

Martyrdom benefits neither child nor parent

I learned it from my parents. You learned it from yours. Being a parent is a lot of hard work and sacrifice. It means being tied down by your kids and by your sense of responsibility. It means taking fewer risks with your life style because you have to think about your children's welfare. It means that mothers can take a career seriously. It's the time for us to grow up and settle down.

All of which sounds like a great bore. In this age of the pill, however, young couples have a choice, and a number of them are saying no to parenthood. Others are saying not yet.

They'll tell you they have decided to take care of their own needs first. They like their freedom and are unwilling to trade it for the martyr-like style of their parents.

That's what we learned from our parents. Being free and happy is for kids, not for parents.

It's as though the two can't co-exist. That's very sad, because parents need to have fun, too. Becoming a parent doesn't mean you have given up your need for personal happiness. You need freedom to pursue the things that turn you on, just like your chil-

dren do. And, just like your kids, you need to feel that your personal whims are important.

THE FACT is that we are all kids, no matter what our age. It's just that some of us are bigger, older kids; and we have deemed that the bigger, older kids must sacrifice themselves for the smaller, younger ones. Which is nice for the smaller, younger set, right?

Wrong. Young children need parental care, but they also need to learn to take care of themselves.

When it comes to child-raising, more is not necessarily better. In fact, too much parenting can be at least as harmful as too little. If mother birds were uncontrollable martyrs, their little birds would not learn to take care of themselves. We would see a lot more birds walking.

Along with clean diapers, food, naps and cuddling, young children need a variety of stimulation. They benefit from exposure to more than one or two adults. Being around other human beings, of all ages, is a good developmental experience for children. But

a lot of kids don't get much of this because their over-responsible parents feel guilty about babysitters and day care centers.

Learning to entertain yourself is a personal resource that will serve a person well all of his or her life. This is kept from the child of the martyred parent. She feels too guilty when she is not giving her child her full attention, to let her children don't learn how to be self-entertainers.

OF COURSE, it's not as simple as that. No parent intentionally sets out to be a martyr. But, even for modern-minded parents, it can seem like a juggling act, balancing precariously between being too self-sacrificing and being neglectful.

The reason is most of us assume responsible child care and parental fun must be in competition with each other. We feel guilty when we discard our responsibilities even for a short time, as though we are having a good time at the expense of our helpless little children.

And it's this either-or, us-or-them attitude that must be re-examined if you want to shed your martyrdom.

By
BOB TRENZ,
Ph.D.



Parents who have succeeded at becoming unmartyred have taken on a more positive attitude. They believe that successful parenting means finding ways to meet the needs of their kids and their own childlessness simultaneously. Instead of looking for compromises to make parenthood more tolerable, they seek solutions that make winners out of both the parents and the children.

Unmartyred parents don't just accumulate a list of reliable babysitters. They spend a great effort seeking or developing childcare alternatives that

add to their child's life. Rather than just finding someone responsible to watch their children, they find sitters who are interested in sharing new experiences with their children.

SOMETIMES THIS can be done by just finding the right person for the job. You would be surprised at how many sitters would like to be more than just child-watchers. Given some suggestions, some materials, and some teaching, babysitters can become opportunities for creative experiences for your children.

You'll know you've made it in this department when your son or daughter says, "Why don't you and Dad go out tonight—and get me a sitter." You might be amazed at how cooperative your children will be in helping you to become a liberated parent. By providing games and projects and a little encouragement, you can help bring out your child's self-sufficiency. Solitude can be a very positive experience for children when their parents give it to them creatively rather than neglectfully.

Some of the most successful liberated families have instituted quiet times in their households. These are times when any family member has

the option of playing, reading or relaxing alone, if he or she wants it. Everyone tries to respect this. Children are helped to find quiet, self-entertaining activities so that they, too, can learn the pleasure of personal free time.

Once you adopt this attitude that parental liberation can be good for your offspring, you're more than half-way there. Then, it's just a case of applying your creative problem-solving abilities to the task.

Of course, you'll run into a guilt feeling once in a while. But that's because guilt feelings are a little stupid—they mean well, but they don't always know when they are incorrect. And the same can be said for well-meaning neighbors, friends and martyred parents everywhere. Being a liberated parent may require the courage to be a maverick.

But it's worth it. Remember that you learned to be a martyred parent from your own martyrdom. What kind of parental model do you want to teach to your children?

Bob Trenz is a marriage counselor and psychologist in Rochester. Letters to Dr. Trenz should be addressed to P.O. Box 43, Rochester 48063.

Human potential leader sets new seminar

Dr. Nathaniel Branden, internationally known psychologist-author-lecturer, has announced a major new phase in his 20-year career in the "human potential" movement with a 40-hour workshop entitled "Self-Esteem and the Art of Being."

The first greater Detroit area workshop takes place April 14-17 at the Northfield Hilton Inn in Troy. Branden, well known since his widely publicized association with novelist-philosopher Ayn Rand, said devotees of the objectivist philosophical movement and mental health professionals have been suggesting to him for years that he call his two decades of experience in enhancing self-esteem into a marathon program.

"Since the advent of the so-called 'pop psyche' or 'growth' therapies of the late 1960s, those suggestions have occurred more often," Branden said, "because my colleagues desired to see qualified professionals enter the field."

The author of "The Psychology of Self-Esteem," "Breaking Free," and "The Disowned Self," added that while "Self-Esteem" shares similarities with some of these other programs in terms of form, it differs greatly in goals, philosophy and methods.

"I am not interested in merely providing a peak experience that will dissipate in a few weeks or months," Branden explained. "I am interested

in providing sustained and enduring results that change lives."

"Self-Esteem" was presented for the first time in Washington, to a group of about 75 participants last month. Afterwards, Branden told associates and colleagues:

"I can happily say that the results were of a kind I would not have dared promise in advance. Witnessing the growing aliveness, spontaneity, authenticity and self-esteem of the students who participated was one of the most rewarding experiences of my professional life."

That facilitates awareness, acceptance, responsibility, and assertion; interactions with others in the workshop and with the self. The techniques are

aimed at removing the self-imposed limits that confine our lives. The results are expanded behavioral boundaries to increase the feeling of being competent to deal with the challenges of life, both at work and in personal relationships."

Explained Branden, "The workshop is not a lecture series, nor psychotherapy. But it does contain elements of teaching, a variety of exercises."

Branden said his organization, the Bioenergetic Institute, already has scheduled a "Self-Esteem" workshop in Los Angeles in March and in the Greater Detroit area this April. He tentatively plans about six workshops annually across the country.

Jewish Awareness Week set by EMU

The second annual Jewish Awareness Week, sponsored by the Eastern Michigan University Jewish Student Alliance, will be held March 21-24 on the EMU campus.

Events planned for the week include a lecture by Ranan Lurie, an acclaimed political cartoonist published in more than 200 newspapers; Israeli folk dancing; a Protestant, Catholic and Jewish dialogue presented by clergymen from each faith; a photographic exhibition and a videotape presentation of best-selling author Chaim Potok speaking on "Religion-Culture Crosscurrents in the Jewish Experience."

David Blumberg, student coordinator for Jewish Awareness Week, says the week is designed to make people aware of Jewish people and their activities.

Ranan Lurie, political cartoonist for the Los Angeles Times, will participate in a rap session at 6 p.m. Monday, March 21, in Room 207, Sill Hall.

An illustrated lecture of his cartoons will be held at 8 p.m. in Roosevelt Auditorium.

Israeli folk dancing led by Valerie Moffett, assistant professor of dance at EMU, will be held in McKenny Union's Guild Hall from 7:30 to 9 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22. Visitors should come to this event ready to participate.

On Wednesday, March 23, a Protestant-Catholic-Jewish dialogue will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Phelps-Sellers

Lounge. Panel members will include Rabbi Bill Rudolph of Bnai Brith Hill-Field Foundation in Ann Arbor; Rev. David Mair from EMU United Ministries in Higher Education and Fr. Robert T. Kern of Holy Trinity Chapel in Ypsilanti.

A videotaped presentation of author Chaim Potok speaking on "Religion-Culture Crosscurrents in the Jewish Experience" will be presented in the Buell Hall Lounge at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 24.

