

But if you can just think of it as selling a piece of merchandise rather than yourself, it helps a lot.

"I'd go in thinking, 'I'm David Cassidy and I'm here to sell you something I have—a piece of merchandise. So I'll do a reading and see if you like the merchandise and want to buy it.' That helped me a number of times, because I'm so insecure anyway. I think all actors are when they walk into that room. It's like you are really on the block to be judged, and you have to expect to get your head chopped off a couple of times. It happened to me more than a couple of times, but at last I began to get work.

"My mother helped me to look at the business in that way, and it gave me a positive attitude. I really believe the reason I'm successful is because I had that attitude, and I owe it all to her—totally!

"She was just so positive about me. She would say, 'That's going to happen for you because you're thinking that way and because you really want it to happen.' I was skeptical at first—I'd go, 'Yeah, yeah!'—but I eventually began to adopt her attitude.

"When I'd walk into a room for an audition, I would look around at the other people who were waiting there with me and I would think, 'I know I should get this part. I'm sure a lot of the other people here are good, but I know I should get this part!' And it worked.

"I definitely think it can work for other people, too. I don't see how it can miss. But if you don't really believe it, then it doesn't work. I really believed it—I felt positive about it. And I owe that to my mother."

■ In addition to helping David learn about show business and giving him a positive attitude, his mother helped David obtain an audition with the Los Angeles Theatre Company between his junior and senior years in high school. For she realized that it was only a year before he would be going out on his own in search of a career, and she felt that working with the theatre group would help round out his theatrical education. It also enabled him to feel that he was doing something for his future career at a time when he was terribly anxious to get started. The audition was successful, and David appeared in the group's productions.

A year later, David was graduated from Rexford High and left for New York to try to crash Broadway. "When it came time to leave, my mother just let me spread my wings and fly," he recalls gratefully. "It was fine with her that I was going to stay with my father and Shirley, who were living in a big house at Irvington-on-Hudson while they appeared together on Broadway in *Maggie Flynn*. Actually I lived in a little guest house on the estate and spent a lot of time in New York City, so I didn't see too much of them."

David went to work in New York's teeming garment district. He had a part-time job in a textile mill, but would go out on theatrical interviews during his lunch hour. He also studied at the David Craig School of Musical Comedy.

After many weeks of pounding the pavements in search of a job in the theatre, David won an important role in a musical called *The Fig Leaves Are Falling*. He finally had his first professional job—and of course he couldn't wait to tell his mother about it.

"She was in California, and I called her immediately," he recalls. "I was ecstatic. I couldn't even talk! I said, 'Ahhhhh... guess what? I got a Broadway show!' And she said, 'Oh, no! That's fantastic! I knew it would happen for you. Now you know it's not that hard to crack the nut.'"

Even though the Broadway show eventually failed, it provided David with sev-



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