

*A Mother Speaks
of Nudism*

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I think that as a rule the husband first becomes interested in nudism. The wife generally holds back a little and sometimes quite a bit. It is easier for the male to throw off his co-called modesty, and shyness. He is a little more used to seeing others of his own sex in the nude — in sports, on the job, etc. I think that women are reared more guardedly and instilled much more with the idea of the shame of exposing the nude body. We have so many inhibitions and complexes to get rid of. Both men and women.

Nudism usually starts at home. First the husband grows lax in dress — he runs around in shorts for a while before dressing — or from bath to bedroom with nothing on — or maybe he sits and reads the paper a while that way. The children start to copy him — they just naturally like to go nude anyway. You fuss at your husband for setting the example — it just isn't decent to let the children see you that way; you fuss at the children to put their clothes on. He likes the freedom of movement without clothes and knows the children do too, and tells you to let them alone and let them enjoy themselves. He coaxes you to try it. But you are horrified — the children will lose respect for their mother if they see her running around like that. And besides, what would the neighbors think? But after a while you catch yourself going from the bathroom to the bedroom quickly to get something you forgot or you dash to answer the telephone in the nude and one of the children catches you. And the child doesn't seem to be horrified at all — you are the one horrified and ashamed of your nude body. But still — you don't think it is right for decent people to act that way — the body is sinful and shameful and should be kept covered so as not to excite thoughts or give the children "ideas."

Then one night your husband brings home a nudist magazine he has seen on the news stand. You refuse to look at it. That filthy thing — imagine bringing that into the home where the children might see those nasty pictures. You are indignant at the whole matter and refuse to have anything to do with it. Your husband reads the articles and tells you about one or two

of them. About what a nudist camp is and the activities that go on there. How healthy it is for children — the outdoor living. Out of curiosity, one day when you are alone, you pick up the magazine and leaf through the pages. You see the posed pictures of the beautiful girls. You don't like them. Then after a while you look at the articles and glance through two or three of them. They do sound interesting, yes, but — you wonder what kind of people are those nudists, anyway. Sunworshippers? Exhibitionists? Fanatics of some sort? Some kind of religious cult? Why do they have to take all their clothes off to get the benefit of the sunlight, why not leave some little thing on to cover up their nakedness?

Your husband continues to discuss the subject occasionally. Finally you realize his seriousness and you sit down with him and discuss the matter of taking your family to a nudist camp. Your mental attitude has to go through quite a change. In order for you to make your first visit to a nudist camp a lot of the inhibitions and complexes you have carefully nurtured all these years have to be cast out; the false modesty you have been taught; the shame complex; the idea that you have a body that is sinful and shameful and it is obscene to show certain parts of it in public — especially in front of the opposite sex. Most of us have been brought up very strict morally, and nudism seems to be absolutely against everything we have been taught as a child. And then there are the children — supposing they told the neighbors — or their school chums — or Aunt Sally or Uncle Fred — what would you do?

And there is also a very personal fear — your figure isn't as pretty as those girls in the magazines. Supposing you went there and your husband saw someone prettier than you. Or perhaps you have a surgical scar — it would look so awful. And besides you would lose all your femininity and allure for your husband. You know the old saying, "Familiarity breeds contempt."

Your husband can see the benefits to be gained for his family. And as he becomes more insistent, you finally give in and say, well, all right, just this once. He writes to the local club, whose name and address is in the magazine, and finds out where their camp is and gets permission to visit. You pack a picnic lunch, load the children into the car and are on your way. You have varied feelings of fear, curiosity and bravado. You don't know what to expect. Is it really a place to take your children? What will they see there? You round a bend in the road, go through a gate, and suddenly you are there. You see a nude man chopping wood. There is a spirited game of volley ball going on. People down by the pool — children running back and forth, playing, swinging on the

swings and hardly anyone even turns his head as you drive in. You sit in the car a minute, taking it all in. Before you can make up your mind to get out of the car you are greeted cordially by one of the members and invited to get out and walk around the camp and see what is there. You are taken here and there and introduced to some of the members. Without apparently looking, you see all kinds of people: short, tall, slim, stout, all sorts of figures, both male and female, some with fine tans and some white and some pink with sunburn. You look at the inviting pool, the green lawn and the sun is warm. The children are tugging at your hand, begging to go in the pool, and can't we take our clothes off. Mommy? And suddenly you feel so conspicuous with your clothes on and you want to enjoy the sunshine and fresh air with the relaxed freedom these other people seem to have. You go to your car and disrobe, and the first step has been taken. The biggest step.

