

Sandwich generation finds test of faith

I have had both friends and clients tell me that when one is a member of the sandwich generation sometimes one can feel as if they have lost their faith.

The Sandwich Generation is that generation of middle aged adults who are caught in the middle of what their teenage to adult children want, and what their parents want and need, as they themselves pay attention to what they want and need. The Sandwich Generation member feels like they have lost their faith when the stress of this balancing act becomes too great. On the other hand, it can take all of the faith which one has to feel as if they are adequately paying attention to these three important acts of needs.

There is probably no simple advice coming forth from Scrip-

ture to give us quick, simple and clear guidelines as to how to do this. The older models do not always work. Previous generations have, like ours, faced the issues of both the raising of children and eldercare. Simply put, elder care was accomplished through family and community living. Previous generations had at least some, if not all, extended family in the same geographical location.

Changes occur

Children and grandchildren were involved in the lives of older relatives. There was often mutual care; the older generation took care of the younger when the middle generation worked. Many changes have occurred. Now families live far apart. The age range is greater as older people live longer, mid-

dle aged folks have waited longer to start a family, and it is often a challenge financially to put it all together.

Each generation needs and wants a sense of control and purpose. Inner control allows one to feel that they have power over their environment and make their own decisions. But this is the crucial loss for the older generation as they lose capabilities and skills. External control means there is a feeling of no control over what happens. Both the middle and older generations can feel that way, especially if the needs of the older folks are huge and the middle generation is caught among their needs, those of their parents, and those of their children.

Some of the things which the Sandwich Generation members can do to help themselves with

these huge life changes might involve launching their children with greater responsibility for their lives. Keep their marriage fresh. Pay attention to your own work and career and make sure it is not put on the back burner. Prepare for the inevitabilities of what aging does, both to parents and to yourself. Review roles and responsibilities to allow for maximum support in your own household and as you care for the older relatives. Both men and women need to participate in the care of the older relative. Review your life to assess if you are where you hoped you would be by middle age. Help your parents, if they are able, to do a life review and assess where they are.

Financial plan

Other more practical consider-

ations might include clarity and ease of household management, your own and the living situation of the parents. Have a financial plan for yourselves, your kids and your parents. Make use not only of family but friends and other community resources in the care of your parents. Do not let your parents' needs overwhelm and push aside those of yourself. Keep everyone abreast of health problems and other changes with the older adults.

This is not a complete list. But, as we value our parents, as we think of ourselves as part of the family of our faith community, and as we focus on the kind of care we would hope for ourselves, we can gather some of the strength needed to survive the Sandwich Generation Years.

YOUR FAITH



Paul Melrose

Paul Melrose is staff therapist at the Samaritan Counseling Center of Southeast Michigan. He can be reached at 248-474-4701 or at www.melanais.org/paulmelrose.

Hills actress job is more than just an illusion

Friends admonish wannabe actors never to quit their day jobs. One young Farmington Hills actress has found a way to beat the system.

Jennifer Hoemke performs as an illusionist assistant. What's that? And how do you explain it to a family that has supported theater studies at Wayne State University for four years.

"Being an illusionist's assistant is something that just kind of fell into my lap," said Hoemke, a former Miss Farmington/Oakland County in 1998. She was among the top 10 finalists in the Miss Michigan pageant the following year.

Educational shows

She performs with Scheer

Genius Productions. With owner Doug Scheer, the duo travel throughout Michigan performing a variety of 40-minute educational shows for students in grades kindergarten through grade 6.

"In these small theatrical plays, I perform off the wall, silly, sick-like characters that the kids find entertaining," she said.

"And that's where my acting skills are used. The shows deal with such issues as conflict resolution, life skills, math and a Halloween safety show. The illusions are big and colorful and I use my dance skills and flexibility to help me squeeze in and out of small tight places. I find myself being chopped into three pieces, shrunk to about a foot

tall and I appear and disappear quite often, just to name a few of the tricks I get to perform."

Hoemke feels strongly about her commitment to theater, a commitment that was tested during a recent illness that kept her in bed for more than a month.

"God gave me a gift, a passion for theater and the skills I need to perform. I love making an audience laugh, cry and forget their worries for a while and we shouldn't waste the gifts God gives us!"

She credits her parents for getting her started in theater. Her father, Grant Hoemke, is a musician, conductor and an instrumental music educator in the Farmington Public Schools.

"God gave me a passion for theater. I love making an audience laugh, cry and forget their worries for awhile."

Jennifer Hoemke
—actress

"My folks started me in music at a young age. I grew up going to see shows, listening to musicals, and watching the older classic musicals on TV. My parents took me to see *The Phantom of the Opera* for my 16th birthday and I've been hooked since. My mom's my biggest fan. And my grandma was a singer with

the Don Large Chorus and she had a strong theatrical background. I would say it's in my blood!"

Miss America role model

Heather Whitestone, Miss America 1994, is a role model. "She was the first Miss America with a disability to win the title. She is deaf and if you ever see her dance, it's an unbelievable sight. She's a beautiful ballet dancer. The amazing part is she can't hear the music."

"I have respect for Heather's devotion to her faith, her willingness to help others, her determination to succeed and to grow as a woman and her strength to face each challenge that comes her way," added Hoemke. "I try



Jennifer Hoemke

to live my life the same way and I honestly feel she is an excellent role model for young women."

Hoemke loves all types of performing, but prefers musical theater.

"As long as I have the chance to continually develop my skills in any area, I'm happy."

Pooh Visits Storyland returning to Marquis Theatre Aug. 7 through Sept. 16

Pooh Visits Storyland returns to Northville's historic Marquis Theatre stage Aug. 7 through Sept. 16.

Pooh Visits Storyland tells the musical story of a cuddly whimsical bear named Pooh who becomes lost looking for his pot of honey. In search of his favorite treat,

Pooh gets mysteriously swept far away from home in a windstorm and ends up in Storyland.

Performance dates and times are 10:30 a.m. Tuesday through Friday, Aug. 7-10, 14-17, and 21-24; Saturdays at 2:30 p.m. Aug. 11, 18, 25 and Sept. 8 and 15; Sun-

days at 2:30 p.m. Sept. 9 and 16.

No children under 3 years old allowed. For more information, call the Marquis Theatre located at 135 E. Main Street in downtown Northville at (248) 349-8110.

"Pooh Visits Storyland tells the musical story of a cuddly whimsical bear named Pooh who gets lost looking for his pot of honey."

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 4 of the Self-Service Storage Facility Act, State of Michigan, the undersigned will sell at public auction sale by competitive bidding. Sales are for cash only. Removal within 24 hours for sale are storage units for which rent and fees are past due.

On the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at Public Storage, 34050 Nine Mile Rd., Farmington, MI 48335 (248) 473-4020 on August 21, 2001 at 12:45 P.M. the personal property described below:

In the matter of:
Richard Phillips Jr., space C010 - Misc. items.
Kelly Sims, space B006 - Sofa, chairs, misc. items.
Carl Wheeler Sr., space H003 - Fax mach. monitor, scanner, speakers.
Raymond Northrup, space C015 - Riding mower, wheels.
Ron Turkin, space B078 - Misc. boxes, table, T.V. misc. items.
Michael Palus, space C062 - Misc. items, boxes.
Johnnie F. Holloway, space D011 - Microwave, T.V., misc. items.
All sales subject to adjournment.

Public: July 19 & 20, 2001

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The City of Farmington Hills reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, either in part or in whole, to waive any formalities and to accept the bid which it believes to be in the best interest of the City.

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City Clerk

Public: July 19, 2001

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