



Family Values

Seasons of Parenthood: Rebounder

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When parents begin to need their adult children and grandchildren to take care of them, they have entered the Rebounder season of parenthood. During this season, all parents become for a short or long period of time Rebounders who try to bounce back from health problems as they struggle to remain independent and adjust to the need for care during the tarnishing of the golden years.

Regardless of age, Rebounders can still be vital; can still contribute to the family when they have a team of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren who understand their value. They then are in a position to pass on a legacy of love and caring to the generations that follow. Depending on their personal style of playing the game of parenthood, Rebounders tend to fall into three categories:

- **Proud Independents** -- resist the idea of moving out of their house and accepting a helping hand. They try to prove that they are still the capable players they always were.
- **Humble Submissives** -- regret inconveniencing their adult children, fail to ask for what they need, and feel neglected.
- **Aged Sages** -- strive to maintain their independence, are willing to ask for help, and recognize that they are fortunate to get it.

In this final season of parenthood, it is the interaction – the teamwork, coordinated play and number of assists – among the generations that determines parents' peace of mind, the security of their souls, the meaning at the core of their being.

This season ends in death. Through death, parents teach their children what they need to know about living. In the best

scenario, they remind them that reconciling the past is a necessary step in moving on to the future in life and death.

The Rebounder pocket guide to truth:

- **So now the ride is over.** Now that you have gotten off the Ferris wheel, you either want to go around again or are relieved that it's over. Either way you realize your day at the park is almost history and you look for the Exit signs.
- **Look! Your kids are getting on the ride you just left.** You wave at your kids and feel good that they are following your lead. You want to get close enough to tell them what to expect. It is hard to get their attention. You make every effort to be seen and heard.
- **What an incredible park!** You spent almost your entire adulthood at Parenthood Park. You wonder how you can leave a place that has become so much a part of you. After changing your identity so many times, you have one final transformation left – leaving the park knowing that you used your time to the fullest. That is the only way you can leave in peace.
- **I hope somebody's around to help us get out of the park.** At this point in your life, you realize that you must have faith in yourself, as well as your Maker, that you will eventually find your way home, just as your parents did before you, and theirs did before them.

Taken from: *The Eight Seasons of Parenthood* by Barbara Unell and Jerry Wyckoff.

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