



# TERESA BRUNSTING

AUTHOR, COACH, SPEAKER  
[BEHOLDURBOLD.COM](http://BEHOLDURBOLD.COM)

AS FOR ME AND MY PARENTING

## Hope for "Empty Nesters"

My daughter, Olivia, has just finished her senior year in high school and will be heading off to college in the fall. We have recently had all the "lasts"—last prom, last concerts (she is very musical); graduation and the party will also be done by the time this article is out, although I'm stressing over them now.

It seems like just yesterday she was a little girl and I was taking her to dance class. I couldn't be prouder of

the woman she has become. I am going to miss her so much every day, but will also be so excited for all the opportunities she has in store for her future. So many mixed emotions

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**"CHILDREN ARE A HERITAGE  
FROM THE LORD, OFFSPRING A  
REWARD FROM HIM."**

PSALM 127:3

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come alive when parents face becoming "Empty Nesters."

I have read a number of articles lately about adjusting to an "empty nest." Some people can become depressed or anxious, develop feelings of guilt or even loss of identity. In such cases, seeking professional help is important because it is a big transition that can also cause financial and relationship problems.



Prom and graduation for my last child accomplished. Heading to Empty Nest.

## Empty Nest Syndrome

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**Empty nest syndrome can be real and it can take time to adapt. If you are like me, a great deal of your everyday life has been centered around your children and then . . . they are gone.** It's a big adjustment and let's face it, adjustments are hard. They take time and most of us simply don't like them. They require real effort and mess with our daily routine.

If you are at this point in life, ask God as well as your friends and family for help. **Keep in touch with your children as much as you can. Write them notes or letters, and Facetime or call when it works for them.** I am saying this as much to myself as I am to you. We can do this "Empty Nest" thing! People have managed it before us; what's more, they are okay and even seem to like it once they give it time.



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**TRAIN UP A  
CHILD IN THE  
WAY HE  
SHOULD GO;  
EVEN WHEN HE  
IS OLD HE WILL  
NOT DEPART  
FROM IT.**

PROVERBS 22:6

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## Insight

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Some of the articles I've read advise giving yourself permission to grieve. Write a long letter to your daughter or son and tell them how you feel—get your emotions out. Other articles I liked suggest a positive note with which we can wrap this all up: take off your parent cap, reconnect with your spouse, plan visits to campus, reconnect with your family and friends, find things that interest you, and even reinvent yourself. It could be fun! To me, all this is basically saying that **it's the child's time to be on their own and it's the parents' time to be on their own.** You will still get together and enjoy each other's company, love each other, and continue to be parent and child. It merely means **the child is now an adult and deserves to be treated like the strong, wonderful person you, the parent, raised and entrusted to God to look after.**



## God's Love

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I always view my children as God's children and thank Him for the time I have with them. I also believe it takes a village to raise and influence children, and my daughter and son have been blessed by many who have positively influenced their lives. I am so thankful those people were put in their path in life.

## Future

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I'm excited for my daughter's college plans while also a little anxious about what is next for her and for her parents, the "Empty Nesters" left behind. But **with God's help, I'm sure we will all flourish.**



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*It Takes a Village*

# Trust and Obey . . . for there's no other way

I plan to:

