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CELEBRATE A CHILD

By Arleen M. Kaptur

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This month we celebrate CHILDREN'S DAY. We already have a Mother's Day, Father's Day, and a Grandparents' Day. Why should we have a Children's Day? Don't we give the young ones enough attention in everyday life? We cater to their needs, give up needed sleep and relaxation so we can spend quality time with them. The media exalts their deeds, whether good or bad. They are featured in magazines, books, newspapers, and on television. So why a Children's Day?

Those of us who are truly blessed with children can attest to the fact that they are never clones of ourselves. Surely, on more than one occasion, we wish they could do some of the things we did as children, or enjoy some of the games, hobbies or interests we had. We even encourage this with gifts of whatever we liked, or the dreams we pursued. Somehow they manage to go on their merry way, and leave us standing in the dust to hope that they will be happy with the lives they have chosen. If you have more than one child, then multiply these feelings by just as many.

The world is run by adults. We make the laws and we enforce them. We create the products and we market them. We decide who does what and when. We tolerate some behavior and condemn others. We judge, decide, and act as adults.

Now enter the world of a child. It is as colorful as a box of crayons, as bright as the sunshine, and as warm as a favorite quilt or blanket. In the heart of a child lives hope, dreams, goals, ambitions, and destinations. These heart-held attributes change with time and sometimes when these children reach adulthood, these hopes and ambitions are totally changed, sometimes by choice and sometimes not.

Look into the eyes of a child and you have a glimpse of the destination of the world. Take them by the hand and you place yourself at the mercy of sweet smiles, bear hugs and moist kisses. They may smudge you with dirty hands yet those fingerprints leave a mark of confidence that the world will continue to turn and there is a chance that it will get better.

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Whether you have children of your own or have the opportunity to be friends with the children of other people, don't miss out on the challenges they freely give and the dreams they will paint your life with. Children use imagination if given the chance, and opportunity if you open the door. They dance with the wind and skip through the raindrops. A child always sees the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, where as adults we may even miss the rainbow. They listen to our tales, and they go on to create their own. The little ones will sit with us by a quiet stream and while we take a much deserved nap, they dream of what will be and how they will make it happen.

A child is a mixture of generations before them and yet they have their own distinct impact on the future. They may be small in stature but they are giants in creativity. They can fly on a magic carpet as easily as we drive a car. They can spin tales of delight, while we lament the past. Children climb the ladder of life and hope to reach their castles in the sky. They are clever, original, and have a vision that they carry in their souls.

Where is the point that we change from being the miracle of a child to the practical, down-to-earth, adult that tolerates no nonsense, is too busy to watch a firefly, and misses the delight of a spider spinning his web? I don't believe everyone attains this transformation at the same time. Some blame it on life while others point to their parents, environment, or even their heritage. If we find that we can no longer sit down and find humor in a misshaped clay figure, or realize that the crayon marks are not "outside" the lines, but that they are only an expansion of what could possibly be, then take a child by the hand and let them lead you back into a realm where anything is possible and everything is probable. Enter the land where everything lends itself to be transformed into whatever you would like it to be.

So, why do we have a Children's Day? Could it possibly be because we realize that we are children for such a short time and we are adults for the rest of our lives? Do we feel in our hearts that we have to step back into a world where color, sparkle, and enchantment allows us to reclaim dreams, renew our hopes, and a small hand will help us find ourselves? Are we really celebrating children or does the world need to realign its visions and build better castles in the sky? Isn't Children's Day really a day for the whole world to appreciate life and really see what it has to offer? Are we finally beginning to realize that we carry our childhood in our hearts and that when we rekindle our acquaintance with what we were, our steps are a little lighter, our smiles are brighter, and our world resembles a box of crayons.

