

FOR THE LADIES

LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN

By Bonita Armstrong

Long-range planning was never something I used to think about. When I was a small child, planning for the next day was a tremendous task. My mother used to tell me pick out clothes for school the night before. I would, but by the time morning came around I didn't want to wear those clothes anymore. I'd select a different outfit and take quite a bit more time choosing it, much to my mother's dismay.

After I became an adult I'd hear people talking about saving for their retirement, planning vacations a year or more in advance, planning when they would have children, how many they would have and how much space would be between each child.



BONITA ARMSTRONG

No, long-range planning was definitely not my strong suit. It was all I could do to keep up with what was going on in my life for the next couple of months, or weeks or sometimes even days.

But then, something spectacular happened. I became a mother and my ideas about

long-range planning changed.

I still don't have a hearty retirement to fall back on in my golden years. Planning a vacation for me consists of taking a few days off work to rest at home. And anyone who knows me knows that my children came along quickly and plentifully.

But I did change one idea about long-range planning. I decided to be a good parent, I had to set some long-term goals for my children. If I want them to become well-rounded, worthwhile, quality people, I had to commit to some work and some responsibility. Which, as you all know, is not an easy task.

I want my children to know how to do certain things when they get to be teenagers. So I must start preparing them now.

SUGAR PADDY

By ZELDA FURYEAR-WILLIAMS (ES)



Melisha, listen to me: you need a man who will inspire you... one that will believe in you... one that will remind you without saying a word you're a beautiful Black Woman need I say more

I have to wrestle with them learning to do chores around the house. They gripe and fuss, which is sometimes frustrating to me, but if we all stick with it long enough, they will be able to do these chores without any prodding and nagging from me.

I also want them to have good study habits. Therefore I am constantly on their backs about doing homework at a certain time of the day, reading quality books in their spare time, and not watching too much television. Right now, they think I'm mean, and they tell me so, but later it will be a tool they can not replace.

If I want them to grow up to be honest, civic-minded, strong black men and women, who reverence God and adore their people ... then I must present that image to them. It's a lot of work for me sometimes to burn the candle at both ends but someday it will be worth it.

If I plan it right and execute it well, I could have some wonderful people on my hands. Some that will make a contribution to society in a positive way.

So maybe I won't have a hearty nest egg to live on in the future. I will probably never take

sisterhood is a powerful thing.... I'm hanging up on that note

a trip around the world, but all that really doesn't matter to me.

I once heard someone say that one hundred years from now, it won't matter what kind of house you live in, or what kind of car you drove, or even what kind of job you had ... but if you make a difference in the life of a child, you will have made a difference in the world.

My sisters and brothers ... making that difference begins at home with our own children. Let's make a brighter future for our children by making our children a part of our long-range plans for success.

October Is Breasts Cancer Awareness Month

BARRIERS TO MAMMOGRAPHY

While most younger women at high (genetic) risk for breast cancer receive regular mammograms, older high-risk women and those with less schooling frequently do not.

In a study supported by the National Cancer Institute, more than 1 out of 10 had never received this critical diagnostic exam.

Experts say that about 1 out of 5 breast cancers have a genetic or familial component. They also maintain that while all women are at risk of developing breast cancer, those who have a first-degree relative with the disease have a risk that is increased 2 to 10 times.

Mammography, or breast x-rays, however, can often detect very small, incipient breast cancers. Such early detection with treatment greatly improves the outlook for less radical surgery and increases the chances for recovery.

A research team, led by Dr. Caryn Lerman from the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, PA, investigated mammography practices in 140 women, 35-79 years of age, each of whom had a first-degree relative with breast cancer.

They matched frequency of screening with age, and such psychological variables as depression, anxiety, and overall breast cancer concerns. Educational level was also attained for comparison purposes.

The researchers found that younger subjects were generally prudent about mammograms. More than three-fourths of women in their mid-to-late thirties adhered to the prescribed mammogram schedule; 82 percent of them had received a mammogram within the past year. However, more than one-third (37 percent) of older high-risk women (50 years and over) did not obtain regular mammograms. Those with serious breast cancer concerns or anxiety, and those with a high school education or less were also much less likely to obtain

regular mammograms.

The results of this study, the first of their kind, point to an inverse link between psychological distress and mammography screening practices, indicating that breast cancer anxiety may hinder use of mammography.

Follow-up investigations may help target appropriate psychoeducational interventions for such high-risk women, explain the scientists.

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A lot of reasons why you haven't had a mammogram.

I'm embarrassed.

I'm nervous.

I'm not getting undressed for anyone.

There's no history of breast cancer in my family.

I take care of myself.

My doctor never told me to go.

The only reason why you should.

It may save your life.

Even though your doctor may not have told you to go for a yearly mammogram, that's no reason not to. A yearly mammogram takes less than fifteen minutes and can detect lumps too small to find even by frequent self-examination. And finding breast cancer early may just save your life.

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