Senior Advice: Fatherhood seems to baffle grandson

by Doug_Mayberry

Q: Our grandson and his wife had their first baby two months ago. They live nearby, and our grandson frequently comes alone to visit. He complains his wife now gives "Susanne" all of her time, and he doesn't exist. She has taken six months off from her career.

How can we help him adjust?

A: Did he anticipate the fact when couples have children the family dynamics change dramatically? Today's mothers have triple responsibilities handling babies, careers and their mates. I suspect the why some couples now choose not to have children is because they feel they are not able or capable of raising children. Suggest and help to make a list of their new daily responsibilities. Which ones can he assume?

Not only will his help be appreciated, but by becoming more involved with his daughter, the more he will love her. Remind him a wife's interest in romance and sex after she bears a child does not return immediately and usually is not the most important thing on her mind. It requires time but the trade-off is having someone else to love, to care for, to hug, adventures, laugh with, and grow together.

Until they work out a new routine it will be more difficult to stay in touch with friends, go to the movies, etc. In assuming some daily responsibilities for Susanne and his wife, he will learn how a child is a gift not everyone receives. Tell him you already are enjoying bragging rights about your great-grandson, and you look forward to some future baby-sitting so her parents can have an occasional night out! Slip your grandson $100. (He will need it.)

Q: My husband and I retired six years ago and did so because we thought our savings would be sufficient. It is not working. Inflation, taxes, health expenses and family needs have thrown our budget off. We are digging into principal. My husband thinks he should go back to work part time. However he is now 67 and is reluctant to ask for a job.

How can I encourage him?

A: Many of us older soldiers believe we are not wanted and needed. I disagree. There are jobs available. I notice more elderly individuals working in retail stores, working security, directing traffic, stocking shelves and acting as restaurant greeters.

Employers appreciate older workers who will show up on time, are willing to work flexible hours, have positive attitudes and appreciate the job. Often older greeters surprise me with their enthusiasm and ability to direct me to merchandise I buy.

One secret to recommend to your husband is to ask many questions during his interviews. This gives the potential employer the opportunity to learn about his interests, personality and communication skills. Let his enthusiasm show! One of the key questions I evaluate when I accept rental applications for my apartment is why they want it. The more enthusiasm they show, the longer they rent.

Potential employers are fully aware of Social Security supplements, Medicare and possible other retirement income seniors may have. Needing supplemental income is a good reason to hire. No doubt your husband has the skills, desire, interest, and needs to qualify for many different jobs.

Assist him in creating a brief resume, which documents his skills, goals and the uniqueness he offers. Have him wear appropriate clothing, answer the interviewers' questions and give straight answers. Follow up with a thank-you note to reflect his interest.

I don't think it will be long until you will be making sandwiches for his lunch.

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