

# Age and its ups and downs

Life



## **Family Vs. Culture**

Most often, people wonder where they belong in their culture or society.

There are things that help us find our way. In life we come across many rules and expectations, and that is no matter the age or hour. Being a teen transitioning into the adult life in today's society is not only difficult, but also different in many households. Most of us tend to want to be independent, be our own person, and make our own choices.

Ever since I was born, I have been more than fortunate enough to have the life that I do. Although my life has always had a certain direction, I have always done what my parents had asked of me. Growing up was pretty easy for me, but one specific challenge I had always faced was I seemed older than my actual age. This makes sense since I usually hung out with older people when I was growing up. It all started with my skills in the game of softball. Since my level of competing was so high at a young age I had gotten the opportunity to play with the older girls. The more I played with them, the better my skills got. Being a nine year old playing with 12 year old girls is something really big, and then turning 16 playing with and against 18 year olds is just bizarre. These girls were not girls anymore, they were women. I grew up much quicker than most girls and boys my age. I never quite fit in with my age group because my maturity level was much higher than others. Being young, constantly around older people put me in a mindset how my attitude is towards adulthood. Seeing how many of the girls acted, they had seemed to be independent making me feel like I could conquer many things on my own in the near future.

I never actually realized I had a problem about my age until I turned 18. Of course, 18 is a special age for most. It is the start of or at least taste of the “real adult” world. It is the age we feel invisible because we feel untouchable. Honestly, I thought it would be the age in which I would make my own choices and do my own thing. Turns out it really did not work out that way. In fact, I started to feel more controlled than I have ever been by my parents.

In my household there are many strict rules to follow and high expectations. We are told what to do and when to do it. If we do not listen, there are consequences. My parents tend to be a bit dramatic, but then I look back and realize how they were raised. From the stories they have told me, their parents had a sense of strict control role in their life as well. Unfortunately, that got passed onto them raising my sisters and me. After high school, I figured my parents would let me be since I was 18 already, but that was not the case. According to my parents’ rules, if I am living under their roof, I must follow their rules regardless my age. If I am not paying any bills and still living under their roof, I must follow their rules, which I can understand, but I am young and want my freedom. There was a time in my life that really made me think about being 18. It has its perks, but a time that stood out to me was when I was at the doctors. I had gone to the doctor’s because I had gotten very sick. Being 18, I have the right to not tell my parents certain things that I do not want to tell them. Therefore, I can make certain choices for myself at the doctor’s. My mother was in the room with me while the doctor was giving me options, saying I was 18 I could make these choices and changes on my own. There went my mother. She about blew up. I saw her face turn red like a bomb explosion and steam blowing out the side of

her ears. I had already known I was going to have my mom help me, but the doctors did not. My mother about cursed out the doctor, saying how she is my mother, and just because I am 18 does not really mean I am an adult, and if she and my dad are still caring for me my mom should have a right to know things. After that, I clearly got the point, and I think so did the doctor.

Difficulties with age, religion has become an issue. My family is Christian and traditionally that would make me Christian as well. I love God, and I believe in God, but there is a point in Christianity at which “ giving yourself to God”, going to church every Sunday, and so other many rules to being Christian that I am expected to do. My parents say we should have God in our lives. I agree, but others should not force God or religion into their lives. Being young, children do not have the choice but to get up to go to church with their parents and attend Sunday School. Aside to that, being young, children do not question things like why am I going to church or what is church and religion. A time I will never forget and till this day has had an effect on me with my religion was when after church one day the pastor made an announcement asking if people wanted to step up to the alter to have a relationship with God. The pastor would then help and pray with all the people who go up and stand at the alter. I was sitting down in the comfortable purple chairs minding my business, ready to go home and all of a sudden my mom snatches my arm and slightly throws me up to the alter. Truthfully, I was secretly laughing to myself because it felt like a joke. I had always questioned what “ giving myself to God” even meant, but I was clearly not willing to “ give myself to God.” I could not believe my mom had the nerve to do so. I had felt so uncomfortable that I immediately wanted to

leave. Ever since then I felt different about my religion. Now that I am older and I feel I should have the right to pick my religion, the right to want to attend church, simply just have a say in how I feel about my religion, I should be allowed to question it all. I do not have to agree with what my parents believe. My parents do not understand my state of mind because they still see me as their little child. Being Christian can be a big deal and overwhelming for some people. Religion has many perspectives and I think people have to be a believer on their own to feel something real. In my case, I do believe it is real to believe. I have seen miracles happen to people that even doctors cannot explain such as this young boy at church mysteriously had an "old man" wrinkly left hand. No one understood how that was even possible. When the word got out about his hand at church, tons of people were praying for him, and by the following Sunday, his hand was healed with no medication. My religion and others religion is a wonderful thing. For other people's religion, it is something for them to keep sane. Now that I am older and am understanding my religion, "giving myself to God" is something I am not ready for because I had been rushed into it without no understanding in the past. One thing is that I am looking forward to experiencing that for myself one day.

For a while now, me wanting to make my own choices has been a huge headache. I understand the age of being 18 and I see my parents' view as well. I also understand 18 does not really make me a credible adult, maybe in the court's eye or society, but if my parents are still full on caring for me, I have no choice but to listen to them. Age has its up and downs and we all want to be forever young again, but age is a factor that will always be there.

As we grow older, rules and expectations get stricter and more complicated than just hearing parents say we need to be in the house at a reasonable time. The older I get, the more I start to understand family vs. culture bump heads.