the gibberish of the suburban classifieds: "1 bdrm, Indry, A/C, crpt, apple, nr shpg, ht He would rip out a page of ads and take it with him when he went to play racquetball with his buddies, grateful that enough of them had been through the process that they could warn him which singles habitats to avoid.

Sometimes, scanning the ads as he sipped instant coffee, it occurred to him that something had gone dreadfully, inexplicably wrong. Often he still thinks it has.

"I resent 25 years of working toward a day when you can enjoy your mate and your family life and light up your pipe and kick off your shoes on the porch—I don't smoke a pipe and I didn't have a porch, but you know what I' mean—I mean enjoy what you've worked for. And instead, you lace up your Reeboks and go out to have a drink.'

Evergreen Glen in Prospect Heights is the kind of apartment complex that abounds in suburbs across the country, one of those huge places with a sylvan name and acres of asphalt. There is no glen, and the evergreens are a few scraggly 3-foot pines.

But Evergreen Glen was Klinsky's first home alone, and he liked it, once he got used to the throbbing of stereos through the walls, the ceiling and the floor. He enjoyed meeting the young single people who filled the place, and the older woman whose German cooking perfumed his hall.

He was luckier than other divorced men he knows, who had to refurnish their lives from Wickes and Swingles. He had inherited a sectional couch, a table and six chairs, kitchen utensils and 12 wine

glasses He laughs about the glasses: "I can't imagine having 12 people over to dinner anymore.

He stored his tools in two dressers. In front of the sofa he placed a table he had made from a printer's type box and whose niches his kids had filled with seashells from a family vacation. He pushed two single beds together to make a double.

"It came out nice," he says. "I was proud of it.'

With his apartment in order, he set about reconstructing his social

He took off his wedding ring. He put on a pinkie ring.

Gone were the school activities, the neighborhood projects, the weekly or twice-weekly visits with the family to temple. His new schedule was racquetball on Monday nights; Tuesday at Billy and Co., in Wheeling; Wednesday "who knows"; Thursday at home with a Big Mac, "Hill Street Blues" and the bills. Friday and Saturday were date nights, and on Sundays he joined the crowd at the Snuggery in Schaumburg.

At the bars, he became part of a suburban recycling circuit traveled by the formerly married. The people he met there have become his new community.

His favorite times are spent with the Tuesday night regulars at Billy's. When the dinner customers have gone, he and a few friends who don't like the flashing lights and synthesized drum in the bar across the lobby push together several tables in the dining room. They often sit there in the low lights, amid the dark wood, the red booths and the gold chandeliers and talk until 1 or 2 in the morning. Of the many things to which he has been introduced since his divorce, this easy camaraderie among men and women is one he values most.

Even so, he longs for the rewards and routines of family life. After two years alone, he moved into an apartment with a woman he got to know at Billy's. Her son still lived at home, and her parents were still alive. He saw a way to replant himself quickly in a family

It was a mistake bred of loneliness. He soon moved out and into another modern one-bedroom apartment

Mar Rue is in a Prospect Heights neighborhood made up almost solely of condos and apartments. Complex after complex stretches down a road shaved of trees. They have names such as Old Willow Falls, Lake Run, Bay Grove, names that do little more than recall what the land was before it was paved and built upon.

The best recommendation he can muster for his apartment is, "It's clean.

Its deficiencies do not matter much because he tries not to be there much. He fills his time to overflow, but still one truth remains:

"When you're living alone, when all of it's over, you still go home alone," he says. "That's one of the biggies. You still go home alone, wash the clothes alone, eat some of your meals alone. And the thing that I think about probably the most is if you wake up ...

He pauses and looks apologetic. "I say it as a joke, but ... but what happens if you wake up dead one morning? Who's going to miss

He thinks about his friends at Billy's. If one of them weren't to show up for a week or 10 days, he'd notice. "But I wouldn't think they were dead in their apartment. I'd think they had something else to do.'

What would happen, he wonders, if he went home one night, packed his bags and hopped the next flight to Europe? How long would it take for his friends at Billy's to say, "Hey, what happened to Phil?" How long would it take his kids?



Tribune photo by Charles Cherney

dear?' 'Yeah, I ate with the kids. I

had to eat with the kids. Now I'm

He just wishes that some of the

now-old friends, new restaurants,

advantage of when he was married.

If suddenly his old house were

kids said they were going to move

If that meant he could never go

to Billy's again, never talk to Pam

the waitress, not try new business

ventures as easily, it might not be

"I've tasted other things," he

have the best of both worlds. I'd

like to have a nice house that I'm

on Tuesdays to all my friends at

Billy's, 'Hey, Friday night, let's

meet at my place.

proud of and also to be able to say

Phil Klinsky recently moved in

with a woman he met at Billy's.

Thursday: Katie Rodriguez-

modern marriage who must spend

Hinman, 14, is the child of a

much of her time alone.

says. "I like them both. I'd like to

given back to him, though, if his

back in with him, if there were

some magical way to resume his

old life, he would have to think

twice about the offer.

"I'm a guy who loves to be

going to go finish my book.'

things that give him pleasure

nights out—he had taken

my house.'

worth it.

Debra Atkins, waitress at Billy's, takes Phil Klinsky's order: The Tuesday band of regular customers shares a "brotherhood of tribulation."

It is close to 10 one Tuesday night when Klinsky arrives at Billy's wearing jeans, boots, a fringed blue suede jacket and a shirt open at the collar to reveal a gold chain and mezuza. The jacket was a present from a woman he met at Billy's. The chain was a present from his kids.

'Sure, I dress different now," he says. "A little more flamboyant. I used to be a jeans-and-sports-shirt kind of person. Now I realize that the jeans have to be clean. You have to look in the mirror longer because other people are looking at you more.

