

# 3 remedies to improve your relationships WITH YOUR ADULT CHILDREN



## Hello my friends.

I'm going to give you three tools you can start using that will improve your connection with your adult children. These tools will help you to choose to love them despite whatever their behavior may be.

In our premortal existence, we were all brothers and sisters and all children of our Heavenly parents. When we came to earth, we were helpless babies, that were placed in a family, to be raised by a mother and father. Then WE grew up and became parents of helpless human babies to nurture with love, guidance, and righteous teachings. As everyone grew older, we thought our children would want to maintain the close connection we always had had.

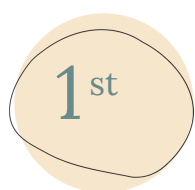
When our children became adults, we thought we could act like adults when we were around each other. But, it seemed as though the relationship was turned upside-down. We were no longer emotionally close like we were when they were the children.

It's hard being an adult parent to an adult child; it's hard being an adult child with a parent. Parents don't know when, how, and often don't want to "cut the apron strings". Adult children have a high desire to cut the apron strings so that they can learn to grow on their own.

The good news is that nothing has gone wrong. That means that you just need to figure out what YOU need to do to stay connected and improve your relationship with your adult children.

These three suggested remedies, if applied, can help you feel peace, compassion, and love in your relationship with your adult children.

- Commit to loving your children no matter what they do or don't do.
- Throw the manual away about what you expect your child to do or say.
- Take responsibility to "get a life".



## **You have to commit to just love your adult children.**

I don't think we fully understand how amazing love feels but also that the purpose of love is to just love . It's not something earned; it's not something you give to someone if they deserve it; it's a gift you give yourself. love just loves. When you love someone, you're the one that benefits. You get to feel the most amazing emotion of all emotions to feel. LOVE.

We create all of our own feelings through our thoughts. Your thoughts are your interpretations about the actions of something or someone else. It's your opinion or perspective of what is going on in your life.

For example, when your adult son doesn't reply to your text, you might think (A) he is being disrespectful or you might think or (B) he's busy caring for his family.

When he doesn't ask you about what's going on in your life, you might have the thought that he's self-centered or you're not important to him. You could choose the thought that he has a lot on his mind or he's concerned about paying the bills. Same situation; two different thoughts or perspectives; resulting in two different feelings felt.

## **Nothing has gone wrong.**

All of us just want to feel good. We need to take responsibility and be in charge of our own happiness. What our adult children do or say is not the cause of our happiness or unhappiness. It's our thoughts about what they say or do that is the cause of our feelings.

The good news is we are responsible for choosing our thoughts; thus, we are responsible for choosing all of our feelings.

I have a very distant relationship with one of my sons. There was a time that when we did talk, it was very short. When I texted him he would answer several days later with only one or two words.

He never inquired about what was going on in my life and he never shared anything about his life unless I asked. I had the thought "I must repulse him". Having this thought made me very sad. When I changed my thought to "he loves me; he's showing it the only way he knows how", I was no longer sad. I was at peace. I felt love.

Do I feel hurt when my children say or do hurtful things to me ? You bet I can. But only momentarily because when I am committed to love, my brain can take me straight to a loving thought. When I can

put my ego aside from being dependent on feeling loved by my children's actions, I can focus on just loving them.

2<sup>nd</sup>

## **Throw the manual away about what you expect your child to do or say.**

Yes, get rid of the manual! You have a manual for your car that tells you what to expect when a service light comes on or what to do to maintain your car to keep it in a good running condition.

A manual is a guide that tells us what to do for best results and rules to follow for best outcomes. It's only natural you would have a "manual" with lists of expectations of how adult children should act. But in reality, that infringes on their agency, so throw out your manual.

I'll never forget when my oldest son came home for Thanksgiving during his first year of college. My manual was written something like this: "as an adult, you'll wash your own clothes, you'll clean up after yourself in the kitchen, you'll go to bed before 2am, you'll help with dinner, and we will spend one on one time together".

I remember waking up at 2am to find a bunch of 19 year olds having a marshmallow fight in the kitchen, dirty dishes all over the kitchen and living room, screaming and loud laughter. My manual said, "after the age of 18 you should act like a mature adult". My manual was wrong!

When my kids got married, they pulled away from me and grew close to their spouses. My manual said they would "cleave" unto their spouse, but I would still be just as important in their lives.



When my youngest son got married, he replaced me as the most important woman in his life with his wife. I remember asking him which day of the week they wanted to come to dinner and he politely replied not very often. One more item to delete from my manual.

Again, my expectation, my “manual”, was wrong. You may have many more items in your manual of how things are supposed to go in your relationship with your adult children. In doing so, you are setting yourself up for disappointment.

