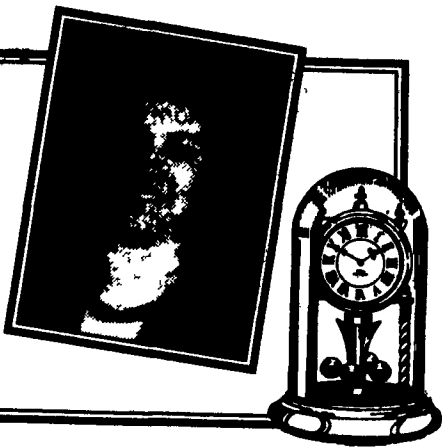


Taking Time by Rebecca Escott



Try It... You May Like It

Do you remember the Life cereal commercials with Mikey? Remember the other kids bargaining about who will try something first? As I conduct workshops, I've found that many people are as resistant to trying something new as those kids were. But often, testing a new idea or product really pays.

One popular activity that I present in my money management workshops is a taste test. I purchase a selection of products and ask people to taste and rank their favorites. After the results are in, I share the information about prices. This makes a lasting impression on the group. For instance, most are surprised to find

that it is very difficult to distinguish differences among saltine cracker brands, and yet some labels are half the price of others. Unless I had made the individuals try these products in a blind taste test, many would have continued to buy the name brand items. Why? They were sure they wouldn't like the less expensive brand. Now they report that they regularly buy and are pleased with store brand products.

Last week I practiced tasting a new product. I went to the store to pick up some bottled ice tea for a road trip. My favorite brand was only stocked in cans. After scanning the shelves carefully, I realized that one bottled brand was 1/2 the price of the rest. I had never

heard of it before. What the heck! I bought three bottles to try.

This time the test brought a pleasant surprise. I like it, and I saved a lot of money. Of course, I could have saved more by brewing my own tea and putting it in a cooler. (That's the price I pay for convenience.) Now I have a less expensive product that I will purchase in the future. If I continue to experiment with no-name and store brand products, each time selecting the best one for the price, I save food dollars that can then be spent on other priority purchases.

It pays to try new things.

I saw this principle put into action last month when I visited my brother and sister-in-law. This time it was applied to parenting. My sister-in-law had read that if you lit candles at dinner, your preschoolers and school-age children were more likely to eat in a more relaxed manner. Her comments after trying it for a week, "You know, it really works!" And her five-year-old and two-year-old relish the opportunity to blow out the candles at the end of the meal.

Cooperative Extension publications are filled with suggestions. We continually encourage people to make positive changes by trying new things. Here are a few of them:

- Make a shopping list before going to the store or mall, and shop only from the list.
- Drink water.
- Walk or ride a bike instead of driving a car.
- Top waffles with fruit and yogurt instead of syrup.
- Maintain only one major credit card. If they charge an annual fee, call and ask them to waive the fee. If they are unwilling, switch to a company that charges no annual fee.
- Eat at least one meal a day with your children.
- Talk with your child about a newspaper or magazine article.

• Make puppets out of paper plates and popsicle sticks.

Each money-saving tip, discipline technique, family activity suggestion will not be a "winner" for every family, but many are. The point is, unless you test the suggestion, you'll never know.

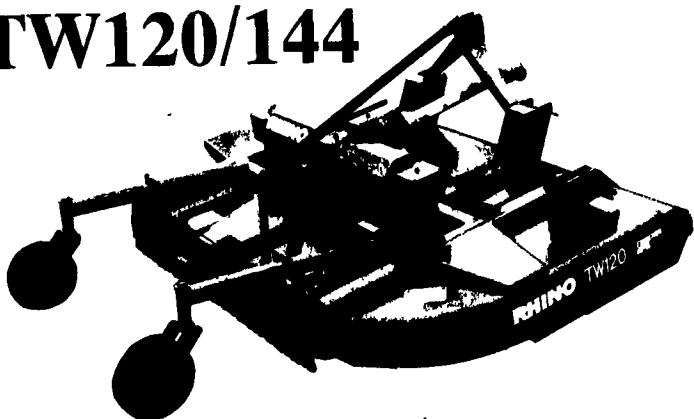
I encourage you to take time this week to try out a new product or new idea. You may be surprised... the less expensive product may work as well, a smaller portion may satisfy your hunger, your kids may enjoy the opportunity to play cards with you some evening. You'll never know unless you try.



Berks Society 1

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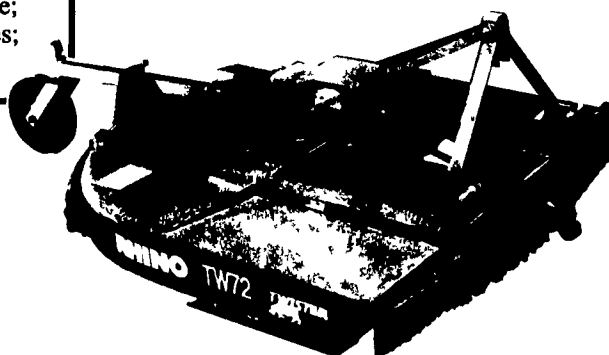


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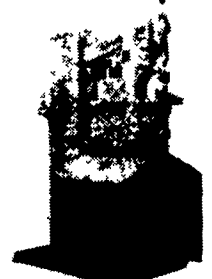
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Dorothea Boch was hostess at her Douglassville home for the May meeting of Berks County Society of Farm Women Group 1 with President Evelyn Heacock presiding at the meeting. Group 1 was organized 55 years ago on May 11, 1950.

Retired Amity Township Police Chief Maurice Eschbach spoke to the group of his experiences when serving as active police chief of Amity Township.

Eleven members represented Group 1 at the annual Spring Rally of Society of Farm Women of Pennsylvania which is held at Dickinson College in Carlisle. The rally, which had as its theme, "Sing and Smile and Pray on a Day in May," was most enjoyable.

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