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(An excerpt from Celebrate a Child by Arleen M. Kaptur)

Arleen Kaptur has written numerous articles, cookbooks, and the novel: **SEARCHING FOR AUSTIN JAMES** Websites: <http://www.arleensite.com> <http://www.Arleens-RusticLiving.com>
<http://www.webspawner.com/users/rusticliving/index.html> <http://www.topica.com/lists/simpleliving>

Resistance to Celebrating

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

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The following article is offered for free use in your ezine, print publication or on your web site, so long as the author resource box at the end is included. Notification of publication would be appreciated.

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Author: Margaret Paul, Ph.D.
E-mail: <mailto:margaret@innerbonding.com>
Copyright: © 2003 by Margaret Paul
Web Address: <http://www.innerbonding.com>
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RESISTANCE TO CELEBRATING

Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

Some people really love celebrations - birthdays, anniversaries, holidays - while other people seem to dislike them. Derek will tell you that he could go through life very nicely without celebrations. To Derek, celebrations are a bother, a nuisance. They are meaningless and commercialized, created by big business to make money. Derek does not want to fall into the trap of being like everyone else.

Bonnie, Derek's wife, is just the opposite. She loves celebrations. She loves to buy just the right gifts for people. She loves to celebrate people on their birthdays and anniversaries. She loves Thanksgiving, Christmas, as well as Chanukah, since she is half Jewish. To Bonnie, celebrations are times when she can express her love and appreciation for people and her gratitude for her life. Bonnie is sad that Derek doesn't like to join her, and often feels lonely at holiday time because Derek is so resistant to celebrating.

How did Derek get this way? What causes him and others to dislike celebrations?

Derek grew up with a very controlling, invasive mother. She tried to control Derek in many areas - how he wore his hair, who he dated, how he spent his time, what courses he took in school, what major he had in college. In addition, she exerted much control over him during celebrations. Not only did he have to get her a terrific present, but whatever he got was never good enough. For Derek, celebrations were not fun at all.

Now, as an adult, Derek is in resistance to being controlled. He has transferred his anger and resistance toward his mother onto society and big business. Now it is society and big business that are trying to control him. Now, because he is an adult, he no longer has to give in as he did with his mother. Now he can resist being controlled.

The problem is that it is not really an adult who is making the decision to hate holidays - it's a

wounded, angry resistant adolescent who just doesn't want to be controlled any more. Derek actually

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has a little child inside – the happy, playful, loving child - who would love to be celebrated on his birthday and would love to celebrate others, but this tyrannical, controlling adolescent part of him (who is just like his mother!) won't let him. So, like Bonnie, his little inner child ends up feeling sad and lonely on holidays and birthdays, while the adolescent part of Derek thinks he is beating the system.

Derek will never be able to experience the joy of celebrations until he starts to care more about what is truly loving to himself and others, rather than being controlled by his resistance to being controlled. As long as not being controlled - by Bonnie, by his mother, or by society and big business - is more important to him than taking care of the little child inside who loves celebrations, Derek will be in resistance.

One way of moving out of this resistance is to find something he does want to celebrate. Can he celebrate his love for his wife? Can he celebrate the loving part of himself? Can he celebrate the fact that he is free to resist and rebel if that is what he wants? Can he celebrate his freedom to choose, his free will to determine what will bring him joy? Derek has the choice to move out of celebrating what others say he should celebrate and discover what he wants to celebrate. Then he might discover the joy of celebrating!

Meanwhile, Bonnie needs to take care of herself and find people who would enjoy celebrating with her. Rather than being stuck in her loneliness around special days, she needs to find friends to celebrate with her. She needs to let go of trying to get Derek to join her - which only taps into his resistance - and figure out how to take care of herself in the face of his choices. She will just lose out if she tries to have any control over his resistance. However, if Derek is open to learning about his resistance and open to learning about what he could celebrate, she can certainly engage in those discussions with him. If she lets go and he opens to exploring, perhaps they can discover new and joyful ways of celebrating!

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best-selling author and co-author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?", "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By My Kids?", "Healing Your Aloneness", "Inner Bonding", and "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By God?" Visit her web site for a FREE Inner Bonding course: <http://www.innerbonding.com> or <mailto:margaret@innerbonding.com>



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