



There were smaller tragedies, too, throughout his childhood. He was a fairly healthy child, yet he also suffered numerous childhood illness—all of which were scary and confusing to him—including getting hit in the head with a golf club and going through eye surgery at a very young age. Each time he had to face a doctor he tried to act very brave, but inside there was fear. And fear is very big when you are very young.

## HE'S KNOCKED DOWN AGAIN

David survived childhood with all of his scars invisible and hidden. He decided he wanted to be an actor and off he went to New York—only to be knocked down again. He worked and slaved to get his first major part a Broadway play—paying all the dues an actor has to pay in New York—only to have the play fail within one week. His first big break and it was a bust! Shot down again! This time the effect of it was more visible—he went into an immediate and obvious

depression. For days he wandered around full of doubts and fears about himself and his career. He felt rotten! Wasn't anything ever going to go right for him?

His family problems didn't just involve his parents' divorce, either. After the divorce, he lived mostly with his mother and grandparents—and a large portion of his life was spent without a close relationship with his father. A young boy should have a father to guide him and set an image for him to look up to, but most of the time this wasn't so for David—his life revolved around his mother and elderly grandparents.

Years later, after his father had remarried and had more children, David's step-mother, Shirley Jones, was able to pull things back together for awhile and bring Jack and David closer together—but it was to only last a short time.

All too soon Jack and Shirley's marriage began going the way of Jack's first marriage, and David was once again faced with divorce in the family. And many of the thousands of little things that tore apart Jack's relationship with Shirley also tore at his relationship with his son—and once again David was without a father figure.

As far as fathers go, David has been his own man since he was five—which is tragic.

## NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Careerwise, David's life picked up immensely when he got the part in *The Partridge Family*—but tragedy still lurked in the sidelines. Along with the sheer happiness of finally being successful came enormous responsibilities and pressures which threatened his health and well being. Several times he pushed himself or was pushed to the point of collapsing from exhaustion.

It all caught up with him one day on the set when unbearable pain ripped through his body and

sent him straight to the hospital. Within hours the decision was made to perform major gall bladder surgery the next morning—not much time to get into a good frame of mind for surgery. Once again David was scared, really scared—and in pain!

For the first time in his life he was faced with a life and death situation—and once again he found himself trying to appear brave and strong when he was really quite frightened. Once again he kept it all hidden inside.

Fortunately the surgery was successful and a month later he was back on his feet and hard at work. But the black shadow was still hanging over him.

## SAM DIES

Barely had he gotten back into good spirits when tragedy struck again—his much loved dog, Sam, died following a fight with another dog. He'd had the dog for over five years and it was just about the only steady, continuing factor in his life that hadn't changed radically with the coming of superstardom—but now he was gone.

The dog was replaced on David's next birthday with a lovely young female mutt, Kula, given to him by his roommate Sam. A short time later it too died, leaving David feeling like some sort of jinx. He's almost afraid now to get another one for fear it'll happen again. And for a boy who grew up with a dog always around, it's hard for David to get used to coming home to an empty house.

But perhaps the greatest tragedy of all in David's life is that he has never yet found one true love, one special girl, one really right relationship. He might have been able to face a lot of things with much more confidence if he'd had a lovely lady beside him—but love has so far eluded him.

David now is a success. He's survived his tragedies and learned from all of them. Let's hope there are no more.