

As I was standing in line at the grocery store I did what I usually do — glance at the magazine racks and scan the cover titles without actually buying the magazine. My wife forces me to be cost-conscious and, in addition, the prices of magazines these days are really outrageous.

There before me, in “O” magazine was an article on lying, of all things. I didn’t buy it but when I got home I started thinking about lying and its relationship to sociopathy — I know; sometimes my mind goes a little sideways — and I realized that my first exposure to a sociopath was probably the story of Pinocchio.

Now think about it for a moment: he ditches school, hangs out with the wrong crowd, smokes, lies, and goes to “*Pleasure Island.*” *God knows what really goes on there.*

I decided to do some research. {show books on Pinocchio}

It’s important to note that Pinocchio was only a wooden boy — he had not yet reached the status of a real boy. For one thing, he did not have a conscience That is what Jimminy Cricket was suppose to be for (please refer to the Blue Fairy for details) He would have to pass some trials before he could be a real boy. When confronted with his aberrant behavior he, well, frankly lied. As the book says “With each lie, Pinocchio’s nose grew and grew.”

Pinocchio would not be allowed to be a real boy until he proved himself “brave, unselfish and truthful.” OK. Lying is bad. Or..is..it?

Let’s see. If you didn’t go to work but lied to your wife that you did — that probably is bad. If something is your fault and you blame it on oth-

ers such as “A giant monster with bulging eyes kidnapped me and made me do it,” that is probably bad.

But what if someone says to you “do you think I’m ugly?” I’m not sure it is a virtue to say “Yes, I think you're ugly.” There might be a more diplomatic way of responding.

And on a more serious note, what if you lived during the time of Anne Frank and a Nazi asked you where she lived. Would saying you didn’t know, when you actually did, be a sin?

It seems to me that telling the truth is a good general rule. It can even be pleasurable. My Mother, as she aged, said one of the pleasures of her getting older was she could say what was really on her mind and not have to worry about what other people thought of her.

In fact, that seems to be the key. Lying is bad when we lie not to embarrass ourselves. Lying may be good when we do it to be kind to others. In other words, is what you say self- centered or other centered?

Thank you, and as for you, my Brothers..... I think you are all very handsome.