

Finally, status updates with redeeming value. [Friend Us On Facebook](#)

[Sign In](#) | [Register](#) | [Help?](#)  
[My Benefits](#)

SEARCH

HOME HEALTH HUBS DISEASES & CONDITIONS TESTS & PROCEDURES DRUG GUIDE MANAGE MY HEALTH SHOP

[Home](#) [Information](#) Tips For Parents On Getting Along With Their Adult Children

EMAIL PRINT FOLLOW US RSS

## They're Not Kids Anymore: Getting Along With Your Adult Children

It can be a tricky balance between wanting to help your adult children and respecting their independence.

By Eve Glicksman, Staff Writer, myOptumHealth

Share [What is this?](#)

Twitter

Digg

Facebook [More...](#)

EMAIL PRINT RSS



Your oldest daughter needs to lose 30 pounds. Your son is in debt up to his ears. Your youngest daughter's children are out of control. Whenever you offer advice, they get mad.

Your kids may be over 30 now, but the parent-child relationship continues to reverberate. And it can be a tricky balance between wanting to help them and respecting their independence as adults.

Conflicts between parents and adult children can be especially intense because the emotions run deep. Tensions may surround:

**Values and beliefs.** Friction can arise between parents and children with differing views on how to spend money, raise children, handle marriage or practice religion. Both may feel frustrated, hurt or angry if they do not feel accepted.

**Expectations.** Parents may be disappointed in their kids' choice of a career or mate, or that they've become more distant. Children may resent that parents don't help them out with money or take a more active role in grandparenting.

**New demands.** Adult children may not want to play a caregiver role when a parent becomes ill. Parents may be hurt that a child has less time to give them due to the demands of his or her own work and family life.

**Not letting go.** Suggestions from the parent may feel controlling to the child. Or the adult child may be the hanger-on who is making unfair demands on parents.

### Can't we all just get along?

Some children avoid stress with parents by not visiting or calling as often. Others may cut off the relationship entirely. Chances are that both the parents and the children feel hurt when this happens.

Parents should not feel they have to make amends with a child who has been abusive to them. But realize that your "just trying to help" can trigger resentment in grownup children who have their own ways of doing things.

Here are some general guidelines for getting along with your adult kids:

- **Recognize they are adults.** They should be making their own decisions and learning from their own mistakes. Instead of telling them what to do, listen, be supportive and respect their choices. Tell them you're proud of them.
- **Let go.** That means no criticisms about their spouse, their lifestyle, their parenting or how they dress. Be available if they want your advice, but remember it's their life.
- **Don't play the guilt card.** Making your children feel badly about your loneliness or poor health can overwhelm them - and keep them away.
- **Listen and be open.** Try to understand your child's viewpoint if he or she is angry. Say "I'm sorry" if you are about something. But also share how your child's behavior has been painful for you.

### If your child is struggling

Some older parents have an adult child who still looks to them for help. Their child may be jobless, addicted to drugs or just self-centered. They may keep coming back to ask for money, a place to stay or other type of help. This can be very hard for parents, especially if the child is manipulative.

If you have a child like this, you may feel like you have failed as a parent. But even if you did make mistakes, your 40-year-old is now responsible for his own life. And, you may need to protect your emotional well-being and your bank account by setting limits.

### Related Articles

[Helping Your Grandchild Cope With a Parent's Addiction](#)

[Letting Go of Grudges](#)

[How to Protect Yourself Against Elder Abuse](#)

[Boomerang Kids: They're Baaaack!](#)

[Are You Co-Dependent?](#)

EMAIL PRINT RSS

Sign Up for **HealthClicks**  
 Our Free Email Newsletter ([Learn More](#))

enter your email address

Learn more about the symptoms of bipolar depression.

[Start here](#) ▶

1044602 12/10

### Featured Video

00:00 / 00:00

### Treating Major Depression (03:16)

Major depression is more than just suffering from a bad mood. It can affect just about everything you do, from how you sleep at night to how well you perform your job. Learn how you can feel better...

### Videos

Treating Major Depression	Meditation and Stress	Cravings and Weight Loss

[View All Health Videos >](#)

It's OK to give children some financial help, but only do what you can do comfortably. Bailing them out all the time may keep them from making the changes they need to be self-sufficient.

If you're feeling a lot of stress and anxiety about the situation, talk to a therapist on your own or with your child.

[Share](#) [Twitter](#) [Digg](#) [Facebook](#) [More...](#) | [EMAIL](#) [PRINT](#) [RSS](#)

Updated on 04/07/2009

**SOURCES:**

- The Ohio State University Extension. Understanding and strengthening healthy relationships between adult children and parents. **Accessed:** 03/23/2009
- Texas A&M System, Family and Consumer Sciences. Adult children and aging parents - building positive relationships. **Accessed:** 03/24/2009
- Greenfield EA, Marks, NF. Linked lives: adult children's problems and their parents' psychological and relational well-being. Journal of Marriage and Family. 2006;68(2):442-454. **Accessed:** 03/23/2009
- University of Illinois Extension. Dealing with your adult child. **Accessed:** 03/24/2009

Copyright © 2011 myOptumHealth.

**Calculators & Tools**

<a href="#">BMI Calculator</a>	<a href="#">Calcium Calculator</a>	<a href="#">Diabetes Risk Quiz</a>
--------------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------------

[View All Calculators & Tools »](#)

**We'd love to hear what you think of our site.**

Help us continually improve.

[Take Our Short Survey](#)

**Shortcuts**

**Health Information & News**

- [Diseases & Conditions](#)
- [Drug Guide](#)
- [Health News](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Tests & Procedures](#)
- [Health Videos](#)
- [Shop](#)

**Manage My Health**

- [Calculators & Tools](#)
- [Find a Doctor](#)
- [Personal Health Record](#)
- [Symptom Checker](#)

**Health Hubs**

- [Complementary & Alternative Medicine](#)
- [Cancer](#)
- [Children's Health](#)
- [Colds & Flu](#)
- [Diabetes](#)
- [First Aid & Safety](#)
- [Fitness](#)

- [Healthy Pregnancy](#)
- [Healthy Weight, Healthy Kids](#)
- [Heart Health](#)
- [Men's Health](#)
- [Mental Health, Stress & Grief](#)
- [Nutrition](#)
- [Pain Management](#)

- [Parenting](#)
- [Respiratory Diseases](#)
- [Saving & Paying for Health Care](#)
- [Seniors' Health](#)
- [Take Charge of Your Health](#)
- [Women's Health](#)

[FOLLOW US](#) [RSS](#)

[Help](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertise With Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Advisory Board](#) | [Learn About NowClinic](#)  
 © 2011 OptumHealth, Inc. | [Terms and Conditions](#) | [Privacy and Security Policy](#) | [Advertising and Editorial Policy](#)

myOptumHealth.com does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment recommendations. It is not a substitute for your doctor or other health care professional's care. The material on this site is for informational purposes only.

