

Still Dreaming at Midlife

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When I was a little girl all I dreamed about was getting married and having kids. This wasn't the "in thing" for a gal raised during the 60s and 70s. Mothers who felt trapped at home in loveless marriages and/or without careers told their daughters the world was their oyster. They inspired them to "*do something with their lives; don't be dependent on a man.*"

I was madly in love with my high school sweetheart while friends were speaking of going away to college and pursuing careers. The plan was for my beau to get into optometry school and then we'd marry. The dream came true. At twenty-one years old, I went down the aisle, the happiest gal on the face of the earth.

Even then, God was on my side, although I was clueless. It sickens me now to think I didn't want to get married in a church. God was the farthest thing from my mind.

After working four years while hubby pursued his degree, God decided to get our attention. It started with the death of a dear friend, followed by a series of my husband's health difficulties. Add to that, undiagnosed infertility, and we figured out we weren't in control of our lives. A rude awakening for a young couple who thought they were on top of the world.

We searched for ministerial advice and by the grace of God a minister family friend chose to speak with us. It was then that we turned our lives over to Christ and found a church home.

My childhood dream of marriage and a family was fulfilled when we chose to adopt two children from Korea, and then quickly became pregnant, giving us an instant family.

For many years I lived the dream of being a stay-at-home mom to my three children but started getting scared thinking about the empty nest that was just around the corner. I didn't want my mother's midlife. I loved her dearly. I knew she had much to offer this world because of all she had so lovingly given her five children and Dad. I wanted her to fly from her empty nest, but many in her generation thought their jobs were over when the kids left home. Mom's midlife caused me to prepare for mine.

Ironically, she was diagnosed with cancer, given six months to live, lived seven, and died surrounded by her adoring family. Immediately following her death, I was forced to create my midlife because my kids would soon be leaving the nest. I needed to “get a life” as I so flippantly told Mom during my teen years. (Forgive me God for such disrespect.)

I had not considered what I would do when the kids left home; one season at a time, but what next? My only dream was to marry and have kids. I’d never considered the possibilities of another dream at midlife.

After hunkering down at the kitchen table with my Bible, journal, and prayer folder, pleading with God for a purpose at midlife, together we came up with a plan, the next dream. I launched a Web site to give baby boomer women a voice. I wanted us to have a place online to connect, encourage and support one another. It is now the number one site on all search engines for “baby boomer women”, www.BoomerWomenSpeak.com. I’ve since launched the National Association of Baby Boomer Women, www.nabbw.com where women are empowered to claim their midlife passions and live them. I couldn’t have done it without Him. It is through Him that I’ve received everything I’ve needed to live another dream.

For all women who have dreamed of more, I encourage you to:

- Draw near to Him.
- Be honest.
- Tell God you’re searching and need His guidance.
- Reveal your fears.
- Listen
- Allow Him to make known the gifts He’s already given you.
- Use those gifts for His purpose.
- Live out your dream through Him at midlife.

He already knows your dream. All you need to do is take time to listen and then bravely and with courage...follow.

It’s time to become the midlife masterpiece He’s envisioned for you.

Dotsie Bregel is Founder of the National Association of Baby Boomer Women, www.nabbw.com and the wildly popular Web site www.BoomerWomenSpeak.com, the # 1 site for “baby boomer women online. She is passionate about empowering and educating midlife women. Dotsie has been mentioned in *Time* magazine and *AARP Bulletin* among dozens of newspapers across the nation. She frequently does radio interviews and appeared on *The Early Show* (CBS) with Dave Price. You may contact her at dots@boomerwomenspeak.com or 1-877-bboomer.