

## Building Your House

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire so he told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house-building business to live a more leisurely life with his wife and enjoy his extended family. Although he would miss the paycheck each week he was confident they could get by.

The contractor was sad to hear his good worker was retiring, so he asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but over time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career.

When the carpenter finished his work, his employer came to inspect the house. Then he handed the keys to the carpenter and said, "This is your house... my gift

to you." The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.

So it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then, with a shock, we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we would do it much differently.

But, you cannot go back. You are the carpenter, and every day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. Someone once said, "Life is a do-it-yourself project." Your attitude and the choices you make today, help build the "house" you will live in tomorrow. Therefore, build wisely!

*Author Unknown*



*YourStyle*  
FINANCIAL

1325 Kenaston Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2P2

Cell: (204) 227-6395 Office: (204) 474-2929

Fax: (204) 992-3546 Toll-free: 1-877-895-3258

[www.yourstylefinancial.ca](http://www.yourstylefinancial.ca)



Graduation from St Paul's High School.  
Paige (15), Carey (21), Ashton (19)



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What's important to you

Fall 2012

## Six Ways to Improve Family Communication

A crisis can magnify dynamics forged over decades, and if these dynamics are dysfunctional, the decision-making process will be as well. These tips will help families find their way to a better communication style:

1. Recognize different perspectives.
2. Acknowledge that contributions will not be equal.
3. Gather information regularly and independently, then compare notes.
4. Meet regularly as a family.
5. Brush up on communication skills.
6. Consider outside help.

Source: [www.parentgiving.com](http://www.parentgiving.com), Article reprinted with permission from Living Assistance Services, [www.laservices.ca](http://www.laservices.ca)

## Take Time to Sharpen the Saw

What a fantastic summer; I am so glad we capitalized on every opportunity to enjoy the weather, the water, rounds of golf and time with family and friends.

One of my special memories is the quiet time working on my "summer project", whereby I carved an Eagle from a old spruce tree my dad and I had cut down two winters ago along the shoreline. We had a choice to either dig out the stump or let it rot. Then my mom said, "Doug, why don't you carve an Eagle out of it". Bazinga.... That's a Great Idea!

So, every time we were at the lake, I would spend hours sitting and visualizing the Eagle. I used a chainsaw for a couple cuts and the rest was by hammer and chisel. I am very pleased with how it turned out, especially given the ants that had already made a home. A special thanks to Lor for her assistance in debarking the stump and to my sister Sharon for the acrylic paints. I trust it will last many years to come.

Take time to do what's important to you, as you can't get back the hours that have gone by.





## Being FIT outweighs FAT

Everyone knows that it is unhealthy to be overweight. But what if you are physically fit? Can fitness cancel out the health risks of being overweight? YES!! Fitness can out trump weight. This is good news for overweight people who are unable to lose weight or keep it off. If you exercise and become fitter, you're likely to benefit even if you don't lose weight! Researchers have concluded that increasing physical activity is likely to be at least as important as weight loss for reducing premature mortality. Thus, the health risks of being obese may be lessened or even eliminated if you exercise and stay fit.

What's the cheapest, healthiest cure on earth? WALKING!! Not only will it make you fitter, walking contributes to your overall happiness!!

I challenge you to walk for 20 minutes and NOT feel better by the end of your walk!!

### EACH WEEKLY HOUR OF EXERCISE REDUCES MORTALITY RATES:

Light exercise, like walking or gardening, was associated with a 4% reduction in mortality rates!

Moderate exercise, such as golfing or swimming, a 6% reduction.

High intensity, like running or cycling, 9% reduction in mortality per hour of exercise a week.

In effect, every 1,000 calories burned in exercise per week lowered mortality rates by 11 percent!!

Log on to [Yourstylefinancial.ca/fitness](http://Yourstylefinancial.ca/fitness) to share your tips for a fitter, healthier, happier lifestyle.



I am pleased to announce that Loreen Bockstael, B.Comm (Hons) has joined me at YourStyle Financial Inc. As some of you may know, Lor has been my life partner for some years now. She was instrumental in the success of my book, **LifeBalance** and has been playing a behind-the-scenes role at YourStyle Financial as Director of Marketing. We are now making it official and Lor will be Vice President, looking after Marketing, Client Service and Communications while completing her insurance licensing requirements. With 25 years in the financial services industry, Lor's work experience includes Great-West Life, North American Life, Assante Financial Management (seven as Branch Manager) and most recently Manulife Bank.

Lor can be reached on her mobile at 204.794.9929 or by email [loreenb@mymts.net](mailto:loreenb@mymts.net)

## Family Dynamics and Caregiving

Providing care for a family member can bring out the best - and the worst - in everyone involved. People can come together to support each other or the stress can lead to frustration and conflict between family members. Past dynamics and family roles often re-surface when dealing with the stress of caregiving. All those old issues and unresolved tensions can often re-emerge.

It is important to keep in mind that everyone will respond to the situation in his or her own way. Frustration can occur if you expect other people to feel or act the same as you. Everyone in the family comes with a different history and perspective; a different relationship with the person who is ill; and a different comfort level with illness and the associated emotions.

Also, family members each have their own strengths. Some will excel at the personal care aspect of caregiving, while others cringe from it. Others may thrive by doing housework, gardening, repairs or dealing with finances. Let people work in the areas where they shine.

Even when two people are both doing the same duty, they may still do it differently. How you provide personal care to your spouse may be different than how his sister does when she relieves you. Different does not mean wrong. Ask yourself whether it is really worth butting heads over.

Family meetings are important for keeping everyone up-to-date regarding the care, recipient's health, as well as to delegate duties. The goal at these meetings is not to resolve long-time family issues, but to ensure everyone is on the same team, and to sort out what needs to be done. It can also be an opportunity for current concerns to be aired and miscommunications to be cleared up.

Here are some suggestions for how family members can work together when caregiving:



- Start early. Clarify tasks and responsibilities. Be concrete, specific and ensure everyone has interpreted the plan the same.
- Have one person (usually the primary caregiver) be responsible for coordinating what needs to be done and for keeping family members in the loop.
- Let others know their help is both wanted and needed.
- Be realistic in your expectations as to what each person is able to do.
- Express appreciation to each other for the help each is able to provide.
- Expect and accept differences of opinion and reactions and find ways to compromise. Keep in mind that everyone has the right to his or her own feelings and point of view. You can agree to disagree and still complete the caregiving tasks as needed.
- Take a moment to recognize what is old conflict and what is related to the current situation. Try to put aside long-time grudges for now so everyone has the energy to deal with caregiving.

Article By Barbara Small - Reprinted with permission from Senior Living Magazine, [www.seniorlivingmag.com](http://www.seniorlivingmag.com)



**YourStyle Financial Inc.** cell: 204 227 6395  
 Doug Buss CLU, CPCA, CFP office: 204 474 2929  
 1325 Kenaston Blvd. fax: 204 992 3546  
 Winnipeg, MB R3P 2P2 toll-free: 877 895 3258