



## **AskTheInternetTherapist.com**

### **Newsletter June 2004**

### **Featured Sample Email**

#### **Parenting**

By Audrey B., Jung, CPC, DCC, NCC



**Question:**

*I would like to know if you think it is ok for a 5-year-old girl to be sleeping with her father.*

**Answer:**

Dear Rose,

The art of parenting is indeed complicated, and there are many conflicting professional opinions on the subject of sleep. In the past century, as our culture grew increasingly materialistic, an emphasis on independent infant and toddler sleep became reinforced. Children's sleeping with their parents was seen as a sign of poverty, suggesting that a family could not afford to give their young children rooms of their own. Many doctors had even discouraged sleep-sharing parenting by suggesting that mothers may roll over their children and smother them, or that fathers would be tempted to inappropriately touch their children in the night. Evidence does exist, however, stating that this puritanistic approach to parenting is inappropriate and, in some cases, harmful to the psychological well-being of the child.

Traditional attachment parenting advocates that infants sleep with their mothers, allowing breastfeeding to occur throughout the night with little or no disruption to the natural sleep cycle. Single fathers have engaged in this parenting practice to reduce the separation anxiety of their children due to death or divorce. Modern fathers have even adopted this practice as a way to take a more active parenting role with their children.

As the infant ages, sleep-sharing may continue due to its many benefits. The child's sense of safety is reassured; important, especially during the toddler years as she experiences anxiety

dreams, night terrors or fear of the dark. Evidence suggests that a child's breathing patterns are regulated by the natural rising and falling of her father's own chest. In an age where children are spending more of their awakening hours outside of the home – in day care centers, schools or with baby sitters – sleep-sharing will allow the father and daughter time to develop a balanced male-female relationship. Finally, sleep sharing is a parenting plan that assures a basic need – everyone gets more sleep at night.

The question therefore remains, at what point should a toddler be encouraged to sleep on her own, in her own room? Although it is generally recommended to let the child decide when she is ready to sleep on her own, some children may need a more directive approach. In this case, a small mattress may be placed in the parents' bedroom alongside their own bed. The child can then be allowed to explore and get used to sleeping in her own space, while assured that her father is nearby if she needs him. Once she completes that transition, the bed can be moved farther and farther away from her father's room, until she is ultimately sleeping in her own bed, in her own room. If the child calls out to her father in the middle of the night, he can cuddle her until she returns to sleep, and then he should return to his room. This behavior will diminish as the child becomes accustomed to her room.

Assuming the child's father is not abusing substances that would alter his sense of reality, and that he is sleeping with his daughter in response to her request for security, there is no reason to believe that anything abusive may be happening. If, however, the 5-year-old girl begins to demonstrate any signs of sexual abuse – developmental regression, increase in sexualized behaviors, complaints of pain while toileting, increased aggression or decreased social interaction – I'd strongly encourage you to intervene and get both the child and her father psychological (and possibly medical) help.

I hope you find this article useful.

Jef Gazley, M.S.  
Audrey B. Jung, CPC, DCC, NCC  
[www.asktheinternettherapist.com](http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com)

## **Featured Counselor: Audrey B. Jung, CPC, DCC, NCC**

Please welcome one of our newest counselors that joined the site.

**Audrey Jung, CPC, DCC, NCC**  
Family counseling and issues relating to Deafness



Audrey is a Certified Professional Counselor in the state of Arizona (CPC), a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and a Distance Credentialed Counselor (DCC), as well as a member of the American Counseling Association, National Board of Certified Counselors and International Society for Mental Health Online. She is a graduate of The University of Maryland, College Park with a B. A. in Psychology, and she received her M. A. in Counseling from Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. Audrey Jung has been specializing in issues relating to Deaf Counseling and HH populations, children, adolescents, families, stress reduction, tobacco cessation and pregnancy/post partum issues

since 1995. She is fluent in American Sign Language and maintains a private practice in the southeast valley of Phoenix, Arizona. Audrey's clients have commented that her listening skills, personable approach and patient understanding have assisted them in achieving their counseling goals and objectives.

