

# Person upset over decisions

*Editor's Note: The Colby Free Press was offered to sample advice columns other than Dear Abby. We will try them for a while. Please tell us what you think.*

BY DR. JOYCE BROTHERS  
Dear Dr. Brothers: For much of my life, I've been shocked and horrified by the amount of time I waste trying to make some relatively simple decisions.

Even shopping is sometimes agony for me because of this. As a result, I often end up asking other people — sometimes someone I don't even know well — to help me, and for some reason, this almost always seems to irritate them. Why, I don't know.

Anyway, I don't want my young daughter to have this problem. I hope it isn't an inherited trait. Can you offer any thoughts that might help me with this? — I.R.

**Dear I.R.:** First of all, to my knowledge this isn't thought to be related to genes. You can help your daughter by encouraging her to make decisions. Although you don't mention her age, even small children should be given a choice of what fruits or vegetables they prefer and should be allowed to select their own ice-cream flavor and items of clothing. This can begin very early in their lives. It not only

reassures them that they and their views matter, but it lets them practice making decisions.

One of the reasons you have such difficulty doing this might be that you may have been raised with parents who over-emphasized the need for perfection, instead of teaching that we learn by making mistakes. An error, an attempt and a failure can be a major step toward progress and ultimate success. Remind yourself that it might not matter exactly which product you buy. The stress that builds up due to your fear of making an error is bound to take a toll on your health.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I hate the fact that most of our mornings start off with fights as we try to get our two adolescents out of bed on time.

I manage to keep my cool better than their father, who gets increasingly angry when he has to return, scream and shake them until they drag themselves to their feet.

One obstacle is that we're both commuters, and timing is everything because of endless traffic. We're living more than 80 miles from the city where we work, and we moved to the country for the kids.

I think this fact grates on him because of the high price of gas, and also he wasn't eager to move anyway. Any ideas for solutions that would help our mad-house mornings? — R.E.

**Dear R.E.:** Yes. If your youngsters are like most their age, they're not getting nearly enough sleep, and, like their parents, they're apt to be overscheduled with extracurricular activities, some of which should perhaps be lessened to make it possible to complete homework assignments earlier, allowing a full nine or even 10 hours of sleep.

Granted, in order to do this, it might mean cutting out some time at the computer and turning off TV sets or limiting viewing to an hour. If you could accomplish this, maybe using a special reward for weekends only, you'd have less-frantic commutes, and your mornings would be more relaxed. Your youngsters probably won't believe this, but insufficient sleep makes learning and retention of what's been learned more difficult. Sleep deprivation has a negative effect on creativity and judgment as well.

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# Moderate Democrats plan dream future

DENVER (AP) — Moderate Democrats think they have the key to winning back power in Washington and across the country — a package of economic proposals aimed at giving every American a shot at reaching the middle class.

"We thought it was important and necessary to rekindle the American dream," said Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa, a potential 2008 presidential candidate and the chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council, a centrist think tank.

Sadly, Vilsack said, many of America's children nowadays don't have faith in the idea of an American dream.

"They don't believe in the notion that somehow they're going to have a great life, and many adults are just hoping that their kids have it as good as they have it. Deep down in America's psyche that troubles a lot of us," he said.

"I don't want to be part of the generation, the first generation in this country's history, to basically look my kids in the eye and say: 'Sorry. Hopefully you'll have it as good as we have it.' And, I don't think too many American parents

want to have that conversation with their kids either," Vilsack said.

Additionally, the Iowa Democrat said: "We are a competitive nation. We don't like losing and if we're going to compete in the global economy, we're going to have to do things differently."

The centrist organization, best known for helping Bill Clinton secure the White House in 1992, was to unveil Monday its "American Dream Initiative," which lays out policies on education, health care, retirement and income.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, who led the year-long effort and also may run for president, will outline the specific proposals in a speech to nearly 400 local elected Democratic officials from more than 40 states attending the organization's annual meeting in Republican-leaning Colorado.

The site underscores the organization's contention that the party must broaden its appeal and reach out to voters in rapidly growing areas of the country if it wants to win control of Congress this fall and the White House in 2008.

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