

By the Way...

'I Can't' NEVER WILL!

By Dexter H. Faulkner

If you expect to win — or lose — you will!

"I just *can't* seem to bring up the subject of me liking boys to my parents."

"I need help with my sister, bad. I *can't* take it anymore. We used to get along fine until about two months ago. Now we are constantly fighting."

Have YOU ever said "I CAN'T!" about anything — making top grades in school, meeting new people, learning a new sport?

Did you find that when you said it, you couldn't?

What I'm saying is, didn't just voicing your negative feelings — saying you couldn't — make it impossible for you to do something about your problem?

Have you ever noticed that our record books and our history books don't tell us anything about those who sat back and said, "I can't"? But the books are full of stories of men and women who said, "I can!"

Absolutely anything!

Photo by Hal Finch A positive attitude is absolutely necessary to success in anything. Yes, that's right, ANYTHING — whether you're crossing

the Atlantic in a reed boat or getting an article printed in *Youth 86!*

That's not to say that life is always fair or peachy or rosy just because you have a positive attitude. Sometimes life is rough. But that doesn't mean we should all just join the crowd and be miserable.

It's up to you to make a difference in your life. I can't do it for you... but YOU CAN! To succeed,

you must have the will to win. You must see yourself as a winner — always. Even when you have setbacks, picture yourself successfully talking to your parents or enjoying time spent with a brother or sister.

Life will let you settle for whatever you will settle for. If you accept not being able to go to your parents, that's exactly what you'll get! You must expect to win, to have a good talk, even when it looks like the odds are against you. If you expect to win — YOU WILL!

Here are some ways that you can be a more positive person. But, remember: Before you can put any of these into action, you must decide that you are going to be a winner!

OK, winner, here they are:

Point one — *think actively*. Instead of wondering passively, "What will happen to me next?"

(Continued on page 29)

You can do it! Whether your goal is getting a job or getting along with someone, a positive approach can make you a winner.



'I Can't' NEVER WILL!

(Continued from page 1)

think. "What actions am I going to take?"

If you want to talk to your parents about something important to you, but are afraid to, decide that you will beat that fear. Set a time and then, with a cheerful attitude, go do it! Not with the feeling of gloom and doom, but with the feeling that everything's going to turn out fine.

Even if the talk doesn't go so well, your effort is sure to open the way for better communication in the future. It will get easier with every attempt.

Positive people believe it is better to strive valiantly and fail than not to try at all.

Point two — *be enthusiastic*. You've got to put some "Umph!" behind your active thinking. Once you've decided to take action, do it with gusto and excitement.

You've decided to do your part to get along better with your brothers and sisters, so don't give it the old half try. Give it your all!

For example, the next time they ask you to do something for them, do it gladly and with energy. Not because you owe them anything, necessarily, but because you love them.

If this is a new approach for you, be ready for a little resistance, at first. They may be surprised and even suspicious of your intentions.

Something to work for

Point three — *be goal oriented*. Negativism comes from having nothing to hope or to work for.

Of course, the right goals must be set. To ensure that you're setting right goals, check with someone you trust who has obviously set the right goals in his or her life.

Be sure to break your large goals down into several smaller ones. Make a list of the things you can do to improve relations

with your family. Then, work at it one step at a time. Remind yourself often of your subgoals and goals. A goal forgotten is as good as no goal at all!

Point four — *help others overcome negativism*. This is the final, and perhaps most important, point in changing an "I can't!" attitude into an "I CAN!" attitude.

If you don't help others, you will withdraw into your own negative, tiny self-world. There you will be crippled — unable to help yourself and unwilling to help anyone else. You won't give to others or be concerned about others. Life loses any value.

On the other hand, if you choose to be unselfish and help others be positive, you will reap the benefit of becoming more positive yourself. Guaranteed! Also, some of your new and improved attitude may rub off on those you help.

Three little ways to give others a boost of confidence are: 1) give them sincere compliments, 2) let them know that you're grateful for what they do for you and 3) call them by their names. Help them to feel important! Your efforts will pay off by multiplying your own confidence.

We can expect our full quota of troubles. But being positive means shifting your thoughts from things that are against you and focusing on what you've got going for you.

I'd like to hear from some of you now that you're working on saying "I CAN!" I hope the next letter I read from you sounds like this:

"I used to feel like there was nothing I could do about my grades (or whatever), but after following your suggestions, I found things really turned around! Now I'm doing something to make my life more successful, and it works!" □

Credit for the globe pictured in March, page 17, was inadvertently left off. It should have read: Courtesy National Geographic Society.