

EMPTY NEST SYNDROME: A RACKSUCK OF MIXED MOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

It is basically the law and natural order of things. If you have children then raise them until they are able to go through the world on their own. Its very hard spending almost two decades to teach them right and wrong but many parents find that the hardest part of being mother or fatherhood actually occur when their children grow up and fly the coop and empty the nest. Despite your friends, family, work and other activities you still might feel a bit of empty. Empty nest syndrome is a psychological condition that affects both parents, results in a feeling of grief (feeling of loss, redundancy, unworthiness, and uncertainty about the future) due to their children's departure

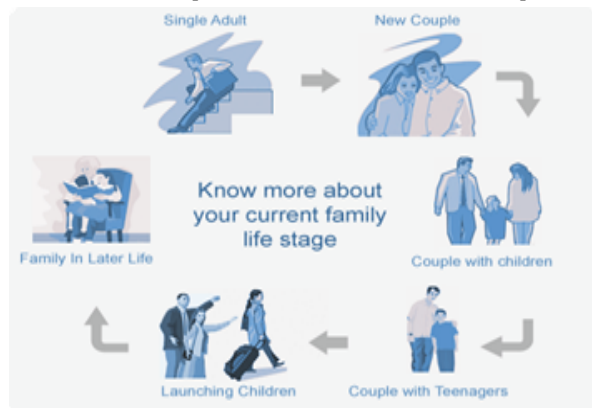
KEYWORDS : Redundancy, Unworthiness, Rucksack

INTRODUCTION

It always seems like yesterday that you held your baby in your arms and promised to take care of him/her forever. Every parent have desire to grow their children well and lead independent lives. We all might have encourage our children to become independent but we as parents might feel difficult to suddenly have no child at home who need our care. Especially when you are parent of a single child or strongly identify with your role as parent then you might experience difficulty in adjusting time with that empty nest.¹ When children live the nest (home), parents often have a rucksack of mixed emotions and it is striking thousands of parents each year. It is a very normal feeling and is called as *Empty Nest Syndrome*. If you are feeling overwhelmed and deeply saddened by moving your child out of home, your might be experiencing this syndrome. Generally it is a combination of grief and loneliness when their children depart from home.² This is a feeling by which every parent must going through whose child will leave the nest/house. Empty nest syndrome is generally not a clinical diagnosis/disorder. Instead it is a transitional period in which the parents often experience bittersweet and emotionally challenged situation.³

DEFINITION

"Empty Nest Syndrome" is that feeling of emptiness, anxiety and loss that fills the parent after the child leave the home and make their way out in the world."⁴ (Paul Hokemeyer)



Sign And Symptoms:

Parents may experience following feeling:⁵⁻⁷

- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Grief
- Loss of purpose

- Frustration over lack of control
- Anxiety about your child
- Distress
- Depression
- Conflicting feeling of excitement and loss
- Loss of meaning or purpose in life

Copying With Empty Nest Syndrome

If you are feeling of sadness and loneliness then follow certain suggestions:

Stay Positive: You can positively utilize your time and energy to your relationship, habits and interest.⁷

Accept The Timing: Avoid comparing your expectations with your child's timetable. Instead focus how you can help your child to succeed when they leave the house.⁷

Stay In Touch: Keep continue your bond with your child by contact through phone calls, texts, mails, video calls and visits.⁸

Seek Help/support: Share feelings with ones whose children have recently left house will certainly help to fill you with positivity.⁸

Re- Engage In Your Community: Talk about this transitional period of life with your partner and best friends.⁸

Ways To Prevent Empty Nest Syndrome?

Prepare for the departure and Plan ahead: If your last child is about to leave home, then make planning prior. Take this time to check that they are aware of how to do the basic essentials for caring for themselves alone. Make sure they know how to wash their clothes, cook for themselves, deal with neighbour disputes, balance a check book, negotiate for good deals when buying things, and know how to appreciate the value of money.^{9,10}

Don't get panic: Even if you are not aware that your children are leaving until the last minute, don't get panic. Accept that this is happening and be enthusiastic for them, offering your support at any time it is needed. your child will be happy to know that you are supporting them, love them, than to see you sad and worrying.^{9,10}

Explore the ways that you intend to keep in touch with your children: You'll feel a sense of loneliness and emptiness when they're gone because you can't just turn around and tell them the things as you always used to do. Keeping up

constant communications is vital for maintaining a sense of family togetherness and to keep up with the news.⁹

Seek opportunities: make new connections else give time to your loved ones. Look for new opportunities in your personal and professional life.⁹

Start looking to you own needs: Make yourself busy in doing work which gives u happiness can help ease the sense of loss.

Re discover the love of your life: This is a time to talk honestly and openly about the direction of your relationship together. Accept that this is a difficult time of transition can allow both of you to forgive the uncertainties and messiness of growing together as a couple without kids again¹⁰⁻¹¹

If you feel depressed, consult your doctor or mental health provider.

CONCLUSION

The nest of family love is like a nest of birds. When it is the right time to fly, the young will fly away, as is the way of life. However, for some people, especially for the primary caregiver, this can be a time of great emptiness and sadness that can easily tip into depression if unheeded. The most susceptible parents are those who find it tough to have an empty nest or, those with an unhappy or unstable partnership, those with high self-identity struggles a lot, and those with no external work. The parent experience an insecure grief reaction and thus should plan and prepare for an empty nest and be aware of the actions that need to be need to be taken to prevent its potential destructive results.

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