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The many ways that we may honor our parents

By **CRYSTAL MARINO**
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CORRESPONDENT

Family honor is nothing new

to the islands, as nearly every young individual raised on the islands has an understanding that to honor

parents is to be blessed and successful later down in the walk of life. And as the nation prepares to cel-

brate National Parents' Day this Sunday and the outstanding parents in our lives, I thought it would be

amazing to get people's perspective on honor, from the new and young generation to those older and experienced in life. My question: How do you as an individual honor your parents, and what are the visible benefits of that honor?

One of my close friends, Sena Finau, a businesswoman in Tongatapu, Tonga, spoke to me of the key factors she learned about honor. "I believe honor starts from the heart. Honoring is crucial because this is not something that we can just say but is something that we must believe and act upon. We honor our parents by simply obeying them in not only by our action, but also in our thoughts and our hearts. It more like regarding them in admiration and with deep, deep respect. We also honor our parents with our words. How we speak toward them should be different from how we speak with our siblings or friends. Also the tone of how we speak to them is very much important as the words we use. Lastly is our action. Sometimes as we grow older and have

our own families, we tend to forget our responsibility as kids to our parents as we should be looking out for them as they grow old. We cannot just neglect them because we have our own priorities now that we're older. I believe that with all of my heart that as long as we have our parents with us on this earth we must do all that we can do to honor them because I strongly believe that if you cannot honor them, then you cannot truly honor any authority or anyone throughout your life and that is scary."

She noted that although there is no perfect parent, yet there is still a way we can find to honor them. She also mentioned some of the benefits she has seen because of parental honor. "I realized that you can never have a successful life if you are not a person who knows the value of honoring, nor more importantly living this life, and it must start with us honoring our parents. I believe we can guarantee a successful life if we simply understand and live this principle to truly honor our

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parents because not only it is a commandment but it does come with a promise.”

Finau also shared her personal thoughts, regarding her late father who passed away a couple of years ago. “I wish my Dad [were] still alive so I can give him the honor that he deserved. Do not wait ‘til they [parents] pass away to greet them, as I did. If you still have them around, even just one of them now, you have the opportunity to honor them while you can.”

And with many islanders holding a religious background, many share a similar view. Alayssa Mondido a liberal arts major at the Northern Marianas College on Saipan, said, “For me, honoring parents can take form in different ways, but what matters is that our love and gratitude is expressed toward them. Parents are expected to provide and raise their children, but we know that not everyone is able to have that experience because their parents went on a different route. We honor our parents when we recognize how significant their decision to keep us and how it has impacted

I believe honor starts from the heart. Honoring is crucial because this is not something that we can just say but is something that we must believe and act upon.

who we are as individuals today. Especially in this day and age, we see more children growing up in a world without their parents, so I look at parents who stuck it out despite the difficulties with high esteem. When we honor our parents, we are not only being a blessing to them, but we are also being a blessing to ourselves. If you are a parent or are planning to become one, our children can learn how to treat us based on how they see us honor our parents.”

Meghan Sumor, a student at Marianas High School, described the way she honors her parents as “doing good in school and life” and using the knowledge they imparted to her. She also mentioned that her parent’s faith have positively impacted her. “If they can change I can change, so what they do with their life impacts me

in some way, and they influence me.”

Tekoa Seharmidal a student in the Republic of Palau, says he honors his parents by obeying them and heeding their teachings. “If your father and mother tell you to do something and you don’t want to do it, just do it because they probably are trusting you and relying on you to do it. Personally, I think honoring our parents is also a sign of our gratitude and a non-verbal way we can say ‘thank you’ to those who raised us. And I think the benefits that follow honoring our parents are benefits in life. For example, if you can honor your father and mother, you learn to also honor your boss, wife/girlfriend, and honor anyone who is close to you...”

Elizabeth Abigail Zamarripa, a student of Heritage

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Parents are like the stronger pillars sent by God in our lives.... It is the love, affection and care of parents that helps us achieve the impossible and face the most difficult.”

Happy Parents' Day



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Academy in Texas, said she honors her parents for their exampleship, and teaching, rearing her up in their faith “I could name all the ways my parents have helped me and guided me but then this would be very long, so I shall keep it simple. The most important thing I honor my parents for is the fact my parents are raising me in a Christian home. My parents being Christians, teaching me about God’s love and mercy, and watching Him use them, and how they are willing to obey even when it really doesn’t make

his passing and the restoration that took place in their lives. “That’s what God did. He restored my dad, He restored our relationship. I thank God. Even when I didn’t know much about my dad, but at the end, He [God] gave us this opportunity for us to build that relationship.” Tuigamala serves her community as a home visitor for pre-natal under the Children’s Health Bureau on Saipan.

As a child of missionaries, I have had the privilege to travel and meet people from around the world. And if there’s one thing I understand is that not every person has the “storybook” version of a family, and the

As a child of missionaries, I have had the privilege to travel and meet people from around the world. And if there’s one thing I understand is that not every person has the “storybook” version of a family, and the truth is sometimes our relationships with family can be so broken. Which is one of the reasons I honor my parents.

sense makes me respect them more and more. Simply them being Christian, living for God even when the storms come means I can surely serve God even in storms [of life].”

One of the stories that touched me was that of AnaMarie Tuigamala, who told me that she grew up without a father and a single mom who raised her. Being raised without a father, she was usually with her mother or her grandparents. She spoke of the struggles and hardships her mother faced, taking on the roles of both father and mother, disciplining, teaching, and providing for her kids. She remembers her mom as the one who “knit” the family together. “I really admired my mom, and I’ll never forget her teachings.” Her mom’s sudden death at the young age of 48 shook Tuigamala. “She died and she was still working. She was still working to make ends meet,” Tuigamala said tearfully. It wasn’t until many years later that Tuigamala’s relationship with her father started to mend. He was already elderly when he began to come around. “I don’t think God is going to forgive me for all things that I did,” he told her.

Tuigamala cared for her father as he entered his late years and until his death in 2014. She mentioned the good memories she had of her father before

truth is sometimes our relationships with family can be so broken. Which is one of the reasons I honor my parents. Both of my parents grew up in broken homes, plagued by domestic violence and substance abuse. But even though they came from that environment, they did not follow the path placed before them. Many statistics say that we tend to follow in our parents’ footsteps, yet something changed. They changed. Their families changed, and my childhood was one completely different from theirs. It was one that was sweet, innocent, and full of memories. And I honor and respect them for that. But what caused the change? My parents became Christians as young adults. ... They forgave those that did them wrong. Forgiveness pieced our broken family’s relationship, and in fact if you meet them, you could never tell that they came from a broken home. Because they changed their course, my childhood was changed. And I am grateful for that. Don’t get me wrong, my life’s not perfect, we are not the “storybook” family. Yes, there were hard times we faced as a family, but those hard times drew us closer. But what held my family together? What pieced Tuigamala’s together? What was the glue? Faith was the glue.

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Being a parent to a child with special needs

By **ALDWIN BATUSIN**
CORRESPONDENT

Parenting is one of life's hardest tasks. Essentially an unpaid full-time job, parenting tends to the care of children who will carry the generations to come. By President Bill Clinton's authority, every fourth Sunday of July is known as National Parents' Day, a day to commemorate the hard work of parents across the globe and their unparalleled bond with their children. A special demographic within parenting is parents of children with special needs. Together, these parents tackle daily problems head-on to produce the best opportunities and care for their children. With July 24 near the corner, let us take some time to understand how parents of children with special needs struggle in life and some advice they can take to heart:

Emotional impacts. Parenting comes with a huge number of responsibilities, and having a child with special needs adds to the difficulty. Parents feel guilty about their child having a certain disability despite the fact that it is beyond their control. They fear that

their disability would have a devastating impact on their child's life, such as a child's ability to make social connections or do well in school. Other parents also feel that they lost their imagined experience of being a parent because of their child's disability. Some will feel jealous or resent other families who have "normal" children.

Financial burden. Caring for children is costly. Parents have to concern themselves with paying bills on time, finding food for the table, and whatnot. With a disability in the family, more essential spendings are added: treatments, interventions, etc. This easily stresses parents because it makes prioritization difficult.

Familial conflict. It is always good news to hear of a new family member. However, life can go as unplanned. There are some family members who feel disappointment or sadness when they hear that a new relative has a disability. Such attitudes should be banished for the sake of the child and the family as well.

These struggles are unavoidable but manageable. The key to surmounting them is to acknowledge their

existence and be proactive about solving them. Here are three pieces of advice for parents on supporting their children with special needs.

Learn about your child's special needs. It can be very overwhelming, but ground yourself and approach it calmly. Try to understand the different parts of

your child's disability. What are the risk factors for my child? In what ways can this disability affect my child? You may not have immediate help from the start, so it

is best to familiarize yourself with the disability your child has. In that way, you can formulate your parenting style that best meets your child's

See *CHILD* on Page 17

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To all parents, both here and abroad, a house would not be a home without you. You are the cornerstone and pillar of the family. With your love, care, and wisdom, you give meaning to life that help shape a vibrant and respectable home in our community. As parents, challenges are inherent opportunities to make the best with what is available. You go a long way to ensure that your family is safe and get to where they want to be. Our prayers are that you stay strong throughout life's journey. We wish you abundant blessings on this Parent's Day and throughout the rest of your lives.

Happy Parents' Day





MESSAGE FROM
MAYOR DAVID MUNDO APATANG
TO ALL PARENTS IN THE CNMI AND ABROAD

The difference between 'fair' and equal'

By JOHN ROSEMOND
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: How can I explain to my kids, ages 6 and 9, that "fair" and "equal" are not the same. They complain constantly that I'm not fair. What they mean is I don't treat them the same.

A: You're yelling into a hurricane. Forget it. Below age 12 or 13, children cannot wrap their brains around the difference between the two concepts.

Treating children equally means treating them in

the same fashion regardless of any measurable differences between them. Treating children fairly means treating them with consideration of those differences. Take bedtime as regards to siblings ages 5 and 10. To treat them equally, one would send them to bed at the same time. To treat them fairly, one would let the older one stay up later. Obviously, the younger one wants to be treated equally, while the older one wants to be treated fairly.

Keeping kids' secrets

By JANN BLACKSTONE
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q. How much am I required to tell my co-parent? My teenage daughter has confided some very private things to me and have asked me not to tell her father. I know she prefers our home and I want to keep it that way. I'm afraid if I say something, she will feel as if I have betrayed her trust, never tell me things again and will then want to live with her father. What's good ex-etiquette?

A. Oh my. We've got some red flags flying on this one. The fact that you would consider keeping something from your co-parent because you want to ensure your daughter prefers you and your home is certainly not putting your child first. (Good Ex-etiquette for Parents Rule #1.) Your daughter deserves an honest relationship with both parents, and it's your job as a parent and co-parent to support that.

That said, your daughter's request is quite common—and it's not only when parents are divorced. I remember asking my mother not to tell my dad certain things—and they were married for 40 years before he passed away. It was private health stuff, like having cramps and not feeling comfortable explaining why I was resting, but I still found it embarrassing and I asked her to keep it to herself. So, from that aspect, there are some things that need not be volunteered, and your daughter's requests are expected. HOWEVER, from a parenting point of view, it can be a questionable precedent to set. Add the co-parenting piece and it's even more shaky.

Here's why:

Allegiance and betrayal are huge emotions that all face after a breakup, particularly children who go back and forth between their par-

ents' homes. Even the most loving, caring honest children find a way to get what they want and withhold, confide or shift information that will help to achieve that goal. It's human.

But you start playing the "Don't worry, I won't tell" game with them and they are controlling the flow of information. Children often do not have the emotional sophistication to determine what is necessary to make healthy decisions—and because you've set precedent, you're stuck. That's when the emotional manipulation starts, especially with teens. "How can I trust you, Mom or Dad? You said you'd never tell." And, because parents often already feel guilty about their breakup, they start back pedaling—and the child is running the show.

Of course, children have a right to privacy, particularly older teens, so there is a caveat to this mindset. Some issues are just too sensitive and really need to be volunteered by the child. That is why it is so important for co-parents to support the child's relationship with the other parent and create an environment where the child feels safe confiding in both of you. This would include things like demonstrating respectful behavior and when you sense the child is facing a crisis, initiating counseling with a trusted third party who can help your child explore the issue and then serve as a buffer when he or she feels comfortable discussing the sensitive information.

Consider this a teachable moment for all concerned. That's good ex-etiquette.

Dr. Jann Blackstone is the author of Ex-etiquette for Parents: Good Behavior After Divorce or Separation, and the founder of Bonus Families, bonusfamilies.com. Email her at the Ex-etiquette website exetiquette.com at dr.jann@exetiquette.com.

The concept of meritocracy is germane to the discussion. Meritocracy means privilege is conferred objectively. In the previous case, the objective measure is age, but it could also be talent, effort or expertise. Children do not believe in meritocracy. A child

believes—and the younger the child, the stronger the belief—in the "me-tocracy." To Ritchie, it is of no consequence that Frankie runs faster and therefore reached the ball first. Ritchie thinks it's not fair that Frankie has the ball. But then Frankie thinks

it's unfair that because Ritchie made straight A's through the entire school year, his parents are taking him to Dizzy World. Frankie slacked off during much of the school year. No Dizzy World for him.

Unfortunately, many adults these days seem as

confused as children by the difference between fair and equal. The confusion is reflected in the nouveau practice of giving every child on a team an award.

"And the Most Well-Oiled Glove Award goes to Billy Bratnslob! Let's give him a big hand! Good job Billy!"

CHILD

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special needs. You can also reach out to your community and find resources such as organizations. These entities focus on a specific goal, and if they help with children with special needs, you can communicate with them.

Keep a positive attitude.

Children tend to emulate everything about you because they see you as their role model. Inspire them to believe in themselves and that their disability is not their fault. Foster an environment that tells them that life's challenges are just mini speedbumps. Another way to keep a positive attitude is to understand what it is like to be in your child's shoes. Try to get a gist of what it means to inherently not be able to do certain things. Doing all of these can help you create a house of love for your



child to grow in.

Remind yourself and your child that disabilities do not define your child. A child's disability is only a fraction of their identity. Their disability may hinder them from performing a certain function, but they will excel in other functions.

Parents of children with

disabilities can approach the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities. Their mission is to "bring about necessary systemic change in order to promote the lives of persons with developmental disabilities." You can contact them by calling them at (670) 664-7000/1 or by visiting their location on Capital Hill.

Sources: <https://www.bu.edu/wellness/social-well-being/parenting/parenting-children-with-special-needs/#:~:text=Among%20the%20many%20challenges%20are,an%20individual%20with%20a%20disability>

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/autism-learning-disabilities/helping-children-with-learning-disabilities.htm>

There is no greater love
than a parent's love for their child.

Happy Parents' Day
to all the parents out there!



From the Office of Senate President
Jude Untalan Hofschneider
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VOX POPULI

What lessons or values have you learned from your parents?

Although my mother, +Rosario Benavente Aldan, is no longer with us, she was a woman of strength, courage and love. My father, +Juan DLG Demapan, unexpectedly passed away when I was only 11, and my younger twin siblings were only 6. In an instant, my mother took on the roles of being both a mother and father to three young children. Growing up under her wings, she showed us that if we persevere and strive for excellence, we will be okay. She was a hard worker who was committed to providing a roof over our head and food on our table for my siblings and I. She was also a gentle and loving soul whose laughter resounded with distinction at our family gatherings. We never had it all, but we made the most of what we had because in the end, it was love, respect and our belief in God that mattered most. These are the lessons she instilled in me. She was committed to her devotions to San Vicente and the Nino Prague; and in her healthier days, would cook meals for some of our priests and sisters. She constantly reminded me that respect would always take us far in life. "Na siguru na i respetu mas un na ya hululu' gi linal'a'-mu" ("Make sure that



respect is the most important thing in your life."). She taught me that when we give respect, we earn the respect, trust, and confidence of others. And that if we all give each other these, we will always be surrounded by people that will lift each other up, in good times and in our most trying times. She believed in me, and today, I make every effort to pay forward the life lessons she has left behind for me and my little family.

Rep. Angel A. Demapan

From working hard to acting with empathy to prioritizing my education, my parents have taught me so much in my 23 years of life. At the foundation of this long list of life lessons is the most important to me, which has got me through the best and most difficult of times: "Treat everyone with kindness and respect."

As a young adult, I often consider how valuable the life lessons my parents taught (and continue to teach me) are, being that these lessons are the culmination of their own experiences, hardships, and what they've learned from their own parents.

I am eternally grateful for the guidance and wisdom passed down to me by my mother, Dr. Barbara Concepcion Hunter, and my father, William Hunter. I have seen both of them work very hard to ensure that my sisters and I have the ability to not only further our education, but also pursue opportunities for growth in leadership and service to our community.

Thank you, mom and dad. You are my motivation to work hard, be kind, and never stop learning, and I am grateful for all that you do.

Brianna Hunter



From growing up with a bunch of six siblings to getting married and then having a family. My parents, Frank and +Anicia Tomokane, gave so much of their unconditional love to support me and my siblings through it all.

If there is anything I could share about what made it possible to stay positive in all situations, it was because of having parents who were patient, kind and very supportive in everything we have done.

Zenn Tomokane



I think I am the luckiest one when it comes to having the best parents. I do not only have one or two, but I have six caring and loving parents. It may seem crazy as it sounds, but I am grateful to every single one of them. Growing up, we weren't the perfect or "complete family," but we were content with each other. I specifically remember these words from my mom, "Be grateful for what you have." I never really understood what that meant, not until I grew up and I realized that nothing in this world is perfect. I've been through many trials, but they never fail to help me get back on my feet. Although having six parents is out of the ordinary, all I could say is that they are the "complete family" I could ever ask for in my life. I love them so much, and I am forever grateful to God for blessing me with them.

Christine Hayag



Life lessons from my parents have been based on faith—to always pray and keep my relationship with our Lord as a priority. As I went through life and experienced some life challenges, I would often be reminded of our Lord's words—that "He will never leave us nor forsake us." To trust and have faith in our Lord, as everything is on His time. We must have faith and trust in what our Lord has planned for us. And to "always do our best and God will take care of the rest." These words were instrumental as I went through college. I was like many who didn't know what I wanted to be in life. After I graduated from college and moved back home, I had a bit of fear of uncertainties. With a leap of faith and trust in Him, I been blessed with this beautiful paradise I can call home. As I started to grow professionally and experienced some challenges and insecurities, my mother reminded me to always do the "right thing" and she sent me the poem by Mother Theresa, "Do it Anyway." This gave me the perfect perspective that I needed and it has carried me. Be kind, help each other and listen as much as possible.

Catherine Attao Toves

CELEBRATING NATIONAL Parents' Day

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth."
Ephesians 6:1-3

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Honor thy mother and father as the Bible states. Let's take this time to acknowledge and honor those who brought us into this world, and whether they are still around or not, we can always honor their memory since we wouldn't be the individuals that we are today without them.

I must say the one resounding theme or lesson that my mother always tried to instill in us was to always keep God first in everything we do and to always count our blessings. She also believed that you must always try and help others any chance you get. Give without expecting anything in return. Now on the flip side of that, she always said never depend on others and that you have to try and do things for yourself.

Another thing that she instilled in us was to always remain humble in everything that we do. We were also told that if someone spoke ill of you, we are not able to control what others say or think of us, so don't waste any time or energy trying to figure out those reasons since it will only stress you out. The one last thing she always spoke of was to always take care of our health since how are we to take care of others if we can't take care of ourselves. (sigh)

Thank you, mom, I miss and love you every day.

Christopher G. Cabrera



I am everything that I am because Serafina Rosario King-Nabors is my mother. I watched her work from under her desk when she and Auntie Daling Ogumoro were the first females in the CNMI to ever be elected as congresswomen in the 1st CNMI Legislature. I watch her live her life on her own terms, fearlessly and fiercely. Everyday, I get to see her devote her life to her community in silence and in own her way, without any expectation of recognition. She is just doing and giving her best at it. She has taught me by doing. And, everyday that I wake up, my primary goal is to give the best of myself to my family, my friends, and to my community; to live fearlessly and fiercely but most of all, to live with humility. And it is my hope that one day, I can be half the woman that she is.



Kimberlyn King-Hinds

Over the years, my parents have taught me useful life lessons, but the one thing that particularly stood out to me was how to be resilient and to never give up. They have taught me to look at things from different angles and find alternative methods to solve the challenges that we are faced with. They wanted me to know that they are always there to support me and have my back, no matter how hard life gets. Knowing that they are always there for me helps to reassure me and gives me courage to try harder and to not quit. I am forever thankful to have them in my life and I don't know what I would do without them.



Justin Laurence Del Rosario

"A mothers love is more beautiful than a fresh flower." This quote has always stuck with me because not only did my mom raise me, she raised me on her own. She's sacrificed so much to provide me and my siblings our wants and needs because she would always say "because I never had that growing up." She taught us to appreciate the little things and to be humble when big things come our way. When hurtful words are being pointed at us, "just take it in one ear, and out the other" or "if you have nothing nice to say, don't say anything at all" when hurtful words leave our lips. She not only tried to spoil us, but she humbled us in the process. For that, I thank her. I love her. I appreciate her. And I have all my life to repay her.



Kiara Pangelinan

Parenting is not easy but parents like you make it sound so simple and easy.... Warm wishes to rocking, inspiring and caring parents.

Happy Parents' Day

Hafa Adai From the Management & Staff of
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Parents are an epitome of sacrifice, unconditional love, limitless care and affection.... There is no one else in this world who can replace their place in our hearts.

Happy Parents' Day

Office of Representative
Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero