When God Created Fathers
by Erma Bombeck

When the good Lord was creating fathers He started with a tall frame. And a female angel nearby said, "What kind of father is that? If You're going to make children so close to the ground, why have You put fathers up so high? He won't be able to shoot marbles without kneeling, tuck a child in bed without bending, or even kiss a child without a lot of stooping."

And God smiled and said, "Yes, but if I make him child-size, whom would children have to look up to?"

And when God made a father's hands, they were large and sinewy. And the angel shook her head sadly and said, "Do You know what You're doing? Large hands are clumsy. They can't manage diaper pins, small buttons, rubber bands on ponytails or even remove splinters caused by baseball bats."

And God smiled and said, "I know, but they're large enough to hold everything a small boy empties from his pockets at the end of a day ... yet small enough to cup a child's face in his hands."

And then God molded long slim legs and broad shoulders. And the angel nearby had a heart attack. "Boy, this is the end of the week, all right," she clucked, "Do You realize You just made a father without a lap? How is he going to pull a child close to him without the kid falling between his legs?"

And God smiled and said, "A mother needs a lap. A father needs strong shoulders to pull a sled, balance a boy on a bicycle, or hold a sleepy head on the way home from the circus."

God was in the middle of creating two of the largest feet anyone had ever seen when the angel could contain herself no longer. "That's not fair. Do You honestly think those large boats are going to dig out of bed early in the morning when the baby cries? Or walk through a small birthday party without crushing at least three of the guests?"

And God smiled and said, "They'll work. You'll see. They'll support a small child who wants to 'ride a horse to Banbury Cross,' or scare off mice at the summer cabin, or display shoes that will be a challenge to fill."

God worked throughout the night, giving the father few words, but a firm, authoritative voice; eyes that saw everything, but remained calm and tolerant.

Finally, almost as an afterthought, He added tears. Then He turned to the Angel and said, "Now are you satisfied that he can love as much as a mother?"

The angel shuteth up.
Bob’s Monthly Journal
By Robert Lucas, H.F.A. (retired)
Co-owner: The Activity Director’s Office
http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com

The following story was submitted to Activity Director Monthly by author, Ginnylynn.

Ever Present Help
By Ginnylynn
http://www.ourchurch.com/

“George?”

“George!”

“Can you hear me George?!”

Slumped in his wheelchair, with expressionless eyes, one of the residents sat outside alone. As I was returning from a game of Bingo, I rushed to his side. He was one of the newest residents at the Assisted Living complex where I was employed as Activities Coordinator.

We had received several months prior, a notice of characteristics of a stroke. There are simple procedures that anyone can do to see if someone has suffered one. One thing is to ask them to smile. If they are unable to do it, there’s a strong possibility they have suffered one.

I quickly felt his neck and felt a slight pulse. I stood next to George as protector and comforter asking him “George, can you smile for me?” I felt awkward and silly asking such a question at that critical time. I kept reminding him that I was there and that it was going to be alright. Help was on the way!” Seconds seemed like minutes as time ticked away. The only response I received from him was the constant stare from his dark eyes. I’ll remember those eyes for a long time.

I called out to the House Manager to call 911. I was amazed how efficiently the Paramedics responded with questioning us and then loading him onto the stretcher. They administered the much needed care before leaving for the hospital.

I’ve always been in awe of the emergency personnel and their ability to handle stressful situations in their everyday routines. We all should be appreciative of their efforts. Our world certainly would be chaotic without their services.

This incident reminded me how quickly circumstances in our lives can change in a blink of an eye. We need to be at peace with our Creator as we never know when we may be taken from this earth.

I received word back from the House Manager that George’s blood pressure had dropped dangerously low. Do to his diabetic coma; they had surgically implanted a pacemaker. During those brief moments, I drew strength from the presence of the Holy Spirit offering prayers for him. I’m so thankful that He allowed me to be there when it was needed most. Jesus is our Protector and Counselor. He is our refuge and strength, and an ever present help in time of trouble.