The music from "Fame" pulses from the bar, but the dining room is quiet. From across the room, two men wave. Klinsky joins them.

These men belong to a brotherhood of tribulation. Klinsky explains that many of his friends have traveled the same route through life, from growing up in the city to rearing a family in the suburbs to finding themselves unexpectedly alone in midlife.

The hardest part for me is the loneliness," says one of the men, who wears aviator glasses and a designer sweatshirt. His grimace is a mix of amusement and selfdisgust. "So I go jump my wife every night. That's really learning to live alone, isn't it?"

'The hardest part for me," says the other, "is learning to take care of myself. I had never done

"Yeah," says the first one, nodding. "My socks aren't white anymore. But I tell you"-his voice rises with pleasure—"I am very neat. And now I don't have to pick up after anybody anymore.

His friend stirs his drink and shrugs in contradiction. "And I'm not neat, and now there's nobody to pick up after me.'

One of the men wanders off. The other takes to stroking the back of a friendly woman. Klinsky orders

"I have found in my age category a lot of men have never taken time to develop side interests," Klinsky says. "They spend most of their lives making a living. When they end up alone, they don't know what to do with themselves. If they don't sit and watch television, they're lost." That's part of why they spend so much time in the

A waitress pours him a third cup of coffee and he mentions his kids. They are in their early to mid-20s.

"One of the hardest things for me is holidays. Thanksgiving, Mom gets first shot. Christmas, Mom gets first shot. That changes everything.

The year he was divorced he waited until the day before Thanksgiving to accept a friend's dinner invitation, hoping until the last minute that the kids would

Last Christmas, when his kids suggested he meet them for a belated holiday dinner in a restaurant, he decided it was time to exercise parental prerogative.

He filed his demands: They would buy a bucket of chicken. He would load the presents that had been sitting on his kitchen table for a month into his brown '77 Buick. He would drive to his daughter's apartment. They would sit together in a home, not a restaurant. They would talk to each other like a family, not acquaintances. They did. They had fun.

Klinsky tries to talk to his kids at least once a week on the phone, but he feels awkward inviting them to his apartment. He can't imagine what he would say to them once they were there.

Last summer, however, he offered his son a key. Whoever got home first earned the right to the king-size waterbed. The other would have to settle for the sofa. His son never took him up on the offer, but Klinsky knew it was appreciated.

Gradually, he has reconciled himself to his new life. He even prefers parts of it to his married ways. He likes the fact that rather than staying home on Saturday nights with hot dogs and "Love Boat," he tries exotic restaurants. He feels more confident about reviving and making friendships.

He says he has started appreciating the nights when he can come home, kick off his shoes, sit on the floor and eat a hamburger while watching TV.

He is lonely sometimes but no lonelier, he says, than on those many nights during his marriage when he'd come home from work at 8 p.m. and find the kitchen table

"One plate, one glass, one place setting," he says. "'Did you eas

Horoscope: June 10

By Joyce Jillson

Birthday: More options open up this year. Get in step with the public; learn, grow and expand. Keep down roots, too. Wait for trends to develop this month. July finds you smiling, laughing and loving. New romantic prospects develop. Tend to practical matters in August. Structure your activities more. Travel, communicate, study in September. A thrilling change is in store. October is more settled. Positive business developments come in December. February of the settled states of the settled settled. developments come in December. February is strong for career. New trends form in April.

Aries (March 21-April 19): Build a

Aries (March 21-April 19): Build a better relationship with relatives. Your salesmanship will improve over the next three weeks. Increase your reading; improve your mind.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): You're happy about a positive financial change. Other people are impressed with your impeccable taste in clothes and art objects. You'll be sensitive to emotional rejection.

emotional rejection.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): Between now and July 5, Venus will be improving your finances and relationships. Work for the love of it, not for material gain. Your personality attracts others.

Cancer (June 22-July 22); Keep two steps ahead of everyone else. Once again you feel optimistic about the future. Pay off old debts, and avoid going on an emotional binge. You receive good news in the evening

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Your positive approach is the key to your success. The next few weeks will bring you a batch of new friends. Don't judge the future by your past. You're breaking new ground.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take on a larger view of life. Details are not important. Plan a trip if you want to. Let life support you; have faith in yourself proud of a house," he says. "I miss

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): After a period of emotional questioning you are full of optimism again. A new relationship adds excitement to your life. Be open to meeting people from all walks of life. Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): You'll be able to assess the new financial trends. The import/export business may attract

you or perhaps the travel industry. Take a broad overall view of life. Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You're in the center of the action. Some of your dreams will be fulfilled today. If you want quick results, start something new. You get the recognition you de-

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You've been keeping up a steady pace. Now you get to vary your routine. If you're leaving on a trip it's bound to be successful. Take care of behind-thescenes matters.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Things come to a head in your social life. Some people will leave it, and some will stay. You're clearer about your professional goals. Don't overexpand.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You are enthusiastic about the success in your career. Your security comes from being appreciated in your job. Build every-thing on the strength of your domestic



NOW SHOWING

WATER TOWER HYDE PARK NORTOWN BOLINGBROOK EDENS

EVANSTON

DEARBORN Cinema

GRIFFITH PARK Griffith, IN **GROVE Cinemas** HARLEM-CERMAK North Riversion OAKBROOK ORLAND SQ. Orland Pa

EVERGREEN

RANDHURST RIDGE Cinemas RIVER OAKS **SOUTHLAKE Mall** STRATFORD SQ. WESTERN Heights WOODFIELD

BEL-AIR CASCADE CICERO DOUBLE **HALSTED Twin** 1-80 **Tinley Park** TWIN

DRIVE-INS: