

PARENT'S CORNER

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Dealing with parenting guilt rationally

G Guilt. It's part of the parenting experience. We want the best for our kids.

Whenever we fall short of our own high expectations, make mistakes, or doubt ourselves, we are vulnerable to guilt. Parents have to make important choices: Natural childbirth vs. medication, breast feeding vs. bottles, daycare vs. parent care. Guilty feelings can be helpful or destructive. It's how parents deal with guilt that makes all the difference.

At a parenting workshop, a mom shared her feelings of guilt over an incident with her 4-year-old son, Nick.

He loved collecting wrappers. Gum wrappers, candy wrappers, snack bar wrappers, he kept them all. When his collection grew large, Mom would secretly remove some and throw them away.

One day, Nick noticed a handful of his prized wrappers in the garbage. With disbelief he asked her why she was throwing away his collection. Mom felt a pang of guilt.

Guilt causes discomfort which makes us take notice of our actions. Mom wanted to throw away the excess wrappers, but she didn't feel good about sneaking them out.

She decided to give Nick a box to keep his wrappers in and told him that when the box got full, it would be his job to keep the best wrappers and throw away the rest. Her guilt led her to a productive solution that kept her actions in line with her values. In this case guilt was helpful.

Challenge your beliefs

Sometimes guilt is not helpful. Just because you feel guilty, doesn't mean you really are.

Janice's daughter, Ashley was born with asthma. Whenever she begins to wheeze, Janice feels guilty. To eliminate guilt you have two choices: Change your actions or change your beliefs. A person's beliefs can be changed by specifically stating them and challenging their validity. Janice

had trouble putting her beliefs into words, but she finally came up with this: "It's not fair that I can't breathe freely while Ashley has to strain for air. She has asthma because of my genes. I suffer when my child suffers."

To challenge her beliefs, she needs to ask herself three questions:

■ Is there any evidence that my beliefs are not true?

■ Is there an alternate way for me to view the situation?

■ Will my current beliefs lead me to a positive outcome?

Faced with these three questions, Janice forced herself to reevaluate her thoughts. This process led her to conclude: "Life is not fair, but it is precious. It wouldn't help my daughter for me to have asthma too. It makes Ashley feel bad when I pity her. Ashley was created with my genes. It's a package deal."

"If the alternative to life with asthma was no life, I would choose life. I do suffer when Ashley suffers, but the outcome I've been creating has caused Ashley to feel bad for me and that's the last thing I want. The outcome I want is for Ashley to learn to manage her asthma and see herself as a strong and capable girl. That sure isn't the message I've been sending her, but it will be from now on."

Having challenged her beliefs, Janice freed herself of destructive guilt.

Letting go of the past

Sometimes parents can't let go of their guilt from the past. Let's see how Robert's dad worked through his guilt. Six years old, Robert, was help-

Please see PARENTING, C7

It's breathtaking:

Prince of Peace Lutheran has new look with dramatic, colorful stained glass windows

Price of Peace Lutheran Church members will mark a special occasion on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 12.

The Farmington Hills church will dedicate its new stained glass windows at its 10:45 a.m. services. The public also may view the windows during normal office hours - 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday and by appointment on Friday.

Ideas for the new windows, which ring the top of the sanctuary walls, percolated for about five years. Member Sue Mabry worked with the former pastor of the church to devise a plan for replacing 130 amber and textured windows which dated from the church's original construction in the 1970s.

She and other women formed a committee, researched and reviewed bids and chose Thompson Art Glass from Brighton for the project. Dirk Thompson, who designed the new windows, matched the colors and pattern to other windows in the sanctuary. His cousin, John Thompson, installed the windows and his grandfather, designed the original windows in the church years ago.

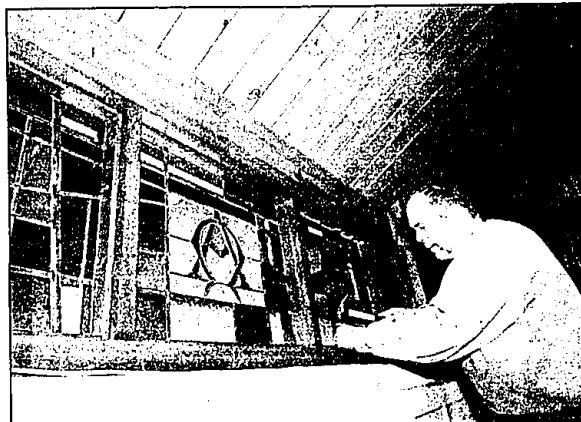
The project cost \$47,000 and was funded by donations from church members in less than six months.

That's a "God-sized feat" for a congregation that averages 150 people at a worship service, says the Rev. Tom Lange, church pastor.

The windows are made of hand-blown Blenko glass. The pattern is an abstract one, broken up with 32 windows that contain scenes or symbols — we call them medallion windows — that call to mind stories from the Bible of the promises of God given to the people of Israel and fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ," Lange noted.

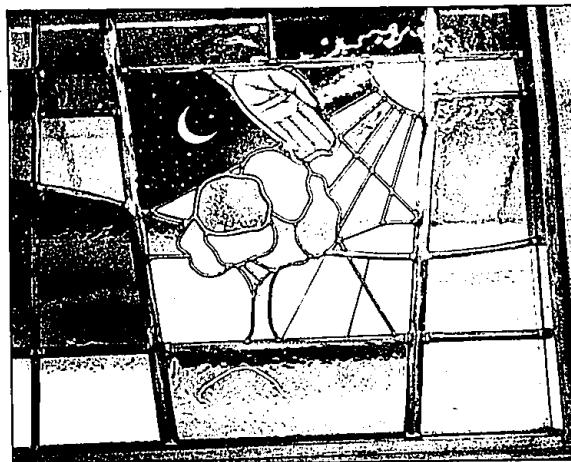
"When the first windows were installed, the change was so dramatic it was almost breathtaking. Several people literally gasped when they walked into the sanctuary and saw them. Now when people come who are new to the church, they won't know the dramatic difference they have made. What they will see instead are beautiful windows that will hopefully enhance their worship experience and open them up a little bit more to God's work in their lives."

Committee members included Bonnie Hart, Greta Goodwin, Marge Chellstorp, Karen Weber and Brenda Hawkins, in addition to Mabry.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL BRENNER

Glass, at last: John Thompson installs one of the final panes of stain glass in the sanctuary of Prince of Peace Church in Farmington Hills. The new windows, 126 panels in all, are designed to blend with the original stained glass, designed and installed by Thompson's father and uncle back when the church was built in the early 1970s. Below, the new panels located about eight feet high are designed to blend with and complement the original vertical glass.



Details: Some of the panel designs include flashed glass that allows small details like the moon and stars in this design.



Consider these unusual gifts

BY CAROL MARSHALL
SPECIAL WRITER

How about ...

- Sky Adventures, hot air balloon rides, Oxford. (248) 628-1000
- Motor City Harley Davidson, Farmington Hills. (248) 473-7433
- Let Mary Cook, prepared meals, Novi. (248) 380-8460
- Tamar's Spa, Farmington Hills. (248) 855-0474.
- Bijan Air, helicopter rides, Ann Arbor. (734) 769-8400
- House of Taitcoing, Westland. (734) 728-7228

"Our season is finally here," chuckled balloon pilot and owner Dennis Kollin. "And we do sell a lot of gift certificates for Mother's Day."

A one-hour flight, three hours for the total experience, which includes after-flight champagne and

hours d'oeuvres at Kalloway's, costs \$160 per person for parties of two or more, or \$170 for a private rate.

If Mom prefers a faster pace, perhaps a helicopter ride is more her style. McMahon Helicopters in Canton offers helicopter charters for around \$800, and Bijan Air in Ann Arbor has packages between \$250 and \$800.

"People love to give helicopter rides for Mother's Day, anniversaries and birthdays," said business owner Bijan, adding passengers' favorite destination spot is a pass over their homes.

And if your mother is a serious woman on-the-go, perhaps something from Motor City Harley Davidson in Farmington Hills is more her style.

"We have a lot of moms and grandmas that ride," said clothing manager Gina Gilardon.

The shop offers something for every budget and level of interest, from pins to collectibles to chrome parts for her machine.

As for buying mom a motorcycle, Gilardon said not to hesitate.

"Oh yeah," she said with a grin. "I bought a motorcycle as a gift once. It went over really well. It was terrific."

If the gift of a Harley for a day is better suited to your budget, Motor City offers daily rental rates between \$125 and \$150, depending on the size of the bike.

HURRAY FOR OFF-BEAT MOMS:


Off her feet

Perhaps what your mother really wants is a chance to unwind and be pampered from head to toe. Tamara's Spa in Farmington Hills offers vinotherapy red wine massages and facials to help her relax and rejuvenate.

"It includes everything we do. We have the body scrub, massage and facial and merlot facials," said spa owner Tamara Friedman, who first experienced a red wine facial on a trip to France. "Wine has a fantastic effect on the skin. It's full of antioxidants and antiaging qualities. When I experienced it I knew I had to bring it here."

The spa offers a special for Mother's Day, the Mother and Daughter Red Wine and Roses

Please see MOTHER'S DAY, C7