

REFLECTIONS

As I look over the past few years of my life, it seems like only yesterday that I was carpooling the children to school and sports events; going for weekly allergy shots, PTA meetings, high school graduations, and saving for college; planning for weddings, and now the grandchildren. Where did the time go? It was only yesterday that I was just a young girl myself with dreams of what I thought my life would be like when I grew-up. Well, here I am, the children are grown and are living their own lives; and now it's my turn. But what does that really mean to me? Having been a single parent for most of my life I knew how to struggle in that domain, but how do I begin to live a full life with the charm and dignity that I imaged it should be? I hadn't been practicing I'd been struggling. And, now that I'm being given life on a silver platter, somehow I didn't imagine that it would be quite like this.

The seasons have begun to change, and time did not wait for me as patiently as I had imaged it would. The things that I planned to do when the children grew-up don't seem to have the same appeal as they did when I first put them on my to-do list. Yes, I have great pride in having been the single mother that I was and everything that it entailed, but as the years are approaching more rapidly and seemingly closer together, I've come to realize that while I was excelling in motherhood 101, I had not been as attentive to myself as I should have been.

Now, as I enter mid-life without having cultivated the skills to thoroughly nurture my woman, I am feeling the challenge from the neglect of my earlier years. So, with the dignity of a woman, and the spirit of a child, I get another chance to do it all again. I get to grow-up and even bring my little girl out to play. But my focus is a little different and my sights are set on what really matters to me. At this time in my life I can't afford to blow it. I finally figured it out. Life is not a dress rehearsal for some future role that I will be starring in, life is now; and now is all I have left.

At this phase of my journey I find that I am more sensitive to the elements of life than I used to be. I tend to cradle the essence of this new era as a mother would nurture her new born, or with the anticipated enchantment of preparing her little one for the wonderment of their first day of school. If only I knew then that time was of the essence, and I could not recreate or capture what is long since gone, instead of sarcastically envying youth being wasted on the young.

As with the sound of music, each decade provides us with an opportunity to create a legacy for those who come after us. In our 20's we are busy exploring the wonders of life. Our 30's are often a point of struggle to identify who we are while juggling the responsibilities of the choices that we have made along the way. In our 40's we begin to expand our boundaries in preparation for our future. Our 50's are a portal between the present and the past where we begin to define our place in the world. In our 60's we record our life's purpose, reflections, regrets, challenges, assessments, joys and sorrows. We try to garner forgiveness for the people who we have harmed or who have harmed us. We create new horizons that honor our past and allow us to start over, take higher ground, and move-on. Our 70's allow us the grace to prepare the legacy that records the path that we traveled and will leave behind.