



Branching Out

Providing support and encouragement through the joys and challenges of this transition.

New Support Group starting in Los Angeles for anticipating the empty nest and being an empty nester. Call for further information (800) 446-3310 or email at natalie@emptynestsupport.com

"We've had bad luck with our kids –they've all grown up." Christopher Morley

Our adult children have gathered their school supplies. It is our turn for resources. September is a major transition for them and for us.

Are You Giving Attention To:

1. Your inner voice that talks to you with compassion or criticism?
2. Are you asking for help when you need it?
3. What you could teach others?
4. Staying curious about yourself and others?
5. Being playful?

A dad called me today and shared that he is proud of his son who did all the work to get into the college of his choice, but he honestly wishes they had more time at home. He made time for the soccer games and milestones. He said he simply misses hearing him in the house and seeing his buddies pop in and play basketball in the driveway. He cries mostly in the car and wonders if he is normal and how long the loss will last.

A mom emailed me wanting to start a book group. She needed a list of recommended books, so here they are for all of us:

- A memoir *FIERCE ATTACHMENTS* by Vivian Gornick
- *I FEEL BAD ABOUT MY NECK* by Nora Ephron
- *PLAYING IN THE LIGHT* by Zoe Wicomb
- *ISHMAEL* by Daniel Quinn
- *BEING PEACE* Thich Nhat Hanh
- *LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE* Laura Esquirel

- *MIDDLESEX* by Jeffrey Eugenides
- *YOU ARE NOT A STRANGER HERE* by Adam Haslett
- *AMERICAN GROUND* Unbuilding the World Trade Center by William Langewiesche
- *SELF-RELIANCE* and Other Essays by Ralph Waldo Emerson

Take a blanket or chair and head to the park under a tree or in a café with a cup of coffee!

New Activities People Tried:

- Kayaking
- Snorkeling
- Biking
- Cooking healthy for one
- Entertaining guests with wine and appetizers and then everyone goes out to dinner
- Quilting
- Writing classes online
- Concerts in the park with a friend
- Fishing
- Photography
- Journaling
- Dance classes
- Re-Decorating
- Getting a dog and dog training classes at the park

Meals Alone

When you come home you might be feeling that loss of your kids being there. Loneliness greets you rather than the sounds of family. The emptiness

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isn't subtle. To ease the transition, you can have music ready and a friend to call while you fix dinner.

Once a week meet a friend for dinner. If you are new to town, pick a local event happening in the evening and go. You can always change your mind and leave. A friend in our neighborhood opened an Italian café with gelato, coffee, and pastries. The neighbors have been walking there, sharing a dessert and playing cards.

Cooking for one still takes planning. If cooking is a way for you to feel creative and relax then gather some new flavors for stir fry, hearty stews, steamed fish, and roasted vegetables. Visit a local farmer's market. Get a magazine subscription for healthy, quick meals.

If cooking doesn't do it for you, then try a crock pot before you leave for the day, read while you eat at a local café, or make a crock pot today and freeze some meals. I like pot luck dinners on the weekend to be with friends and then take a neighborhood walk. Music and dessert when we come back home!

September is new beginnings. Treat yourself like you would treat others. Do something wild, outside of your comfort zone, like a golf, piano, or voice lesson, match.com to begin dating, submit your writing once a week to a local paper or magazine, spinning class, hiking group, reading in a hammock, meditation class, art walks, exercise buddy.

Relationships

The relationship I have with my daughter is my best teacher of life. She keeps me working on my vibrancy, living my dreams and honoring her independence. The relationship I have with my husband is one of continuous gratitude and openness. The relationship with my friends is all about story telling, comfort, and play time. I am simply in the mood today for appreciating what I have and exploring what I need to change and reach towards.

I continue to be in this transition caused by an empty nest. This life change drops me further into exploring who I am now. Change is an ongoing process.

1. Send me your stories about being in the empty nest
2. Ask me questions you want answered about empty nest
3. Let me know what kind of support you need these days on the web or teleseminars or my visiting your community.
4. Email me natalie@emptynestsupport.com or call me (800) 446-3310 about the new Los Angeles support group.

Branching out to you,
Natalie

EMPTY NEST
SUPPORT SERVICES

**Individual Consultations • Phone Consultations
Support Groups • Speaker Engagements**

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