Psalm 46:1

About the Author

Ginnylynn is a new, local author who has been a native of Texas all her life. Her first inspirational book, "A Family's Stronghold", relate her experiences with her family to provide encouragement to others dealing with Alzheimer’s disease. The publisher is Publish America and it is now available through www.publishamerica.com; www.Amazon.com and www.Barnesandnoble.com.

To the Reader:
Activity Director Monthly invites you to send in your stories, poems, jokes and photographs for publication in our magazine. See page 11 for details.
Meeting the Activity Challenge

June 1st has arrived and so have the final changes to the activity guidance for F-248. Activity professionals have been talking about these changes for months and now it’s here. If your nursing home activity department has not read the guidance, nor begun to assess the need for any changes in your department – now is the time to start. But where do we begin?

The first step is to get a copy of the guidance. Your department should have the final copy which is available through the internet, as posted on the NCCAP site (http://www.nccdp.org). Or I can email you a copy (debbiehommel@comcast.net).

There are several areas of focus within the changes, including individualized assessments, therapeutic and individualized care planning, specialized and individualized programming, and the role of the interdisciplinary staff in promoting and fostering involvement in leisure and recreation. These are not new concepts, but they are defined in more detail with many examples cited throughout the guidance.

One of the first areas you can review for compliance is to look at documentation. Are your assessments gathering enough individualized information for your department to create individualized care plans. Focusing on past life roles, their significance to the individual, specific leisure and recreational interests and the need for any form of adaptation should be noted within the assessment. Care planning is also specifically defined within the guidance. There are several pages of suggested activity based interventions to address perceptual, cognitive, behavioral, physical and emotional needs. Taking the guidance with you to care plan meetings can assist the activity professional in upgrading care plans appropriately. As additional care plan interventions are noted, additional equipment and programming may need to be introduced as well to meet the interventions.

The department should inventory supplies and equipment and compare available supplies to the suggested materials noted within the guidance. There are very specific references to the use of magnifiers, amplifiers and other adaptive devices as a means to address specific limitations. These materials should be available within the department for ready access.

Departmental systems to ensure residents are engaged in programs according to identified need and interest should be in place. The guidance offers very specific references to the responsibilities identified interests to those individuals involved in care and methods to ensure residents are participating in programs according to the plan of care should be in place. There has been much discussion the Population Needs Assessment, or any tool which analyzes the categorical needs of the population and compares the identified needs to available programs in the facility. There are many analytical tools being introduced which define the population and program in this way. There is a sample system posted on the CMS training program for the new guidance. (Continued on page 6)

ABOUT DEBBIE

Debbie Hommel is a Certified Activity Consultant on State and National level, with over twenty-seven years of experience in providing direct care and consultation to long term care, medical day care, assisted living, and ICF/MR facilities throughout New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. She is an experienced trainer and workshop presenter, conducting a variety of seminars throughout the Tri-State area for the Activity Professional, Administrator, and allied healthcare professional. She is ACC certified through the NCCAP.
Indoor Activities
Reprinted from Activities ETC 2006! Enjoy other activities, crafts, games, and calendars in this year’s edition!

Small Group
Big Dice

Materials needed:
- Basketball hoop/large plastic garbage can
- Masking tape
- Paper
- Black marker
- Note cards with scoreboard on them

Steps to follow:
If using a large plastic garbage can, securely set it up against a wall. If using a regular basketball hoop, no setup is required until the next step.

On the pieces of paper, clearly write numbers 1-9. Then secure them with masking tape on the floor near the hoop following either of the diagrams below.

Each number has a certain number of shots a player can try to make. If they don’t make the shot by that number, then that is their score. These need to be determined before play begins.

Before starting, have participants do warm-up exercises to stretch their arms, neck and stomach muscles.

Explain to players that each number represents a station, and each station has a shot limit. When a player has reached the shot limit before making a basket at that station, their score is the shot limit number and then they move on.

At each station, the player is responsible for keeping his or her own score. Go to all the stations in order and tally the total score when completed.

When all participants are finished, compare scores and honor the winner with a prize.

