

SPARK 144

(Matrix Code: **SPARK144.00** for StartOver.xyz game.)

DISTINCTION: Parenting ends with a Mom or Dad graduation party.

NOTES: By banishing adulthood initiations, modern culture leaves parents and their offspring helplessly enmeshed with each other, confused for decades about how to proceed with their lives. Parents are entangled with their children, still trying to take responsibility for them even in their late teens and early twenties. Children are entangled with their parents, incapacitated by not standing on their own feet and stretching their wings in the world. We have grown accustomed to thinking that this is normal. It is not.

Certainly the fact of being a biological mother or father cannot be changed. But the cultural roles of *Mommy* and *Daddy* come with a “best if used by” date, expiring on your child’s 18th birthday. At that time a significant life-project comes to successful completion: being Mommy or Daddy.

“Successful???” you demand. *“But my child did not perform well in school! Now they spend most of their time fiddling around with their smartphone and chilling with friends.”*

So many emotional landmines are associated with parenting that this is indeed dangerous territory to tread upon in a SPARK. Already several explosions may have triggered in you. Notice any rush of adrenalin? Tightening of the jaw? A flush to the face? Justifications churning in your mind? An urge to run away, or put a strangle-hold around somebody’s throat?

Have you been a good mother? Have you, as a father, provided enough security and positive role models for your children to admire and respect? Have you protected your children from modern culture’s evils? Have you made good boundaries? Have you done everything you could to open a future for your children that is even more promising than your own? Have your children learned to become good parents?

Regardless of your answers to these questions, the suggestion here is that by the time your child is 18 years old *there is nothing further you can do for them. It is already too late.* Your parenting job is *over.* It probably began ending when they were about 13. By 18 your offspring are under their own recognizance. You are creating a mess by not stopped parenting behaviors, shifting identity, celebrating, and getting on about your future, thereby liberating the next generation to get on about theirs.

Even thinking about this can trigger grieving and fears about cutting the cord and graduating yourself from the parenting job. After all these years, who are you really in there? It may feel strange to drop the title of Mom or Dad, taking back your actual name, and asking your new young friends to call you Bob, or Betty. Remember, it is not part of parenting to initiate your own children into adulthood. That is the job of the global network of skilled initiators. It is time for you to re-engage the world without the dizzying cloud of kid energy around you. It is time to further develop your own services to the world. It is time for your Mom or Dad Graduation Party.

Further considerations may arise:

- Are there men who will stand with my son whom he can ask for help? Will he feel that I have taken my love away? Will he still call me? [*The life of someone else is not in your control.*]
- What is my role now? [*Live your own adult life passionately and full out.*]
- What is the proper distance between us now? [*Respect for another human being. Stop assuming you have any idea who that young person actually is.*]
- What about Birthdays, or Christmas? How to enjoy a sense of “family” without manacles for each other? [*Where is your village? Get connected with your village. Your offspring have their own village connections to make.*]
- I would feel guilty going my own way and being happy if I see my child struggling. [*Respect their process.*]
- I am afraid of comments from family and friends wanting us to have a “normal” life. I am afraid they will accuse me if my child doesn’t fit in. [*If you become more aware, the people around you are afraid they will also have to change. It helps to recognize that the “normal” given to us by the modern capitalistic patriarchal empire is a suicidal paradigm that long ago lost its legitimacy. You are an edgeworker, creating next culture. Being regarded by “normal” people as a misfit is part of the job description.*]
- I see my sons feeling a sense of responsibility for me because I don’t have a partner... How do I release that? I have talked to them but nothing changes... [*A son must take his own balls back from his mother. She cannot give them back because by this act she would still have the authority. As mother you can take the balls out of your underwear drawer and put them out on the front porch. The rest is up to your son. A parallel thing can happen by the daughter going through the initiation of taking her center back from her father.*]
- What are my subtle actions, thoughts, words and behaviors that will keep my child trapped in the parent / child relationship? [*Excellent question for furthering your neutral self-observation!*]
- In the ways my child talks and thinks about women or men I see how much I “influenced” them in their views. Some I like very much. Some I really feel sad and ashamed about. [*It’s too late for all this. No matter which parents a child has they adopt some parts of the parents’ Boxes and reject other parts. Different children in the same family adopt and reject different parts. It is the child who chooses what they adopt or reject, not you. As young people go through authentic adulthood initiatory processes those Box attitudes and behaviors fall off automatically. They do not matter. Focus on delivering your archetypal lineage to the world. The parenting thing is over for you.*]

Take such considerations to your next *Possibility Lab* and go through them excellently, completely, in the company of other evolving adults. Big changes are happening. The next chapter of your life starts.

EXPERIMENTS:

SPARK144.01 Have a *MOM OR DAD GRADUATION PARTY!* Here is a sample Invitation: *Dear Friends, I invite you to my “Mother’s Graduation Party” happening on Friday October 11, from 5-9pm. This is a sacred ceremony to celebrate officially graduating from the caretaking part of being a mother (never from the space of infinite*

love that lives between us). I have already asked my daughter to no longer call me "Mum." She will not be there.

The first part of the evening will be a circle in which I read out loud a letter to my daughter which I may never send to her. Then I'll be asking each person in the circle to say what needs to be said or to make a prayer. After the ceremony, we will have songs and dinner and dancing...and no alcohol.

You are my inner circle of beloved friends, and I am calling on you to support and witness me in this ceremony. If you do not resonate with what I am doing, just let me know. I'll be fine with that. I do not want you to come unless this graduation is something you can truly celebrate with me. I have cc'ed the names here, so you can all see who else has been invited. Please let me know if you can come.

As part of the ceremony, read out loud and ask people to witness by their signature your official certificate, which you write yourself. It should read something like this:

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE OF (MOM / DAD) GRADUATION

For: (Write here your full name exactly as it is in your passport. If your passport does not show what you regard as your real name, then you could think about legally changing your name and getting a new passport. But that is a different SPARK...)

This document, signed this (date, year) in (city, state, country) certifies that (your full legal name), born (date, year), legally married to (name) on (date, year), legally divorced on (date, year), legally remarried to (name) on (date, year), (etc.), has been the (Dad or Mom) for (full legal name of child) born on (date, year), (plus names and birth dates of other children if this ceremony graduates you from multiple children at the same time).

This (man or woman) was not a perfect (Dad or Mom), yet performed (his or her) parenting role for (this or these) wonderful being(s) joyfully and with an open heart and mind. As a parent (he or she) did (his or her) best to create ongoing possibilities for developing muscles of awareness, attention, intention, creativity, responsibility and love.

Today, (name of child) is a young man / a young woman who ... (write some facts and qualities about your child that make you authentically proud, and about the other children as well). For these reasons the (man or woman) who had the privilege to serve as their (Dad or Mom) is a proud and happy (man or woman).

Witnessed by you, my village, I hereby graduate from the role of being (Dad or Mom) and reclaim my actual name (your full legal name) and my respectful personhood in relationship to (this or these) young (person or people) (their names) and to their families and friends. In witness thereof the signatures below attest to this joyous paradigm shift.

Witnesses:

Your signature and date: