

The Counselor's Corner

Not Just My Daughter

I am a baby boomer. I like stuff, nice stuff. I collect it. I dust it. I move it around. I registered for it before our wedding. My friends did the same. China place settings were always on the list, along with pricey complimentary pieces and fancy glassware. Some baby boomers are starting to down-size, moving into a condo or smaller home. In the process, a lot has to go. Before there is a garage or estate sale, the homeowners offer things to their adult children. Many are surprised when their offspring decline, often not wanting even that coveted fine china. Those who own large and unique collections have limited options before they contact the estate person. Art Galleries, like Dumouchelle's, no longer accept most china

When my daughter was registering for her wedding, there was no china on the list. It surprised me, but that same trend continued when cousins, as well as most people who came of age in the 21st century, began choosing things for their homes. They seem to be more practical in their approach. They believe in fine dining, but gourmet food is often served on dishes that are also used for everyday meals. As a result, there is a very limited market for our dollar-soaking décor.

Erma Bombeck wrote some heart touching comments and gave great advice when she was diagnosed with cancer. In her book, *If I Had My Life to Live Over*, she said that her best jewelry and her fine china had been reserved for special occasions, hidden in drawers or displayed like museum pieces that one dare not touch. When Erma was facing death, she felt enlightened and wanted to share what she discovered. Erma said she would have worn that special jewelry more and utilized the china instead of letting it collect dust in the cabinet. She said that this was true for all of the things she wanted to protect like nice rooms, special chairs, pretty candles, and more. She discovered that it had been pointless to put so much love and protection into material things.

A now deceased comedian, George Carlin, had a routine about buying a home that is empty, and then filling it to the point that all of the things inside no longer fit. So, the owner buys another place where these items can be transported. Then the cycle continues. George Carlin felt that moving reflected not only an increase in family size, but an increase in the amount of "junk" we had collected.

These people warn us not to put too much emphasis on what we have collected. Unfortunately, most of us learn this as we age or the prophesy of "ashes to ashes and dust to dust" starts looming in the near future. Some never learn while they reside on the earth, and incredible amounts of things are found tucked in every nook and corner for heirs to sort.

Certainly, the millennial generation is not perfect, but practically and utilization seems to be of utmost importance to them. It is time to learn from our children in this regard. We need to use what we have now and share our things with others. It is imperative to donate some of our possessions, and use the cherished items that we were saving for a special occasion. That special day or occasion is happening now. Tomorrow is not promised.

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