Note: It would be helpful to have a volunteer for every participant.
Dementia Units and Activities:

Many facilities have taken the step of adding locked dementia units. Unfortunately, all too often we are seeing little or no programming for those residents. Additionally, we are seeing these day rooms with lack of supervision or not enough staff to work with the residents. Nursing assistants should be rotated into the day rooms for supervision and to assist the activity staff. It is recommended that activities on these units run 7 days a week from the hours of 9:30 A.M. to 8:30 P.M. Activities play a huge role during the evening hours when the nursing assistants are providing ADL’s. Your Safety Committees minutes clearly show a higher incidence of falls and accidents with residents who are left unsupervised in the day rooms during the evening hours. A strong dementia activity calendar should be designed to include daily music, exercise and reminiscence programs. We recommend that you offer exercise and music programs in the morning. You have less time to provide activities that require “time” such as crafts and cooking programs due to the lunch hours. In addition, the residents are confused and have just gotten up. It is a lot to ask of them to complete projects that require concentration.

Props should be utilized during programs as much as possible. The props will offer a visual and keeps their attention. For the exercise programs you could offer pom poms, maracas, wands, top hats and parachutes. At no time should ball toss or balloon toss be offered. One, because they are slow to respond so we should not be throwing anything at them and two, props engages the entire group and keeps their hands strong. The music programs should include props such as tambourines and musical instruments. We recommend Sing A Long With Eldersong for this population.

In the afternoon, we recommend horticulture, crafts and cooking programs when meal programs do not restrict time for activity programs. You can offer these programs at a slower pace and allow time for success and completion of the activities. A strong dementia calendar offers activities that change on the half hour, are flexible and geared to the residents interest. Offer coloring activities and simple craft projects, keeping in mind to make sure all activities are age and ability appropriate. Remember, all activities that you offer, should be success oriented, failure free, purposeful and meaningful for every resident who is attending that event.

In the evening, we recommend non-stimulating activity programs. Instead offer; reminiscence programs, pet therapy, doll therapy, Wake Up Program, Timeslips, folding towels or easy to understand movies. We do not recommend that the TV be shown except for light movies.

Remember to offer parallel programming. For those residents who cannot participate in an activity, have a table set up with tactile items. These items could be things to touch (pat mats) sorting items (poker chips and large buttons), folding items (towels and wash cloths). If they are low functioning you could offer a sensory room filled with bubble tubes, fish tanks, aromatherapy, music and

(Continued on page 6)
tactile items. These rooms offer many benefits for the dementia challenged resident who still requires stimulation.

The day rooms should have many self-recreation items, such as jewelry boxes, theme boxes, sorting and folding items, theme books, sewing cards and magazines. These are items that can be given to the residents where there are no planned group programs.

If you need suggestions for dementia calendars, or props for programs (click on party supplies) & resources, please go to www.activitytherapy.com

(Dementia/Activities - Continued from page 5)

The action plan should be developed with the administrator and director of nursing, as they should be involved in the plan also. The action plan will provide the facility with a focus and assist in keeping the team on task.

Communication with each other during this implementation period is also crucial. As a profession, we need to support each other and work through these changes in a positive and productive way. The Internet and e-mail is amazing vehicle to remain connected. Use the many bulletin boards and email chains to share information. Most importantly, never lose sight of what is really important – meeting the needs of our residents.

The Activity Director’s Office offers party items online to help you create memorable events & enhance your themes. Browse our unique selection of novelties, accessories, gifts and favors.

http://www.theado.makesparties.com/

(Happy Father’s Day)

I’ve just lost the key to the store-room.

I’m a SENIOR CITIZEN, and I think I am having the time of my life!!!!

ALWAYS REMEMBER: The world was made round so that we would never be able to see too far down the road.

(Senior Citizen - Continued from page 11)
ARE YOU FINANCIALLY FIT?
By Mae Petty

In today’s society we hear about how important it is to stay physically and mentally fit. What about financially fit?

As Activity Directors we all have to keep a monthly budget. Some of us have a large budget, some of us have small ones, and some have hardly any at all and have to do fundraising. Sometimes it’s not that easy, but no matter what, you have to maintain a good working budget.

It’s not that easy when it comes to our own personal budget, because we all love to spend money. Do you ever wonder or dream of having extra money for saving for your children’s college, unwanted medical expenses, up-keep of your home or saving for your retirement? You can learn how to make all those dreams come true. The way you use your money is largely due to your own personal attitude about money. The level of Financial Fitness has a lot to do with NOT HOW MUCH money you make, but more about your attitude concerning money. You need to stop and take a look at how you view your spending of money.

The first thing to do is write down all you spend during the month including things you have charged. Then take a look at how much income you have

(Continued on page 8)
coming in. If there is more income than expenses you are on the right path of living within your means. If there is more expenses than income you need to decide on what really is necessary or isn’t necessary to spend money on. This is where the financial fitness comes in. IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE. Like physical fitness to lose weight, you will need to learn how to start living within your means. You are the only one who can make the changes and start setting some goals to live within your current income.

Second thing to do is get tough with yourself. What happens when you go over your budget at work? You don’t continue to spend, but to cut back until you get back on track. If you see something that you think you just have to have, give yourself time to think about it and to see if you really, really need it. Most of the time you will realize you don’t need it after all.

Third thing to do is to get rid of as many credit cards as you can. Start with paying off one card at a time until you have them all paid off. Only keep around a credit card for emergencies.

REMEMBER, being financially fit is more than about numbers and figures. It is about YOU being in control of your money, instead of money in control of you.

YOU GOTTA KISS A LOT OF FROGS
(before you meet the handsome prince)

A senior citizen was walking across a damp meadow when he heard a female voice say, "Sir, I would like to ask a great favor of you" He looked around and saw only a frog sitting on a grass pod. "I must be going nuts," he thought, "There's no one here."

The voice then said, "Please, sir. Please help me."

Again all he saw was the frog, looking straight at him. "Who said that?" he asked rather loudly.

"I did, sir. I'm the frog. I was a beautiful 19-year-old princess but a witch put a spell on me. Please help me."

The old man picked up the frog and held it in his hand. "How can I help you?" he asked.

"The only thing that will break the spell is to have a man kiss me in the mouth. Please do it for me, and then I will again turn into a beautiful, sexy, princess and I will really make you feel young again. I will make great love to you."

The man closed his hand about the frog and stuffed it into his pocket. "At my age," he said, "I'd rather have a talking frog."
MONTHLY OBSERVANCES

Summer Month
National Patriots Month
National Pest Control Month

Adopt-A-Shelter-Cat-Month
National Rose Month
National Safety Month

Audiobook Month
National Scleroderma Awareness Month

American Rivers Month
Own Your Share of America Month

Cancer in the Sun Month
Recycling Month

Candy Month
Seafood Month

Fight the Filthy Fly Month
Send A Rose Month

Fireworks Safety Month
Turkey Lover's Month

Flag Month
Vision Research Month

Gay and Lesbian Book Month
Zoo and Aquarium Month

Gay Pride Month

National Accordion Awareness Month

National Aphasia Awareness Month

National Dairy Month

National Dream Work Month

National Firework Safety Month (June-July 4th)

National Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Month

National Iced Tea Month

National Men’s Health Week
National Clay Week
National Hug Week
National Little League Baseball Week

Wacky Days of June
Provided by Activity Directors Network
Pennie Bacon, Site Owner
http://activitydirector.net

Week 3
(No Listings)

Week 4
National Camping Week
Eye Safety Awareness Week
Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week
National Sobriety Checkpoint Week

The Toy Goes To . . . .

Tom had won a toy at a raffle. He called his kids together to ask which one should have the present.

"Who is the most obedient?" he asked.

"Who never talks back to mother? Who does everything she says?"

Five small voices answered in unison. "Okay, dad, you get the toy."

http://www.theado.makesparties.com
Clipart for June
I was recently thinking about one-on-one and small group activities when I ran onto the following piece of humor. Wouldn't it be fun to share this with your elderly residents when you visit their room for an activity? Hope you enjoy it. - Linda

I'M A SENIOR CITIZEN
And proud of it!

I'm the life of the party... even when it lasts until 8 p.m.

I'm very good at opening childproof caps with a hammer.

I'm usually interested in going home before I get to where I am going.

I'm good on a trip for at least an hour without my aspirin, bean, and antacid.

I'm the first one to find the bathroom wherever I go.

I'm awake many hours before my body allows me to get up.

I'm smiling all the time because I can't hear a word you're saying.

I'm very good at telling stories. Over and over and over and over.

I'm aware that other people's grandchildren are not as bright as mine.

I'm so cared for - long term care, eye care, private care, dental care.

I'm not grouchy, I just don't like traffic, waiting, crowds, children, politicians.

I'm positive I did housework correctly before my mate retired.

I'm sure everything I can't find is in a secure place.

I'm wrinkled, saggy, lumpy, and that's just my left leg.

I'm having trouble remembering simple words like...uh???...uh.

I'm now spending more time with my pillows than with my mate.

I'm realizing that aging is not for sissies.

I'm anti-everything now: anti-fat, anti-smoke, anti-noise, anti-inflammatory.

I'm walking more (to the bathroom) and enjoying it less.

I'm going to reveal what goes on behind closed doors. Absolutely nothing!

If you are what you eat, I'm Shredded Wheat and All Bran.

I'm sure they are making adults much younger these days.

I'm in the initial stage of my golden years. SS, CD's, IRA'S, AARP.

I'm wondering, if you're only as old as you feel, how could I be alive at 150?

I'm supporting all movements now...by eating bran, prunes, and raisins.

I'm a walking storeroom of facts, (Continued on page 6)
Following is Your Free Facility Newsletter

PREPRINT
After you have downloaded your newsletter you have several choices to make before printing it.

- First type or paste the title of your newsletter into the blank area of the front page mast.
- On the mailing page insert your facility’s name and address in the upper left corner where it says “From:”.
- Prepare any printed material you may have for insertion into the newsletter. At a minimum we suggest you prepare your monthly activity calendar on one side of an 8.5”x11” sheet or paper. On the other side you may enter residents facts and figures (new admissions, birthdays, residents who went home, deaths). Also, on the back of the calendar page you may want to advertise upcoming activities and events, a management roster and other items of interest specific to your facility.

PRINTING
- If you decide to print your newsletter on your facility copier you may print the newsletter on 8.5”x11” sheets of paper. However, it is far more professional looking to use 17”x11” sheets (this size is larger than legal size paper, but can be hand fed into most modern printers).
- If you use a print shop have them print your newsletter on 17”x11” paper. They will have a variety of colors for both your paper and ink. You can expect to pay more for color ink. If you decide to print your newsletter on color paper, avoid using dark colors and extremely bright colors (e.g. fluorescent colors) they are too difficult to read.
- If you take it to the print shop they will also print and insert your extra material and fold your newsletter for you. One fold makes your newsletter ready for hand outs. Two folds prepares the newsletter for mailing.

MAILING
(an excellent activity for your residents)
- To prepare your newsletter for mailing, it must be folded twice so the mailing face is showing on the outside.
- Each piece you plan to mail must be sealed twice on the loose page edge. Use 1/2” pieces of transparent tape (you can purchase seals at most office supply stores if you wish).
- Write or stick your address labels where it says “To:”.
- Place postage in the upper right hand corner. First class postage will pay for your newsletter and at least two 8.5”x11” insertions.
- Your newsletter is now ready to mail. The Post Office appreciates it if you pre-sort your zip codes and bundle the newsletters with rubber bands.

BULK MAILING
With bulk mail you can save a bundle on postage. However, you must set up an account with the post office, mail at least 200 newsletters at a time, presort your mail, prepare a billing form and deliver the newsletters to the post office. Although it sounds complicated, it becomes routine after you have done it a couple of times.

DISTRIBUTION
For the most effective marketing of your facility, we recommend that you make an extensive mailing list including these listed below. The more newsletters you circulate, the more successful your marketing will be.

- All responsible parties
- Seniors at home
- Banks
- Hospital discharge planners
- Nursing homes
- Adult day care centers
- Churches
- Home health agencies
- Federal, State and local social service agencies
- Social organizations and clubs
- Business organizations
- Corporate headquarters
- Area schools
- Area radio stations
- Area television stations
- Area newspapers
- Area businesses

TIMING
For timely distribution, your newsletter will always be available to you at the first of the preceding month. It should be published by the last week of the month and mailed prior to the first of the month the newsletter is dated.

