

## Blog

Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

### The Sandwich Generation: This Is a Fried Green Tomato Special

Carol Abaya, an expert on aging and elder care/parenting issues, coined the phrase “the sandwich generation,” and defines the *Traditional Sandwich* as those adult children who are sandwiched between aging parents and their own children. Sandwiched adults are caught in the middle between what their children want and need, and what their parents want and need. For those sandwiched adult children who are facing multiple and competing responsibilities in trying to balance routines, they are often not getting what they want and need too. This combustible dynamic can result in the sandwiched adult feeling emotionally and physically depleted, feeling guilty, inadequate, overwhelmed, and depressed. Furthermore, job security can be threatened because of having to take too much time off from work in attending to children’s needs versus parent’s needs. Sandwiched adults are faced with having to address increasing dependency needs of children and parents on both ends of the life-cycle spectrum. What can be done?

Things to do:

- Revisit your support system and who can help.
- Create an assignment of tasks according to a person’s strengths and preferences.
- Demonstrate flexibility in assigning and managing tasks within your support system.
- If necessary, renegotiate roles and tasks while assigning accountable outcomes.
- Conduct meetings to review how members are accountable to roles and assigned tasks.
- Reevaluate your career and where you are now in determining whether your employer can be flexible with your work schedule. Perhaps change your job.
- Investigate using child or adult day care.
- Obtain the expertise and help of a geriatric care manager/elder care consultant.
- Consider using non-medical home care services.
- Spend time alone or engage in hobbies and interests regarding diversional activities for yourself.
- Attend a caregiver support group and/or seek professional counseling.

In closing, consider a child’s or an older adult parent’s need for empowerment and being in control. Listen to them to understand what they need to feel in control of their environment. Satisfy their need to be in control by providing the right amount of information, relevant information, accurate information, clarifying information, and validating their worthiness.

Gary Kozick Elder Care Solutions, L.L.C

[www.garykozick.com](http://www.garykozick.com)

[gary@garykozick.com](mailto:gary@garykozick.com)