Granddaughter to a Hard-of-Hearing psychiatrist, Audrey was raised with a special understanding of the role communication plays within the family environment. It is because of this influence that Audrey works to bridge the gap between hearing parents and their Deaf children - emphasizing American Sign Language, Deaf identity exploration and Deaf cultural awareness as a means to improve familial support.

New parents are confronted with a wide variety of challenges the second they bring home their bundle of joy. These challenges can become overwhelming at times, especially when the baby has been diagnosed with hearing loss or a medical disorder. Audrey Jung works with new mothers and fathers as they explore their changing family roles and personal identities, discussing topics ranging from stress management to post partum depression.

For three years, Audrey was well-known as the "Tobacco Lady" in local schools and throughout the community, as she encouraged students, teachers and parents to look beyond media stereotypes and learn all there was to know about the addictive cycle of tobacco. Audrey ran numerous prevention and education groups in schools, the community and office workplaces, trained other professionals to provide basic tobacco interventions, and helped hundreds of people quit smoking. Audrey is certified in Basic Tobacco Intervention and Tobacco Cessation through the state of Arizona's Department of Health Services.

Audrey enjoys rollerblading, weightlifting, scrapbooking, cross stitching, watching movies and reading the works of Tom Clancy, Dan Brown, Ann Rice, and Marion Zimmer Bradley. She is available for General Counseling for family or deaf related issues from 1 pm to 5 pm on Mondays, and has evening availability on Tuesdays through Thursdays. She accepts email counseling and chat counseling for any issues related to deafness, tobacco cessation or family counseling at this moment.

[http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/deaf\\_counseling\\_jungl.asp](http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/deaf_counseling_jungl.asp)  
[audrey@asktheinternettherapist.com](mailto:audrey@asktheinternettherapist.com)

## **June Contest Winner**

Congratulations to Lisa C. He is our June 2004 winner and she picked the Sleep – Beach Tape. Enjoy Lisa C.

## **Featured Mental Health DVD**

**Love Addiction Video    Length: 59:35**

Is it real love? Do you feel like half a person without sex or a relationship? Are you afraid of abandonment? Do you feel you might die without your partner? Love addiction and Sex

addiction is much more common than people usually think. This mental health video describes the cycle of love addiction that is common in this type of relationship and compares healthy love to unhealthy love. **By Jef Gazley M.S. ©1998**

[http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/love\\_addiction\\_relationships\\_DVD.asp](http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com/love_addiction_relationships_DVD.asp)

## **Special Note**

As you have already seen, all of our videos are digitally re-mastered and are available on VHS and DVD. Although we still have some of the old videos, which we are selling for \$25.00 each to make room for more of the new, digitally re-mastered ones. They are available at the price above only by calling 1-800-881-7693 and placing an order over the phone. ***Hurry before they are all gone!*** (This offer is available only for the Love Addiction, Communication Assertiveness, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Chemical Dependence, Co-dependence, and Dysfunctional Families videos).

Be sure to utilize our **free** discussion boards. These forums are formatted by the following special topics- Hypnosis, Chemical Dependence, Co-Dependence, Parenting, Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder, Medical Issues, Dysfunctional Families, Attention Deficit Disorder, Relationships, Veterinary Concerns, and Depression. You might find useful information in the various topics

As you are probably aware asktheinternettherapist offers online individual paid appointment times for in depth assistance with any of our professionals. Our discussion groups however are visited from time to time by our staff and their comments to discussions or questions are provided free of charge. This is an added benefit in addition to client self-help that makes up the bulk of the discussion group traffic. Visit soon.

## **Remove**

If you would like to be removed from the asktheinternettherapist newsletter just reply to this e-mail and place '**remove**' in the subject.

*We believe better health  
begins with better Mental Health.*  
Jef Gazley M.S.  
[www.asktheinternettherapist.com](http://www.asktheinternettherapist.com)