Suggestions for the Effective Use of Your Newsletter
This newsletter concept is the result of several years of preparation and the generous support of the sponsors whose advertisements are contained within its pages. Because all of the material in the newsletter is copyright free, you may feel assured that the publishing and distributing of your free newsletter is legal.

Vol. 02, No. 06
http://www.theactivitydirectorsoffice.com
June 2006
How Old Are You?

(ARA) - Baby boomers are a generation like no other. Socially conscious, revolutionary and taboo-shattering, these Americans continue to challenge the status quo, even as the first wave enters their "golden years." [The first Boomers turned 60 last January].

It's no surprise that as Boomers have aged, their trendsetting beliefs have deeply impacted their personal lives, careers, retirement decisions and relationships with the world around them. In a reversal of previous "getting old" mindsets, Boomers are trading shuffle board for skydiving, Cadillac's for Vespas and denture glue for sunscreen.

As healthcare improves, so do the lives of Boomer Americans who, as beneficiaries of the "Longevity Revolution," will have more years to contribute to society and accomplish their life goals than any previous generation. In fact, most Boomers plan to continue working well into their 60s and 70s as was the case of Arthur Wilson, the Los Angeles bus worker who decided to finally retire on his 100th birthday this year. As lives are extended well beyond outdated natural life expectancy, Boomers are setting their sights on the future and planning for a great one.

The Boomer legacy will leave behind a distinct set of values, but most notably inspiring, inviting, informing and spirited lives. For them and generations to follow, a new life begins at 50. Boomers are showing America how to live without restraints, armed with the confidence to look into the future and to continue building fulfilling lives. Boomers are not bound by typical roles and limitations in their "Age of Mastery," as dubbed by acclaimed author Gail Sheehy. Many Boomers are moving past dealing with "empty nest syndrome" and a larger number are actively dating. It's a natural transition for Boomers with more spare time and freedom to take exotic vacations and to spend liberally, enjoying life to the fullest.

For many Americans, turning 50 is seen as a chance to finally take risks and explore options they have always thought about, but never had the time or money to accomplish. There has been an increase in volunteerism and even entrepreneurship among people aged 50 and older. By the year 2015, about one-fifth of the workforce is expected to be 55 or older, making older workers even more vital to private and non-profit industries.

Not only are Boomers one of the most commanding consumer groups, but they are just as influential in almost every facet of society. Boomers are discerning, innovative and many have large amounts of expendable income. Well educated, many are health-conscious and some even prefer gray hair and wrinkles to collagen-filled lips and facelifts. Rec-

(Continued on page 14)
recognizing the power of Boomers and seniors, more companies now resonate with the specific needs and interests of these rebellious Americans.

For instance, one new company catering to Boomers is challenging them to live the biggest life possible and is helping them make their dreams and life goals come true. Eons, recently founded by Jeff Taylor (former CEO and founder of Monster.com), has created a contest that gives Boomers a chance to win $15,000 to fulfill a lifelong goal before they turn 100. People can enter the sweepstakes online at http://www.eons.com until July 10, 2006, for a chance to finally make their dreams a reality.

Boomers are quickly overtaking Gen Y's reputation as America's most influential age group as they continue to break ground on new territory for those 50+. Boomers have shown time and time again that even as they age, they will not be put out to pasture. Taylor may have said it best, echoing the Boomer agenda with his motto, "Let's live to be 100 or die trying." If history has taught us anything, Boomers will try and most likely succeed.

**Arthritis and Sleep: Tips for Arthritis Sufferers**

ARA) - If you're one of the 42 million people diagnosed with some form of arthritis, you know that arthritis pain can make it difficult to fall asleep and cause you to awaken during the night. Insufficient rest can then make your pain harder to manage during the day, and quality sleep even harder to come by at night.

This vicious cycle is far too common among those who suffer from arthritis, an umbrella term used for a group of more than 100 medical conditions. The common thread among these conditions is that they all affect the musculoskeletal system and specifically the joints. A recent Center for Disease Control study finds that arthritis is the most prevalent chronic condition and the most reported cause of disability in the United States. Arthritis-related joint problems can include pain, stiffness and inflammation. Arthritis also is a common form of back pain.

