

Name:

Reading

1 Read the questions and the text. For each question, choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

1 According to the article, a lot of people
A want to work as agony aunts for magazines.
B need agony aunts to solve their problems.
C enjoy reading problem pages in magazines.
D think being an agony aunt is a difficult job.

2 Dr Peggy doesn't
A deal with serious problems.
B help anybody who isn't unhappy.
C help people who are ill.
D deal with all kinds of illness.

3 Dr Peggy says that giving advice is
A sometimes difficult.
B always difficult.
C always very easy.
D the same as giving medicine.

4 Dr Peggy often tries to make people
A solve their own problems.
B feel more confident.
C think about other problems.
D move to different places.

5 Dr Peggy feels happy that
A she has helped sad people.
B her job is so difficult.
C she is never worried.
D some problems are difficult.

Being an Agony Aunt

You can find Agony Aunts in lots of magazines and even in some newspapers. Some people write to them for advice and many people find their problem pages interesting to read. I wondered how difficult it was for the people who answer these problems so I decided to ask 'agony aunt' Dr Peggy Russell. Dr Peggy, as she is usually called, is well-known for her appearances on TV, as she had her own show last year, and for her problem page in *World Chronicle*. This is what she had to say:

Dr Peggy: I'm a doctor, not a GP, but a psychiatrist – a doctor who helps to keep the mind happy, let's say, and I spend most of my day helping people who have personal problems. I deal mostly with people who don't have serious illnesses – they are not physically ill, but almost all my patients are very unhappy and that is a kind of sickness.

Let me say first of all, I don't solve people's problems. No, I only give advice – and medicine – if it's necessary. Now, you asked if giving this help is difficult. The truth is, every problem is different, as is every person who comes to speak to me. This means there is no real answer to that question. Sometimes a solution comes easily but not always. I think I have most experience in matters of the heart – you know, problems with relationships, and I believe in a lot of cases I can help quite easily. Often it is not just a case of making that person understand that the relationship can't work, but also making that person realize they are an important human being, somebody who matters. So I give a lot of advice which will help them gain confidence and be able to put the problem behind them and move on.

Unfortunately, I do come across problems which are more difficult or make me worry about the person. These include people who are in dangerous relationships. This kind of problem can almost break your heart, but luckily there are a lot of organizations out there which are especially for solving particular problems like this. I'm glad to say over the years I have had a lot of happy endings to what were very sad cases.

Maybe my job has its difficulties, but it's wonderful to feel I'm helping people in need.