

## Coping with suffering

*You are an agony aunt for a magazine. Respond to one of your reader's letters in the space provided.*

Dear Agony Aunt,

Last year my mum was diagnosed with cancer. Ever since then I have had to do most of the chores around the house, look after my mum and my younger half sister who is only 10.

Although my step dad tries to help, he is often too busy working long shifts. I am starting to feel really angry with my mum and step dad for not doing anything – I feel like the adult around the place! I know it's not their fault, but I am completely fed up and have started getting into trouble at school because I keep getting into fights and being rude to teachers.

How am I going to cope?

Yours sincerely, Charlotte Adams 16

Dear Charlotte,

Dear Agony Aunt,

My parents have just told me they are getting a divorce. They have been arguing for ages and ages and home has been really horrible. I have stopped eating properly and my mates keep telling me how thin I look. I had to sit out of the game today because I started to faint after I saved the goal. My best mate is worried about me but mostly everyone just is laughing at me and calling me gay. I just feel so miserable and don't know how to keep going. How am I going to cope?

Yours sincerely, Mark Cassie 14

Dear Mark,

Dear Agony Aunt,

I feel so awful. My granddad died about 6 months ago but I still miss him like crazy. My dad left when I was 2, and I have never seen him since then, and so my granddad sort of took care of me lots. Mum wont speak about it at home. My teachers keep telling me that I should be over it be now and I need to get on with my course work. But I can't concentrate on anything! Mrs Alden said that if I didn't hand all my coursework in tomorrow she would be forced to put me on report and give me detention every day after school until it is all done. This is like the last straw. I am going crazy. How am I going to cope?

Yours sincerely, Ben Tweedy 16

Dear Ben,