

Dear Aunt Winnie,

I love my family dearly and I try to do as much as I can for them but lately I feel so worn out. I feel guilty if I don't try to help them and they seem to expect it. What should I do?

Sincerely,
Worn Out

Disclaimer-The opinions expressed by Aunt Winnie are by no means professional nor do they reflect Aging Services, Inc. beliefs or ideas. Her opinions are strictly for reader enjoyment only!



Dear Worn Out,

I am not a psychologist nor have I ever played one on TV but I once was on an infomercial. Well sort of. If you looked real close, I was standing behind the bushes while a certain, once famous actor was being interviewed.

Back to the point! Now, in my humble opinion which is not professional by any means, I believe there is a kind of guilt that an aging parent (like me) has that is so subtle, they might not realize they are carrying it.

The kind where you try and live up to your children and grandchildren's expectations whether they expect it or not.

Mind you, I am convinced our children are in denial of us, (their parents) aging. They would all like to think that we will live forever and have the same energy we had 30 years ago! Part of the reason they believe this is because we, as parents are in denial! We think we should still have the energy of someone 30 years our junior, and then we act all surprised when we don't have enough stamina to keep up with our grandchildren and great grandchildren.

If you are completely honest with yourself, you will admit that when it comes to family we can feel guilty for not doing things we have always done for our kids.

Sometimes it takes a while for it to sink in for both the parent and the children that mom shouldn't be the one to cook for big family get togethers anymore or babysit the grandchildren every day. There comes a certain point in time when parents need to pass the torch onto their children. Your kids will adapt just fine if you can learn to let go.

Remember, your health is more important than trying to do too much for your children. Don't expect your children to know how it feels to be "older" and have aging ailments because they are not there yet!

I recommend having a heart to heart discussion with your children. Let them know you want to help them but you can no longer do certain things. Remember to stick to your guns and don't entertain self-directed guilt.

You want to be healthy to enjoy your family!

Sincerely,
Aunt Winnie

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