



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

A glimpse at the naughty '90s

I'd thought daffodils were always yellow, but have learned recently that they come in shades of pink, coral, salmon and peach. Well, come to think about it, I have noticed the white ones with yellow centers.

I'll have to do a bit of research on daffodils one of these days. Anyway, yellow is perhaps the favorite throughout our country. And, in my case, I like yellow best of all.

Perhaps the reason we like daffodils so much is that signal the onset of spring and spring is a season when color hits us strong. My large azalea bush is almost completely in bloom with beautiful red flowers.

Since I live in an apartment complex, it kind of belongs to everyone and it seems every year grandparents bring their little ones for a picture with those beautiful flowers as a background.

Out on our side street, the rhododendrons have all leafed in with blossoms in place to give us untold joy in a few weeks. The colors are fuchsia, lavender and pink.

I am convinced it's best to look at the positive side of aging. Perhaps I should say the good side of aging.

Recently, one of our 91-year-old ladies told me that she likes being her age as she feels she can say just about anything and get away with it. I totally identify with that. We both enjoyed a good giggle as we shared with one another.

Sometimes, I find myself looking forward to what's often referred to as the "naugh-

ty '90s." This particular lady said she recently volunteered to be a helper where she lives. And, by the way, she still takes a walk every day too!

The world around me is bursting into color. As I face another beautiful and joyful spring day with the sun shining, the only negative thought I can come up with are those annoying telemarketing calls.

Would you believe at 5:30 a.m. today I had one of those calls telling me I needed to update the warranty on my car?

Do they get on your nerves as they do on mine? Most of the calls are recordings so I can't even scold them.

Oh, well. I hope you had a glorious Easter Sunday as I did. Last week, I forgot to mention another popular hymn (not just for Easter) that is perhaps one of your favorites, too: "In the Garden," written by C. Austin Miles in 1912.

The story behind the hymn is that the author was developing film in his dark room and decided to read his Bible for inspiration to write another hymn. "In the Garden" was inspired by John Chapter 20.

I hope you have fun in your garden this year, too!

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Here's to Your Health

by Misty Botorff



Helping your kids cope with the pandemic

The year 2020 brought a plethora of crises — wildfires, a global pandemic,

political unrest, and uncertainty — which have had an astronomical impact on the mental health of children and teens.

Children learn and communicate through play, social interaction, and modeling from peers and adults, but COVID-19 guidelines on social distancing and school closures caused many children to be isolated over the past year.

When schools closed last spring, families struggled with the transition to online learning and the loss of extracurricular activities. Many kids weren't able to see friends, no longer had healthy outlets for socializing and learning teamwork, and many began living in the uncertainty and fear of getting sick.

As an integrated behavioral health clinician at the CMH Pediatric Clinic, I have seen an increase in anxiety and depression among the children and youth I see. Parents report that their kids spend more time on screens, are less motivated to do activities they used to find enjoyable, and have more behavioral and mental health issues.

However, there are ways we can help children cope with these stressors and help build their resilience.

Parents and caregivers should check in with children often about how they feel and how they're managing stress. What I've noticed right now is that most children and teens just need someone to really listen to them — without trying to fix the problem.

Setting and keeping routines in the home is very important for children's mental health. I encourage you to set regular bed and wake-up times, schedule time for physical activity and limited socializing with other children, spend more time outdoors together, and start new family rituals.

Now is the perfect time to learn and teach new skills like cooking, gardening, play-

ing games, and to just spend quality time together.

If your children are struggling with anxiety or depression, talk with their pediatrician. There are many great therapists in our area who treat children and adolescents. Help is also available from the integrated behavioral health clinicians at any CMH Primary Care clinic.

Providing support, building resilience, and teaching healthy coping skills are all ways that we can help our children through this difficult time.

Here's to Your Health is sponsored by Columbia Memorial Hospital. Misty Botorff is a licensed clinical social worker and integrated behavioral health clinician at the CMH Pediatric Clinic.

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