

Fatherhood Focus



Editor of the Fatherhood Focus
Newsletter



Kenneth J. Waller, Jr. is the founder and developer of Fatherhood Focus, a program designed to train and mentor fathers, men, and youth. Ken currently serves as a consultant for educational institutions, faith based organizations and community mentoring programs. Ken's innovative ideas and approach to youth and adult mentoring is highly sought after, he motivates as he speaks to groups and has the gift of bringing out the best in organizations as a training facilitator.

For More Information :

Fatherhood Focus
PO Box 1135 Owings Mills MD
21117
(443)506-1026
Fatherhoodfocus@comcast.net
www.Fatherhoodfocus.org

follow us on
twitter

Find us on
Facebook

Where Is The Pride?

By Kenneth J. Waller, Jr.

As I travel around the country I cannot help but notice that the young men and women of today just aren't taking pride in their appearance. I'm sure that we've all experienced our young men walking around with their pants just about ready to drop down, all the while being held up by hand not a belt; and our young ladies barely dressed revealing just too much. Where's the pride I ask? When our young men and women don't care how they look. You see them walking around with their hair not combed, rags on their heads, clothes wrinkled, shoes flopping off, poor hygiene... You see them!

Some of our young people have fallen into the trap that it's okay not to care how you look. I'm sorry! I hate to say it, but some of our parents are dressing like that too and help supplement the wardrobes of young people as kids are getting clothes from their parent's closets. Case and point, one morning as I was in a restaurant waiting to be seated, I noticed a young father come up to greeter to put his name in to be seated. I glanced over and noticed that his boots were untied and his pants sagging, then lo and behold, standing behind him was a little boy perhaps around three years old obviously his son, dressed the same way.

Have we become a society that has accepted this by just shaking our heads saying "it's not my problem"? Or saying "it's not my child"? However, like it or not, it is our problem and we all have to get involved. We are the products of men and women who took pride in how they looked, from head to toe. What happen to that pride?

Generations before us were very particular about how their appearance, our men from past generations wore suits and ties daily, shoes shining, and had real swag. It was nothing to see a hardworking laborer from one of the steel mills, sanitation workers, etc., change from their work clothes into a suit. Our women were also fashion statements whether they were homemakers, school teachers or secretaries. Their dresses were pressed and pleated to the max, and their hair was looking good at all times. For those of us who are old enough remember what I'm talking about, there was a period of time when our everyday wear was far from what is considered casual in today's society.

For me growing up in the 70's and 80's, it was cool to look good and we took pride in our appearance. I can remember that if you didn't wear dress pants, dress shirt, and dress shoes you looked out of place. Collectively, we have to expose our young people to who we really are and where we've come from. Our ancestors were very classy people who sacrificed everything, including their lives for us to have some of the things we have today.

We can all chip in, share pictures of our past generations with our youth and show them what pride looks like. Together we can give structure and guidance to our young men and women by getting involved in a good mentoring program that teaches personal appearance, hygiene, etiquette, respect, conflict resolution, and other solid skills necessary to break the negative stereotype. We must help our youth understand that appearance means a lot because I'm a firm believer that when you look good you feel good!



Dance With My Father Again

By A.L. Torres

Several years ago my life was in a serious state of transition... financially, emotionally, and spiritually. I had recently lost my job of three years due to the company moving out of state and I made the decision not to relocate due to the uncertainty of the new owners. My family was about as dysfunctional as dysfunctional could get for me. My parents were together but in name only and it wouldn't be long before my family, as I knew it, would change. And spiritually, I was trying to grow in my walk with Jesus yet struggling to move forward. I was at my wits end and then, the phone rang...it was my mother.

She called to inform me that her husband, my father had moved out during the night. My father walked out on his family and even though I was an adult when it happened, it still hurt. I was devastated, hurt, and angry! I was angry for how he just left his family like he was leaving a bad movie, but I suppose to him it was a bad movie. I hurt for my mother and in an odd way, I hurt for my father too.

Funny how as children we think that our fathers are invincible, can do anything, and serve as our personal superman, and then we hold onto those same lofty thoughts and expectations of him only to be disappointed. While attending a women's retreat, I was reminded of a few things that helped me put my views of my father and our relationship into perspective, which guided me to the road of forgiveness.

I had to be reminded that our fathers are human first and not the supermen that we made them out when we were children. Those unreal expectations are not fair to them or to us, because many times those expectations are fantasy and not based on our reality. We need to remember that our fathers, much like the rest of us, can only function within the confines of how they are made. We cannot make our fairy tale father or our television dad Heathcliff Huxtable into our reality. We must learn to love and accept our fathers for who, what, and how they are, albeit good, bad, or indifferent.

But how do we help the young children understand that superman's cape has a few holes in it!!! Let's think of the children who are not old enough to connect all of the dots, but still sees that absentee father as their superman. How do we soothe those young wounds and try to heal their young hearts?!? As the custodial parent or caregiver of that child, we must be honest yet mindful of how we manage that child's reality of the absentee father. Be honest with that child, do not speak ill of the father, and always be supportive of that child in their relationship with their father; because in the end it is that child's choice of how they choose to relate with their father through their own deductions of the father's accountability and integrity.

At the end of the day, it takes a lot of prayer, time, and hard conversations to work past the wealth of emotions that come about because of a father's absence; however, we have to make a conscience decision to either let those ill feelings consume us or to let them go and learn to dance with our fathers again.

Note From The Editor

Greetings,

Thank you for taking the time to read the Fatherhood Focus Newsletter. I truly appreciated the feedback received from last month's inaugural publication. The encouragement giving to me to continue communicating positive information was overwhelming.

As our continued commitment, each month the Fatherhood Focus Newsletter will highlight individuals and organization with the opportunity share their personal experiences and stories with our readers.

This month I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. A.L. Torres for sharing her compelling personal story. Working through her challenges, Ms. Torres received her Master's degree in Project Management from the George Washington University, Washington, DC and currently resides in Maryland.

Our mission: Bring forth useful information and news that you may not get from main stream media. I pray that you will find this newsletter encouraging, uplifting, and enjoyable. I encourage you share this newsletter with friends and family all over the world.

Sincerely,

Kenneth J. Waller Jr.