

Parent-child relationship changes with years

NEWARK, Del. — Fifty years ago you were a wise, strong parent with answers to your children's questions and money for their needs.

Today your health isn't what it used to be, your funds are limited, and your grown children act like they know more than you do. These changes are difficult to accept — difficult for you and for your children. Perhaps you feel they are trying to do too much for you, or maybe not enough. Either way, conflict can result.

Both you and your grown children will rest easier if you have a good relationship, says University of Delaware extension home economist Debbie Amsden. Be aware that the quality of the relationship is as much as your responsibility as theirs.

Chances are, at some point you will need their physical, emotional, or financial support. And chances are they will want to help. The better your relationship, the more readily that support will come.

For your part, be willing to

cooperate when you need help. For instance, after surgery, be willing to stay at a son's or daughter's house rather than asking one of them to come stay with you. Also, if homemaker aides are available, allow them to clean your house so your child will have time and energy for other tasks.

When your children do help, be gracious. Adult children often complain that their parents never say thank you or show appreciation. Your thanks will mean a great deal to them and will encourage communication between you. When lines of communication are open, you and your children will be able to work out better solutions to your mutual problems — better because everyone's feelings have been considered and no one feels trampled upon.

Sharing your thoughts and feelings with your grown children may not be easy, but it will have benefits. They will understand you better, and learn to accept their own aging.

There's a strong strain of independence in the American

character, but Amsden says it may not serve as well in the long run. If you've insisted on being independent all your life, it may be difficult to ask for help when you need it because you may feel you've failed in some way. Furthermore, if you've taught your children to value independence above all, they might not be emotionally prepared to be depended upon.

Amsden says we can learn from other cultures that view being dependent upon one another throughout life as normal. In a climate of interdependence, support among the generations occurs naturally, with fewer feelings of conflict. When the generations realize their mutual dependence, the old don't attempt to manipulate the young, nor do the young try to dominate the old and treat them as helpless. All maintain their self-esteem.

If you can open the lines of communication with your adult children, you will all likely discover that underneath your conflicts, you love and need each other more than you ever thought.

Mercer Co. dairy princess hosts contestants

MERCER — The 1983 Mercer County Dairy Princess, Kathy Minor, Jackson Center, recently hosted the 1984 Dairy Princess contestants at a tea held at the Cooperative Extension Center in Mercer.

The attendance were the 1984 contestants, Brenda Drake, Transfer; Elaine Hill, Sandy Lake; and Tammy Slater, Fredonia.

The contestants were instructed

on make-up by Virginia Boling, Mary Kay Cosmetics, and on clothing and color by Elaine Nickel, extension home economist.

The Dairy Princess Pageant will be held on June 21 at the Extension Center in Mercer. It is open to the public. The cow-tail hour will begin at 7:30 followed by the pageant. The cost of the dinner is \$6.25. Reservations can be made with Harold Hill, 376-3802, Kathy Evans, 458-9623 or Elaine Canon 528-9508.

Dog training classes scheduled

NEWARK, Del. — If old Rover still chases Volkswagens and Rabbits, won't heel and chews all your shoes and furniture, don't get mad, get even. Send your dog to 4-H Dog Obedience Training.

Classes begin Monday, June 4 at 7 p.m. at Townsend Hall (across from Chrysler) and will run every Monday evening in June and July (except July 23). Graduation is scheduled for August 6. The cost is \$20 and the school is open to all

youth and adults. Everyone must bring a dog (at least 4-months-old). Dogs must have had a rabies shot and need a nylon choke collar and leash.

Enrollment is limited, so call the 4-H office at 451-8965 for more information.

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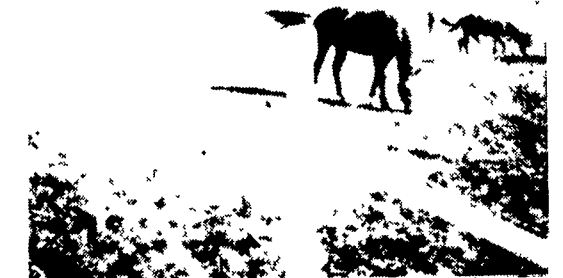
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