As time goes on, you find all your fears dispelled. As for your figure, you find there are some who look better than you do and some look worse. You have learned that physical limitations go unnoticed; they are entirely commonplace. You find that it is the individual, the personality that is important. You think of the different ones, not of their physical defects or beauty, but of their individuality — the effect that person has had on you. Their body is unimportant. You find that the moral standard is very high in a nudist camp. There is no liquor allowed, either on the premises or in the individual. There are no smutty stories told — no over display of affection — folks conduct themselves the same as on any public beach — only their conduct is better. You find there is no sex stimulation brought on by lack of clothing of anyone present. There is almost always a game of some kind going on — volley ball is the universal nudist sport; there is usually work to be done to improve or beautify the grounds.

Another thing, you find that the freedom of nudism intensifies the beauty of your marital relations. Your fears on that score were entirely unfounded.

As for the children — they are so healthy living in the fresh air and the sunlight this way — learning new and interesting things about the outdoors. They do not have the ingrained inhibitions you have had to overcome. To go without clothes is a perfectly natural thing for them. It is easy for them to understand that here they can go nude but in town they can't because everyone doesn't do it as they do at camp. And that is all the explanation they need. They look at you strangely if you try to bring out the shame of showing your body in public. You find in the future that your nudist life has made the answering of the children's questions in regard to growing up and

adulthood and their sexual problems much easier. They do not have the curiosity about the opposite sex other children have. They have seen and understand the differences in the human figure and explaining the functions of the different parts of the body is simple. They are easier in their attitudes toward other children. I do not mean freer — I mean easier. They do not have the shyness that other children have because of curiosity. They have a poise, a sureness — an attractive freshness — a wholesomeness — that comes from knowing they have a healthy body and a healthy mind, which is more important. They are not interested in sneaking down on burlesque row or reading books that have to be sneaked behind the barn or looking at obscene pictures. The facts of life are known to them and there is no vicarious thrill in these things. From my own experience — my fifteen year old boy came home to me one day and told me that some of the boys in his class had climbed up on the wall to peek in the windows of the girls' room so they could see the girls. I asked him if he did and he said why should he — he knew what girls looked like. He was disgusted with such behavior and said of they were all nudists that sort of thing could not happen. There is no record of a juvenile delinquent from a nudist family.

As time goes on, you will spend as much time as you can at the nudist camp because it is an inexpensive outing — the children love it — and it is something your whole family can take part in. No more husband going off fishing or golfing or something else, while you and the children stay home on Sundays. Now, everyone eagerly goes to the "country" for the day or the weekend. And that is because you have found the greatest thing for all — the thing that makes us nudists for the rest of our lives and makes us wish we had not wasted so many years accepting it. That is the freedom — **the utter freedom**. As I said before, in order to take the first step, you have already cast out some inhibitions and old conventionalities. And you get rid of more and more as you go along. You remember wondering why nudists have to take everything off — why not leave something on? You have found out why — because you have overcome the shame of the body — of certain parts of the body. You have found that one part is as beautiful as the other and each has its own natural function to do. There is nothing to be hidden — no reason for wearing "some little thing." Actually, now, you feel it is indecent and obscenely suggestive to cover parts of the body. You feel it is wrong for clothes to be worn for the purpose of concealment. Better that they be worn because of the inclement weather or because of the job being done or some other such reason. You have learned the thrill of the sunlight and the air and the breezes on your nude body — the smoothness with

which your body glides through the rippling water.

You have come to the point where you can hardly wait for the weekends to come around so you can go to camp and take off the clothes you have to wear all week in town because you have learned that the act of taking off your clothes and cleansing your body in the clean air includes cleansing your mind of all the nervous tensions and cares and worries that beset you daily at home; and you find utter relaxation. Absolute, utterly free rest and relaxation. And you go home rejuvenated not only in body but in mind. You get the feeling as you stand by your car and disrobe, that with your clothes you strip off the ugly, dirty world and here alone is peace and brotherhood with your fellow man. Here you find friendly, cordial people, broad of mind, tolerant, respectful of persons.

This is not something that happens immediately. For some, the transition to true nudism is quick. For others it takes quite a while. For some, it is easy to take their clothes off — but not so easy to take their minds off, so to speak — to take off the false veneer of conventionalities; to overcome the petty jealousies and possessiveness between husband and wife; the lustful thoughts towards others; the false shame of the body that is evidenced in these things. And when you do finally reach the understanding of the philosophy of nudism, you find your horizons unlimited, a great peace of mind, a richness in your enjoyment of life. You have found that freedom. And you bless the day you agreed to go to the nudist camp.



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