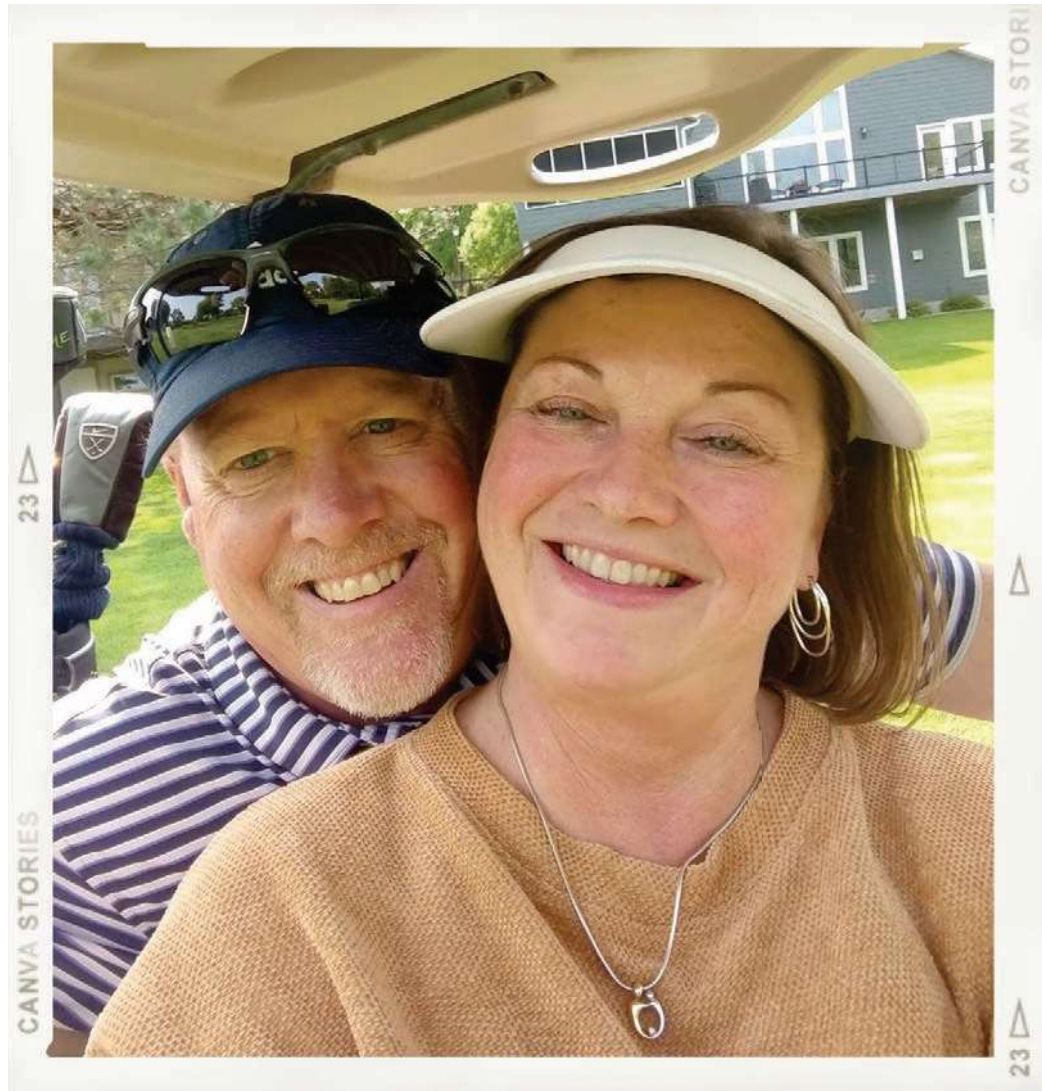
- keep in touch with my children
- spend more time with my spouse
- reinvent myself, and
- write a book.

**Best wishes "Empty Nesters" - THERE IS hope!**

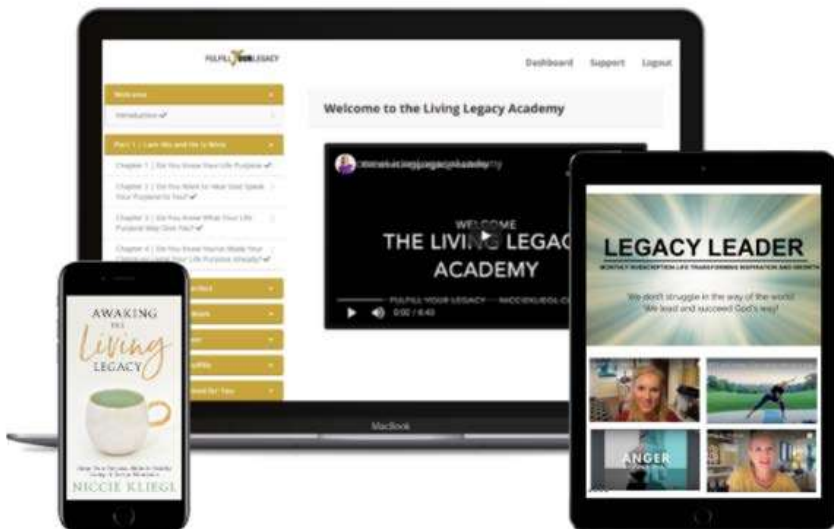
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"TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING; IN ALL YOUR WAYS SUBMIT TO HIM, AND HE WILL MAKE YOUR PATHS STRAIGHT."  
PROVERBS 3:5-6

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