While dealing with the pain can be one of the hardest parts of having arthritis, the pain is your body's way of telling you that you need to rest. Sleep is necessary to restore your energy so that you can better manage pain; it also rests your joints to reduce pain and swelling, according to the Arthritis Foundation.

"Good quality sleep can be an important part of an arthritis pain management plan," says Pete Bils, senior director of sleep innovation and chair of the Sleep Advisory Board for Select Comfort. "During deep, slow wave sleep, human growth hormone reaches a peak level to perform critical tasks necessary for bodily restora-
tion." In support of the Arthritis Foundation's proclaiming May as National Arthritis Month, Bils offers the following timely sleep tips for arthritis sufferers:

* Choose a mattress that alleviates pressure points on your body.

"Beds that are too firm do not support properly and create uncomfortable pressure points -- a discomfort that causes excessive tossing and turning, activities that are counterproductive to arthritis pain relief and recuperation," Bils says. "Consider switching to an adjustable firmness mattress to minimize pressure points that might be aggravating your pain."

One mattress to consider is the Sleep Number Bed by Select Comfort which has dual air chambers that allow each side of the bed to be independently adjusted so each sleep partner can choose his or her ideal level of comfort, firmness and support -- even if one sleeper has arthritis pain and the other does not. Unlike inner-spring mattresses, the Sleep Number bed cradles the body and evenly distributes weight to minimize painful pressure points and reduce body pain and stiffness.

* Choose pillows for optimal spinal and neck alignment.

If you suffer from arthritis back pain, consider replacing your pillow. Choose a pillow that naturally places your head, neck and shoulders in a straight spine and head position (closely matching a proper standing/sitting posture).

* Take a warm bath.

A soothing soak before bed can relieve muscle tension, ease aching joints and help you get a good night's sleep.

* Clear your head before bed.

Find ways to decrease other stresses in your life that could be aggravating your sleeplessness. Read for pleasure instead of trying to absorb work-related material. Before tucking yourself in for the night, make a list of all the things you need to do the next day to avoid having a last minute thought disturb your slumber.

* Follow your doctor's recommendations.

Keep up with arthritis exercises and pain medications as recommended by your doctor. If poor sleep is a continual problem, seek your doctor's advice.

To learn more about sleep and arthritis, the Sleep Number bed or to find a retailer near you, log on to www.selectcomfort.com or call (800) 535-2337.

Courtesy of ARA Content

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I AM MY OWN GRANDPA

Many, many years ago
When I was twenty three,
I got married to a widow,
Pretty as could be.

This widow had a grown-up daughter
With flowing hair of red.
My father fell in love with her,
And soon the two were wed.

This made my dad my son-in-law
And changed my very life.
Now my daughter was my mother,
For she was my father's wife.

To complicate the matters worse,
Although it brought me joy.
I soon became the father
Of a bouncing baby boy.

My little baby then became
A brother-in-law to dad.
And so became my uncle,
Though it made me very sad.

For if he was my uncle,
Then that also made him brother
to the widow's grown-up daughter
Who, of course, was my stepmother.

Father's wife then had a son,
Who kept them on the run.
And he became my grandson,
For he was my daughter's son.
My wife is now my mother's mother
And it makes me blue.
Because, although she is my wife,
She's my grandma too.

If my wife is my grandmother,
Then I am her grandchild.
And every time I think of it,
It simply drives me wild.

For now I have become
The strangest case you ever saw.
As the husband of my grandmother,
I am my own grandpa!
Happy Father’s Day
From US to YOU!

Whisper in Church

A mother took her little boy to church.

While in church the little boy said, "Mommy, I have to pee."

The mother said to the little boy, "It's not appropriate to say the word 'pee' in church. So, from now on whenever you have to 'pee' just tell me that you have to 'whisper'."

The following Sunday, the little boy went to church with his Father and during the service said to his father, "Daddy, I have to whisper."

The Father looked at him and said, "Okay, why don't you whisper in my ear."