



# “Sandy Sez”

by Sandy McCandless, M.A. MFT

Sandy McCandless is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. She earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Chapman University. She works with individuals, families, and children in areas of parenting, relationships and managing life's many stressors. Sandy is a Certified Grief & Recovery Specialist. She specializes in working with people who are suffering from losses both individually and in groups. If you would like to submit a question, you can write to sandysez@earthlink.net and your question will be answered.

Dear Sandy,

I am an 11-year old girl. I have been feeling really bad, because I did something bad. My friends and I were mean to a boy at our school. We bullied him for a week. We called him names and laughed at him. I knew it was wrong, but I kept doing it. After a while, I started to feel really bad about it. I wanted to apologize to him, but he moved away. I feel like a really bad person.

O.R.

Dear O.R.,

You and your friends did something that was wrong. It is wrong to be mean to someone and to make him or her feel bad about himself or herself. However, you are not a bad person. know this because you feel bad about being hurtful. Only good people feel bad when they have hurt someone. Bad people don't feel bad when they have been hurtful.

I am sorry that you did not get a chance to make your apology directly to the boy you hurt. However, it is not too late to make something good out of the bad that has happened. You can stop someone else from bullying others at your school. You can do this by telling an adult about what you see, you can approach students being bullied and ask them to come play with you and your friends, you can send them a note (after school) telling them something nice about themselves, you can let the bullies know that they are being hurtful, and you can even talk to your teacher about putting together an anti-bullying team at your school to bring awareness to how hurtful bullying is. Lastly, you can make a commitment to yourself to always try your best to be kind and thoughtful to others and ask your parents to support you with this.

We all have made choices that have been hurtful to others. The important thing that we can do is to learn from the experience and to always try to do better.

Dear Sandy,

I have been married for 14 years. Last year my in-laws moved to another state. My father-in-law kept his business here and commuted throughout the week. He asked my husband and I if he could stay with us for a week and never left. He came on Monday evening and stayed until Friday evening. He never offered to buy food or to take us out to dinner. He never offered to help financially in any way. He came to our house at the end of each day expecting a meal to be made and his laundry to be washed. The final straw for me was when he came home when we were gone and erased all of my shows from our DVR.

I felt that my father in-law was extremely disrespectful. My husband agreed and spoke to his father six months ago. Since then, my in-laws refuse to acknowledge me. My husband feels like he is in the middle between his parents and me. I want my husband to have a good relationship with his parents. He continues to visit with them (with my blessing). He limits the time and the frequency. I send them cards for each holiday. Was I wrong to make my feelings known?

A.P.

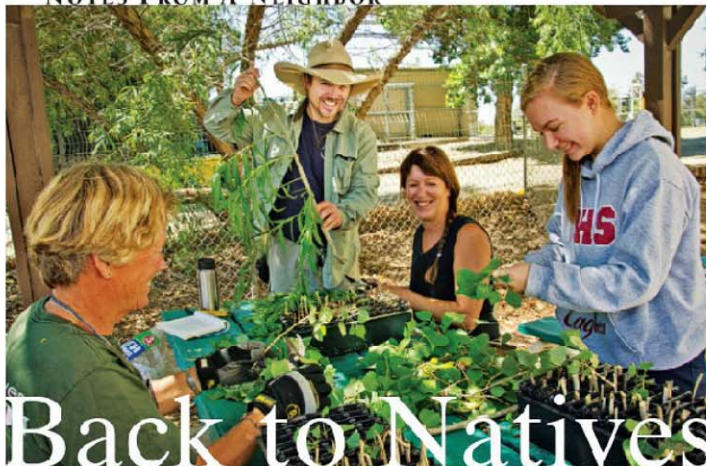
Dear A.P.,

You were correct in sharing your feelings with your husband. He was correct in talking to his parents. Sadly, your in-laws chose to become angry rather than to be understanding. All too often people assign blame to others instead of taking responsibility for their actions. Continue to be loving to your husband and be open to the opportunity of your in-laws changing their attitude. Keep an open and loving heart. At the very least, it will make each day pleasant for you.

Sandy

Write Sandy at:  
SandySez@earthlink.net

## NOTES FROM A NEIGHBOR



# Back to Natives Habitat Restoration

by Don Cribb

Returning land to its natural, original state has become a mission among people who truly care about the quality of the environment in which we live. Some interested individuals actually do something about this concern by removing invasive foreign plants that consume the landscape and fail to support or sustain indigenous butterflies, birds, bees and animals. Such environmentalists realize that if these invasive species are allowed to grow unchecked, certain indigenous plants and creatures may disappear.

Here in Southern California, in Orange County, native plants and animals have been lost to development and the introduction of plants and trees that were never naturally correct for this particular climate, soil condition or landscape. Fortunately, organizations such as Back To Natives (BTN) exist. Dedicated to the conservation and preservation of Orange County and California wild lands through proactive education and habitat restoration programs, in recent years BTN has focused its efforts in South County, Irvine and Santa Ana.

Recently, Santa Ana recruited Back to Natives to advise on ongoing open space review and consideration, cul-

vert and flood control landscape design assistance and a new bike path and park development. With the cooperation of Santa Ana's Park and Recreation Department, Back To Natives has conducted numerous volunteer weed removal projects for the Santiago Park and Creek area and has created a new "Native Plant Nursery" where they propagate native species for specific project locations. As a bonus, they are allowed to offer the plants for sale to the public on a periodic basis.

At the Santiago Nature Center near the Orange border at 600 E. Memory Lane, BTN conducts leisure classes that focus on various aspects of natural history, primarily native plants and their uses, according to Reginald Durant, BTN Director of Restoration. Habitat restoration and preservation and edible gardens are among regular classes presented on a reservation-basis at the Nature Center to help inform those wishing to create gardens such as butterfly and hummingbird-friendly environs.

"How to" presentations for re-landscaping property to be more cost-effective in water-saving ways are also popular, as are classes providing instructions for removal of grass-dominated lawns. Back To Natives gives informative walking tours along the creek to help inspire and restore the naturalist in all of us!

## “Saving Habitat One Person at a Time”

Don Cribb served on the Santa Ana planning commission for eight years, is currently sitting on the Environmental and Transportation Advisory Committee and is the President of the Santa Ana Council of Arts & Culture.