It doesn't matter what other adult children are doing with their parents, your children are unique unto themselves. A manual can be produced for a Honda Pilot because they were all manufactured the same, but our children are each unique and lovable and difficult all at the same time. There is only one thing they need to be. They just need to be themselves.

My son Ben just needs to be Ben. Ben just needs to be as Ben as he can be. When you are disappointed or mad that they don't come to Thanksgiving Dinner but go to their spouses home instead, you are setting yourself up for weakening your relationship with them.

You can be disappointed they aren't coming to your house but realize that it's because you're having thoughts about why they aren't coming. Perhaps you are thinking the other parents are the favorite parents.

Maybe you are thinking they aren't very considerate because you will be having Thanksgiving alone with your husband. Perhaps you are angry because they went to the in-laws last Thanksgiving. But there is always another perspective as to why they are choosing this action.

There is no manual for how adult children are supposed to act towards their parents. They just need to be them, and you just need to be you.

3<sup>rd</sup>

### Take responsibility to “get a life”.

You get to figure out what you want to accomplish in your life, now that one of your major roles has changed. You get to find what “rocks your boat” in this stage of your life. Maybe it’s back to school, writing a book, starting a business, going back to work, volunteering, or getting more engaged in a hobby you’ve always loved.

This remedy is for you to figure out how to complete yourself. There is still so much ahead of you. This is a magnificent part of your life but you have to figure out what your purpose is now. You can’t refer to “the good old days” as the days when all your children were living with you. **Right now is “the good old days”.** Happiness and fulfillment is available to you right now; you just have to create it. Dream big....it’s not too late! It’s the perfect time to go after a big goal you thought was impossible. You may have even more time to pursue what you want now. Here are some questions to get you started:

- Ask yourself; “who do I want to be, what do I want to be, and what do I want to do”? Sincerely answer those questions.

- Make a bucket list of everything you want to do from your present age until you are 100 years old.
- Make a list of your strategies to make all your dreams come true.

Your children will start feeling independent; you will start feeling valued. You get to choose how you will stay connected in your adult child's life, no matter the circumstance.

Your children might tell you they never want to see you again; when your adult son gets married, he may stop sharing much of anything with you; they might move far away or not tell you where they are living causing no physical connection; they may stop wanting you to physically embrace them; they may sneak into town and not tell you; they may not contact you in any way very often.

That's only a few things that a parent might feel is the reason as to why they are struggling in staying connected in their relationship. By YOU making the choice to stay connected, even if you don't know how, you've taken a huge step in creating the connection you want to have.

The next step is to choose thoughts that cause you to feel love toward your child. This is what will enable you to stay connected, regardless of their behavior. Because it is easy to do, it also means it is easy not to do. It takes practice to become adept at managing your thoughts to evidently feel connected to your child.



**Staying connected and creating love is a choice.**  
**Here are some suggestions to help:**

- ✓ Remember tender times spent together. Name the feeling; write down thoughts you were having when you felt that emotion.
- ✓ Take an interest in what your child is interested in; google it, talk to people who have the same interests, read about it.
- ✓ Focus on all the positive things about your child.
- ✓ Be curious about why they do what they do; be curious about why you are choosing the particular thoughts you are thinking about their behavior.
- ✓ Choose a mantra that helps you feel peace and love about your child. Mine is, "my son loves me and this is the only way he knows how to show it".
- ✓ Remember he is blood of your blood; remember he is a child of God; remember he is your equal.
- ✓ Choose to love and show compassion to yourself first.

Once YOU give up showing love to your child, you are choosing not to be a part of his life. Once you quit believing that you can feel the same about them as the day they were born, you've decided that it's hopeless to have tender, loving feelings toward them.

They may want to exit the relationship they have with you, but you can always choose to stay connected with them. Once you make the decision to hang in there, not needing love reciprocated to you to love them, is when you discover that you can always be connected to your child.

It's the power of the mind that allows that to happen. The magic happens when you believe you are connected; the magic is accepting the good and the bad and loving all of the person. Loving yourself and loving others always wins.

What your children want most for you is for you to be happy.

When you are in charge of your life you will find it possible to choose love on purpose. Choosing to love everyone is possible otherwise we would not have been asked to do so by the Savior. It's easy to understand but harder to apply.

**With help from a coach, you can learn to Love on Purpose.**

**LET'S CHAT!**

*Click here to sign up for a free, 1:1, 60 minute consult.*

*I love helping people learn the tools they need to end the struggle with their adult children and connect with them in a way they never dreamed possible.*



♡ *Bonnie Lyman*