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| <p>NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 3633 W. Big Beaver, Troy (Between Adams and Coolidge) 10 A.M. Sunday Worship Service and Church School MACKAY TAYLOR, PASTOR 644-9520</p> | <p>The Congregational Church of Birmingham, U.C.C. Woodward at Crumbrook Bloomfield Hills MI 48311 Worship and Church School 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. Pastor: Rev. Charles O. Erickson Rev. James E. Adams, Jr.</p> | <p>NATIVITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH 1700 W. 13 Mile Rd. 17 Mile East of Lake SUNDAY WORSHIP 9:00 A.M. & 10:30 A.M. Site and Church School at 10:30 Monday through Friday McBride Services 11:00 A.M. Pastor: John C. Frederburgh</p> | <p>Bloomfield Hills Christian Church The Community House 380 South Bates, Birmingham Sunday 10:10 A.M. Bible School 11:00 A.M. Worship 6:00 P.M. Praise Service Wednesday 7:15 P.M. Bible Study Joseph P. Lukacs, Pastor 851-8516</p> | <p>St. John American Lutheran Church 2322 68th Road Farmington Hills Pastor: Rev. Robert L. Smith Worship Services at 9:00 and 11:00 Sunday School 10:15 Nursery Provided</p> | <p>Bethlehem Lutheran Church 35300 Eight Mile Road Farmington Hills 445-2070 Worship 8:30-9:00 a.m. Church School 9:00-10:00 a.m. Pastor: Rev. Robert L. Smith</p> | <p>ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 165 E. Saginaw Lake Road Southfield, Michigan (1/2 mile East of Woodward) 254-9233 Ministries: Roger Innes Church School 9:45 A.M. Worship Service 11:00 A.M. Pastors: L. J. Peterson, L. H. Rose & L. H. Peterson</p> | <p>FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF DETROIT 21200 Southfield Road at 8 Mile Southfield, Michigan 569-2972 Paul A. Jellison, Jr., Minister Church School 9:30 a.m. Worship Services 11:00 a.m. Pastors: Rev. Robert L. Smith</p> |
| <p>THE FRANKLIN BAPTIST CHURCH 26109 Gammon Hill Road of Franklin Rd. Franklin, Michigan 48025 Rev. Ronald E. Leon, Pastor Phone 851-0532</p> | <p>ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH 225 W. Maple Birmingham SUNDAYS SERVICES 9:00 A.M. Holy Communion 9:15 and 11:00 A.M. Morning Prayer 9:15 and 11:00 A.M. Church School (Worship through 8th grades) Worship 10:00 and 11:00 A.M. Holy Communion</p> | <p>BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH 5631 North Adams Road 1/2 mile North of E. Long Lake Rd. SUNDAY 8:15 A.M. Malters 9:30 A.M. Sunday School 11:00 A.M. Morning Worship Pastor: Fred W. MacLellan, Pastor Quane F. Schaefer, Pastor MI 48041 MI 6-5124</p> | <p>St. Andrew Lutheran Church 1225 Longview Road Farmington Hills, Michigan 445-2070 Worship Services at 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. Sunday School 10:15 A.M. Pastor: Rev. Robert L. Smith</p> | <p>CROSS OF CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH Grove Road and Lake Road Farmington Hills, Michigan 445-2070 SUNDAY SERVICES OF WORSHIP 9:00 A.M. and 10:30 A.M. YOUTH BIBLE CLASSES 9:00 A.M. SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL 10:30 A.M. The Reverend Gordon H. Light, Pastor</p> | <p>NORTHWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 14 Mile and Luther Road Farmington Hills, Michigan 445-2070 Pastors: L. J. Peterson, L. H. Rose & L. H. Peterson Phone: 642-0200</p> | <p>WORSHIP WITH US DURING LENT 10:00 a.m. Service — 11:30 a.m. Church School SUNDAY: "The Gospel of Prayer" Homer J. Armstrong, Pastor</p> | <p>WELCOME NORTHWESTERN BAPTIST CHURCH 19421 WEST TEN MILE, SOUTHFIELD MI.</p> |
| <p>First United Methodist Church 1589 West Maple at Pleasant Ministries: James W. Wright, G. Bryan Evans John H. Jones, Thomas H. Brown</p> | <p>First Baptist Church of Farmington Richard Duncan, Pastor - Phone 474-0350</p> | <p>Farmington Hills Baptist On Middlebelt Road Between 12 & 13 Mile Rds. Worship 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Bible School 9:45 a.m. Family Night—Wed. 7:30 p.m. Rev. Fred G. Porter, Pastor 851-0310 Rev. Gerald Watts, Assistant Pastor A CONSERVATIVE BAPTIST CHURCH</p> | <p>CLARENCVILLE UNITED METHODIST 20000 Middlebelt, Livonia Pastor: Gerald Fisher 474-8444 Worship Services at 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. Sunday School 10:15 A.M. Pastor: Rev. Robert L. Smith</p> | <p>First Baptist Church 1225 Longview Road Farmington Hills, Michigan 445-2070 Worship Services at 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. Sunday School 10:15 A.M. Pastor: Rev. Robert L. Smith</p> | <p>St. Andrew Lutheran Church 1225 Longview Road Farmington Hills, Michigan 445-2070 Worship Services at 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. Sunday School 10:15 A.M. Pastor: Rev. Robert L. Smith</p> | <p>Christian Science Churches FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST BIRMINGHAM 191 Chester at Willis</p> | <p>First Baptist Church of Farmington Richard Duncan, Pastor - Phone 474-0350</p> |
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