

HUMAN BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATES

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24Hrs—7 days week

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TREATING PEOPLE RIGHT

Empty Nest Syndrome

Are you getting your older children ready to attend college, or your adult children wanting to engage in life on their own? Empty Nest Syndrome refers to feelings of depression, sadness, and/or grief experienced by parents and caregivers after children come of age and leave their childhood homes. This may occur when children go to college or get

married. Women are more likely than men to be affected, due to the fact, when the nest is emptying, mothers are going through other significant life events as well, i.e. menopause or caring for elderly parents. Yet, this doesn't mean that men are completely immune to Empty Nest Syndrome. Men can experience similar feelings of loss regarding the separ-



Empty Nest does not equal Empty Life

ture of their children. Recent research suggests that the quality of the parent-child relationship may

Simplify Your Life, Reduce Stress

Trying to live a simpler life? At a time when many people feel overwhelmed by their busy complicated lives, the "voluntary simplicity movement" as it is sometimes referred to, preaches the value of living a more balanced, less stressful, deliberate and thoughtful life. Can't find your car keys amid the piles on your counter? Tired of having to excavate the

kitchen table before you can serve dinner? Being surrounded by clutter is an ongoing cause of stress. However, it is more than just an irritation when you are surrounded by more things than you can manage. It sends a visual message that life is out of control. It can become a vicious circle where disorder brings about procrastination which, in turn, adds to

the chaos. To make matters worse, when you are under stress, cortisol the stress hormone, short-circuits your brain leading to forgetfulness, irritation and plain old meltdowns. Your life and even your mind can also become overcrowded with too much messiness. The following are ideas to help you simplify your life and reduce stress. Clear the

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have important consequences for both parents at this time. Parents gain the greatest psychological benefit from the transition to an empty nest when they have developed and maintained good relations with their children. Extreme

hostility, conflict, or detachment in parent-child relations may reduce intergenerational support when it is most needed by youth during early adulthood and by parents facing the disabilities of old age. Today, as more mothers work out-

side the home, they tend to feel less emptiness when their children leave home. Also, an increasing number of adult children between 25-34 are now living with their parents at home. These "boomerang kids" want the "limited re-

sponsibility of childhood and the privileges of adulthood." Children may also return home due to economics, divorce, extended education, drug or alcohol problems or temporary "transitions." On the positive side, time and energy that you

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Clearing clutter can help clear your mind and reduce stress.

clutter. Pick one area to tackle such as the junk drawer in the kitchen or the piles of clothes in the bedroom. Clear out any items you are not using. If they are in good condition, consider donating them to a local charity. If you really can't part with some items, box them up and put an expiration date of a year in the future on the box and store it away. If the box remains unopened un-

til the expiration date, you clearly can do without its contents and should consider donating it to charity as well. Switch off the media. Being flooded with stimuli, even entertaining stimuli, is a tremendous source of stress. Unplug and unhook yourself. At the very least, turn off the TV while you are on the phone, or turn off the phone when you are watching TV. If that is not

enough, try a vacation from the TV news, the daily paper and news magazines. Eliminating the daily paper will also reduce the amount of paper coming in and cluttering up your home.

Clear your calendar. How often have you complained that there are not enough hours in the day? It is not the clock that is the problem, it is the number of activi-

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directed toward your child can now be spent on different areas of your life. This might be an opportune time to explore or return to hobbies, leisure activities or career pursuits. This also marks a time to ad-

just to your new role in your child's life and to changes in your identity as a parent. Your relationship with your child may become more peer like, and you will have to get use to giving your children more privacy.

Remember feelings of sadness are normal at this time. If you are experiencing empty nest syndrome, monitor your reactions and their duration. If you feel that your useful life has ended, or you don't want to see

friends or go to work, you may want to consider accessing your EAP as we can put you in touch with professionals that can offer suggestions regarding these empty nest issues.

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Free up your time, and clear your calendar.

ties in which you are participating. Being too busy can become a habit so entrenched that it leads you to postpone or cut short what is really important in your life. Only say yes to activities you really care about and learn to say **no**. Remember, it is easier to decline an invitation than to figure out how to get out of it later.

Stop multi-tasking and start focusing. Multi-tasking has recently been revealed to be less productive than once thought. Recent research shows that people who multi-task tend to be less able to concentrate and more easily distracted than people who rarely multi-task. When you are concentrating on a certain task, you are totally absorbed by the task at hand. Therefore, rather than multi-

-tasking, complete one task and then move on to another job. Rather than multi-tasking, one should "be present in the moment", especially important in our relationships with others. Being in the moment with others, connecting with them and being a good listener – not thinking ahead to what you want to say or interrupting with unsolicited advice. Total engage-

ment. Being present. Staying in the moment. These are hardly new concepts, but nonetheless vital ones for everyone.



When you make time, you can enjoy life's little things.