

The Functional Family

Adult Children and Aging Parents

According to a recent Census done by Global Markets Research, 1/3 of Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 live at home with their parents.

Life Expectancy rates have increased dramatically in the US over the last 100 yrs.

1914 (M) 52 yrs. (F) 53 yrs.
2014 (M) 76 yrs. (F) 82 yrs.

As baby boomers live longer, any assistance that is required typically becomes the children's responsibility. For many families, the discussion about who will take care of Mom and Dad comes on the heels of a crisis. Most families are not prepared.

Still, with the increase in number of older adults comes the increase of adult children caring for their parents. More than 20 million in the U.S. alone provide care for an aging parent or in-law. What's more, families rather than institutions provide 80 percent of long-term care... themselves.

Four Necessary Attitudes and Actions

1) Embrace the Joy of Interdependence.

- a) Intergenerational dependence is scriptural... it is Kingdom!
- b) Paul's attitude toward Timothy

2 Tim 1:3-5 NIV I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. ⁴ Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

- c) The Bible celebrates and promotes healthy family dependence.
 - i) In Israel, the prophetic pre-cross picture of the NT Church:
 - (1) Children highly valued the Father's continued blessing.
 - (2) The wisdom of their mother was cherished.

Pro. 17:6 ESV Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.

2) Impart Spiritual Life into your Adult Children

Apostle Paul understood the power of Spiritual Fatherhood. He calls Timothy “my true son in the faith” (1Tim 1:2) and my “beloved” or “dear” son in 2 Tim: 1:2.

Leading Adult Sons and Daughters

- a) Pray over them 2 Tim. 1:3.
 - b) Challenge Them to Fight through all Obstacles 1Tim 1:18,19
 - c) Keep Imparting Confidence: Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young 1Tim. 4:12, “ you are not too young to be a great example for Jesus... 2Tim:1:7 God has not given you the spirit of timidity!
 - d) Continue to Teach them how to Treat Others: 1Tim. 5:1 Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, ² older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.
 - e) Warn them about the (evil) love and pursuit of money: 1Tim 6:9-10 Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.
 - f) Always Believe in Them. In 1Tim. 5:11 Paul says, but You! MAN OF GOD!
- ## 3) Offer the security of Honor to your Aging Parents Eph 6:1,2
- a) The greatest challenge for our aging parents is “Loss”
 - i) Losing their strength
 - ii) Losing their spouse
 - iii) Losing their independence
 - iv) Losing their confidence
 - b) How do you deal with Dysfunction Dependent Parents?
 - i) Deal with your past Hurts
 - ii) Honor what is Honorable, forgive what is Not!
 - iii) Take care of yourself. Self care: spirit soul and body care.
- ## 4) Focus of building positive relationships now!
- a) God is the God of Today! He wants to do a great work in your family today!

- b) The decline of a parent's health, death of one parent or financial pressures often mean an aging parent will need increased social and emotional support or services from family—such as help with meals, cleaning, transportation or financial matters.

Quality relationships make for the best decision-making and ease the burdens of caregiving.

Life-long conflicts and unresolved issues from childhood and adolescence will most certainly activate inner conflicts and negative feelings. Being called upon to provide support to an aging parent can be particularly difficult when the relationship is already strained.

- c) What Can You Do?

- i) Honestly assess the degree of closeness in your relationship. Get busy.

- ii) Identify areas of conflicts.

- (1) To what extent do you now have conflicts with your mother/father?

- (2) How would you say you have contributed to each conflict? We cannot change another person, but often there are things we can do—for example, improve the way we communicate or change the circumstances—that may reduce conflict.

- iii) Seek Assistance