

Pastoral Counseling Services of The South Shore

A Division of The Institute for
Spiritual Life and Psychotherapy



Spring-Summer Newsletter • 2018

Are You Part of the Sandwich Generation?

By Jan Lanham, Ph.D, LMHC

I hung up the phone. My mother had been alone for several years since my father's death but she finally agreed to come to live with us in Massachusetts. With this call, I became a part of the sandwich generation. Many of us find ourselves in the unfamiliar territory of attempting to meet the needs of both younger and older generations.

If you are currently experiencing this or might be in the future, here are a few thoughts gleaned along the way by many who are walking this path, addressing the needs of the parents/ grandparents while also caring for children. While there are many situations that lead to this sandwich generation experience, here are some general thoughts to keep in mind.

1. **There's not enough of me to go around!** If you attend to the needs of one generation, are you neglecting the needs of the other generation? Feelings of physical and emotional fatigue, sleep deprivation, and lack of sufficient time for your own needs come to mind. But are there things that each generation might be able to do for the other: time spent together, conversation and stories, physical help? You can't do everything yourself. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

2. **The demands for communication can challenge anyone!** Just as we learn to change how we communicate with our children as they grow, we also need to learn how to communicate with the older generation in a way that reflects their current situation. Understand and appreciate your parents/grandparents for who they are now, not who they used to be. For anyone, even necessary changes can bring on sadness, pain or anger. Words may be said that don't reflect their true feelings. Try not to personalize them.

Communication also should extend to siblings and extended family. These discussions can generate welcome cooperation, or angry feelings when help doesn't come. Engaging all of the family, if possible, in

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*The PCSSS Staff extends
deepest condolences to everyone at
First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brockton
on the untimely death of
Jim Benson, Church Administrator.
He was a blessing to so many!*



Is It A Drill, Or Is There An Active Shooter?

Resources for students, parents, and caregivers dealing with anxiety reactions following recent mass shootings.

Here are some links to helpful information on how to handle the psychological reactions due to news of mass shootings. Whether we are schoolchildren, college students, adults or parents, these tragic events can affect our sense of safety and predictability of the world we live in. Though most of us are resilient and find ourselves bouncing back to our usual levels of functioning, some of us will be affected in how we deal with our daily routine, our sleep habits, our eating, and how we interact with the people we trust as well as with strangers.

- Printable information specific to children, teens, and parents from **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network**: <https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/trauma-types/terrorism-and-violence/school-shooting-resources>
- Article about how to manage your distress after a school shooting from **The American Psychological Association**: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/mass-shooting.aspx>
- How to build resilience from **The American Psychological Association**: <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

The Institute for Spiritual Life and Psychotherapy (ISLP) is a 501C3 non-profit corporation committed to the integration of spirituality and psychology. We offer activities and programs designed to promote emotional and spiritual growth and wellbeing. Our largest endeavor is Pastoral Counseling Services of the South Shore (PCSSS) where our licensed therapists and post-graduate and Master's level interns provide professional counseling therapy for individuals, couples, families and groups. We also offer consultation and spiritual direction. Find us at 781-826-0011 or at islpma.org.

important decisions concerning the older generation can be crucial. Keep talking, keep listening!

3. **Everyone feels a sense of loss.** For elders, it can be the loss of their spouse, home, independence, control, roles, friends, and physical health. For children, they can see how your time is being taken up by other family concerns. Be aware of their reactions. For yourself, you can see the loss of your own time to eat, sleep, exercise properly and have "couple time". What would help to keep you and your relationships healthy and strong?

4. **Yet, can there also be gain?** Grandparents can build deeper relationships with grandchildren and children, particularly if they have not lived in close proximity until now. This time together can genuinely increase quality of life. Stories are passed down. Wisdom is shared. Interacting with multiple generations provides lessons we all need to learn. The opportunity to give back to your parents or grandparents can be satisfying. Learning how a family cares for one another through compassion, patience and respect is a wonderful experience for everyone, even when it is challenging. Priorities get re-shuffled as we learn not to "sweat the small stuff".

5. **You will be continually learning and adjusting!** Know your community resources such as Elder Services. Take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Counseling can be invaluable. Faith communities can be a deep source of strength, support, encouragement and spiritual growth. Enjoy time spent with each member of the family. Work on when to say "Yes", "No" or "I need help." Keep your friends. They can be your lifelines.

Remember that the point is not to do everything perfectly but to be genuine in our care and compassion for those older and younger and for ourselves as well.

Dr. Lanham is a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Spiritual life and Psychotherapy.

Financial Resources Workshop Held

On March 24, Attorney Ann Walsh led a clinical workshop through PCSSS on resources for individuals going through financial hardship. Ann taught about bankruptcy and debt collection, fuel assistance and utility protections, and divorce/child support issues with low income families. She provided contact information for state and federal resources as well. PCSSS Counselors are available to work with individuals struggling with these hardships. Call 781-826-0011, extension 108, for an appointment. Ann Walsh is a member of the Board of Directors of the Institute for Spiritual Life and Psychotherapy.

FBCH Thrift Store

Find Bargains Here!



First Baptist Church
214 Main Street; Rte. 27
Hanson, MA 02341
781-293-3502
fbchanson@verizon.net
firstbaptisthanson.org

Sat. 10AM-2PM & Mon. 6PM-8PM

Donations taken during these hours.

Offering a wide selection of gently used / like new clothing also ceramics, toys, glassware, and other "yard sale" type items.

PCSSS Intern Named Student of the Year

Our own Mirande "Randa" Sidaros has been named a "Student of the Year" by the Massachusetts Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (MAMFT). Randa has been doing a one-year clinical internship at PCSSS since last June. She graduates May 6 from Eastern Nazarene College with a Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy. Randa was officially honored at the MAMFT annual Gala at the Wellesley College Club on Thursday, April 5, accompanied by her husband and their three sons. Congratulations, Randa!

Counseling and Business Office Locations

Pastoral Counseling Services of the South Shore is a dynamic entity with many varied and "moving" parts. Our eighteen therapists and interns see clients in the following locations:

- **St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**
17 Church Street, Hanover
Business Office: 781-826-0011
Belinda McGuire (Billing Manager)
Lois Nutley (Office Manager)
Three counseling offices

- **Church Hill United Methodist Church**
11 Church Street, Norwell
- **First Evangelical Lutheran Church (FELC)**
900 Main Street, Brockton
- **First Baptist Church of Hanson**
214 Main Street, Hanson
- **Christ Church Episcopal (in Thrift Shoppe, 2nd Floor)**
6 Lothrop Street, Plymouth, MA

We are grateful for the covenantal relationships we have with our host churches.