

## Beginning the Conversation Modern Jewish Families in Their Own Words

### BEN AND MICKI UNBURDENED BUT ...

*We wonder who will be around in 25 years  
to be concerned about us....*

Here we are at an age when our younger siblings are either relieved that their children have jobs or wonder if, when they finish their college and graduate school educations, they will be employed in a paying profession. Meantime, our contemporaries are proudly showing off pictures of new grandchildren or looking forward to doing so in the near future. And we have none of these pleasures and worries. A late first marriage for one of us and a childless first one for the other explains this absence.



On the one hand, we have some freedom; we don't have to worry about school schedules in planning vacation and we don't have to worry about college tuitions. On the other, we wonder who will be around in 25 years to be concerned about us. Will we be an elderly couple in assisted living or a nursing home whom no one visits?

As we recall from our own childhood, being aunt and uncle means that we only occasionally intersect with the lives of our nieces and nephews and as they grow and move on with their lives, those occasions seem to diminish.

**A post script:** Most annoying moment comes when friends or colleagues who have known us for years glibly ask "how's the family?" After all this time, it is painful to recognize they can't be bothered to remember that we don't have children. Oy, that stings.