

“A STEP BEYOND”

NEWSLETTER

Christy-Smith Funeral Homes

Kathy Yoder

Director of
Healing
Services



What I've Learned

Kathy Yoder

Every few years I like to sit down and reflect on what I've learned in life. I believe that if we take the time to recognize the changes and challenges in our lives, it helps us to continue to grow. With the Lord's help and encouragement, it always causes me to be thankful, even if that thankfulness comes from hard lessons.

I've learned that time does fly. I no longer try to catch it, or swat it, or force it to stand still. Instead, I try to make friends with the time I have and to spend more time with my friend.

I've learned that it's a waste of valuable time to re-read all the volumes of books listing my mistakes in life. Instead, I've learned to shut those books. God's already forgiven me. If He forgives me, who am I to hold onto un-

forgiveness? Love is a verb. I can't love others if I'm paralyzed by guilt.



I've learned that sometimes grumpy people just need a hug or someone to listen while they vent. And if they vent, sometimes they need a hug after they do. Grumpy people don't want to be grumpy; they've just built up their armor so well they don't know how to let anyone in. I've learned that it's always worth finding a little crack in that armor.

I've learned that it's important to play well with others. It's not always about me. Sometimes it's about someone else. Sometimes someone else's needs come before my own.

I've learned that one little kindness shown to another person can make an astronomical difference. We never know. One kind word might be the only kindness that person receives in a long time or even in a lifetime.

I've learned how to laugh at myself. Laughing at myself keeps me from taking myself too seriously. Someone once said, "God has a sense of humor. He created us, didn't He?"

I've learned to listen to the nudgings of the Holy Spirit. Once when I was a photojournalist I was walking down the sidewalk to the scene of a night time accident. A big storm was raging. All the street lights were out. Suddenly, even though no one else was around, I heard a voice say very loudly, "Stop!" A few minutes later a policeman said to me, "Oh, my, gosh, you almost stepped on some live wires!" Some live wires were across

the sidewalk just a few inches in front of me, but it was so dark I couldn't see them.

I've learned to stop at kids' lemonade stands. It's an incredibly cheap way to spread joy across a kid's face. Easier than spreading peanut butter on bread.

I've learned that money does not buy happiness. It can be very helpful. It can eliminate the stress of unpaid bills. But it can't laugh with you. It can't understand how fun it is to chase butterflies or blow dandelion fluff all over the place on a summer's afternoon. It can't hold your hand when you're afraid.

I've learned that when I feel sad, helping someone else makes me feel better.

I've learned that my parents were a lot smarter than I thought they were when I was younger. I've learned that I never stop thinking of things I wish I could tell my dad. (He's in Heaven.) And I've learned that my mom is my best friend.

I've learned that it doesn't matter what someone does in life. They might be a doctor or a garbage collector or a teacher or a fast food worker. What matters is how they see themselves. Dignity and respect come from within, and when you've got it you're more willing to give it to others.

I've learned that prayer changes lives. It changes the pray-er and it changes the pray-ee.

I've learned that life is too short not to forgive and too long to live with un-forgiveness in my heart.

I've learned that if I wrote down everything I'm grateful for I could soon wallpaper my house with my gratefulness.



I've learned that God is real. He loves me. He forgives me. He has good plans for my life. That doesn't mean that life is easy. But it does mean that He will never leave me. He's there during the good times and the bad and all the times before, after, and in-between.

I've learned that if I am quiet, sometimes I can hear God's still, small voice.

And I've learned that one day I'll get to see the loved ones who have already gone home to Heaven. But for now, I've learned to look for little pieces of Heaven here on earth.

We never know someone else's complete story. But if we can be thankful for that part of their story in which we have been allowed to walk for whatever length of time, then we will have a little glimpse of Heaven on earth.

Christy-Smith Funeral and

Aftercare Services

A Step Beyond

Meets at 3:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month except for at 5:30 p.m. in August, November and December No meeting in January at Christy-Smith Family Resource Center, 1819 Morningside Avenue. 712-276-7319

“Planning a Celebration in Honor of Your Journey”

By Sandy Roggatz; Pre-Need Counselor



Right around the corner we will be looking for green grass and the robins showing up in our yards. If you are like me, you are ready for it. Winter is a time for the land to mellow and prepare for new grow. I for one can't wait to plant my flower garden and look forward to the new freshness of spring. Planning is a big part of our lives. We are constantly planning parties for birthdays, anniversaries and vacations and the like.

I want to tell you about “Planning a Celebration in Honor of Your Journey.” You are probably familiar with the terms in relation to pre-planning a family member's service, and you probably have heard about others doing this. I want you to consider just how that might provide your family the opportunity to eliminate the difficulty in making decision at the time of death. It provides you the opportunity to inform the funeral home of just exactly how you want your services conducted. There are ways that you can even prearrange the details and prepay this arrangement ahead of time. Many refer to this as “ADVANCED FUNERAL PLANNING”. For the next few months, I will be answering questions on a bi-monthly basis that offers you the many reasons

to plan ahead regarding Your Life Journey. The number one question we hear, “Why would I want to pre-plan my funeral?”

Let's look at the answer to that: You want to ease the burden on your family. If your wishes are unknown when you die, they will be faced with making difficult decisions at a trying time. Will they know if you wish to be buried or cremated? Will they agree on an open or closed casket? Will they agree on how much to spend? Confusion and disagreements are common occurrences when there is no plan to follow. You can avoid this by leaving behind a plan.

We are all travelers in this world. We meet at different parts of the journey, but we don't see the entire journey at one time. Even as parents we don't know our children's lives as intimately as we think. Our parents and grandparents have had entire childhoods and teen age years and adulthoods before we ever met them. Their hopes and dreams may have been placed long ago in a secret place for safe keeping never to be retrieved on this earth.