

Parents Are Hard To Raise S02 E77 Transcript

[00:00:00] The world's becoming a dangerous place for us women. Lipstick bodyguard looks just like an innocent little lipstick. But it'll instantly drop any attacker to his knees so you can get away unharmed. Lipstick bodyguard. Fear no evil. Get yours today only at lipstickbodyguard.com

Announcer: [00:00:37] Today's most popular eldercare options. Some good, some bad, some downright frightening. This week on Parents Are Hard to Raise Diane shares some stories of her personal experiences. Listen to this and other episodes using the iHeart Radio app or wherever you enjoy listening.

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Diane: [00:01:16] Welcome To Parents Are Hard to Raise. Helping families grow older together without losing their minds. I'm elder care expert Diane Berardi so I missed you guys.

[00:01:28] I hope you're enjoying our series, all our guest experts. I'm sure you're finding the information they provide useful. You know, we want to be a resource for you. All different topics. And I'm very interested in senior living communities. You know different places for our parents to live. And that's the next series we're going to be doing. And so of course every year I go out and visit different places, and I tell you guys go you know just drop in. And I did the same. I dropped in some places. Some places I made appointments. Some places I tried to make appointments. So what happened is, some people were so gracious. It didn't matter that I just dropped in. They were so welcoming. They were so happy to show me around, answer any questions.

[00:02:29] Some people, even that I made appointments with were mad. They were like, you know, they gave me the bums rush, and even though I offered to come back. And I was amazed.

[00:02:46] And, some places I couldn't make an appointment. I tried everything. There is one big community, and I was only in New Jersey. I didn't have the opportunity go into any other state. But there's this one place it's like a village. You know they have, it looks like apartments. I don't know, because I couldn't get a tour. It looks like apartments and they have like pharmacy, it looks like it's all inclusive. There's really nothing, nowhere... You don't have to leave the place. And so you go on their Web site and it says, book a tour. And so I did that. I went on and I asked. No one got back to me. So I did it again. And no one got back to me. So then I called. And they said someone would get back to you. And no one got back to me.

[00:03:41] So I don't know how many times I did this. So I just decided that's it. And of course on these trips I took my executive producer with me. I'm like, we're just going there. And he's like, Oh, they have a guard gate. I'm like, it doesn't matter. We're going! Cause this is ridiculous. I mean, I don't know, they're guarding us? You know, no information. So we go to the guard gate. And if the guard isn't nice to you...

[00:04:13] No one gets back to you. But I was going to be persistent, because I want to know, now. So the guard says, who you're coming to see? And I said, "Oh I'm trying to take a tour."

[00:04:25] "Well do you have an appointment?"

[00:04:26] I said, "No. I've been trying to get an appointment, but I couldn't get anyone to call me back."

[00:04:33] "Hold on!"

And he goes in and I guess he's calling somebody. So, then he comes back to the window and says, "Well, no one can see you. They're very busy today. But you can pull over there by the red roof and you can set up an appointment."

[00:04:48] I'm like, Okay.

So I go. We drive up and we go into the building and we go to the front desk, and the woman's ignoring us. She's looking through her mail... And I'm like, "Oh my God. you don't..."

Never mind, you just don't treat people that way. You just can't. I mean, it doesn't matter who it is or anything. You can't treat people that way.

So I'm going, "Ahem..."

So finally, she looks up, and she goes, "Do you have an appointment!" And I said, No. I have been trying to get an appointment. I said, "But the guard told me to come here to set up an appointment."

[00:05:30] And so she goes, "Okay".

And she goes into a file drawer, gets a clipboard and puts a piece of paper there...

"Fill out this form."

[00:05:37] I'm like... "Oh my gosh. Okay."

So I go there, and of course most people, when you are inquiring, they want to know who you're inquiring for... they believe you have a parent or a family member. Other places have courtesy for professionals. But okay.

So I am like, this form isn't right... I can't fill this out. It is not for my mom or dad.

[00:06:05] So I go back up and I said oh... And I tell her. I said, "I emailed and I was telling people that I wanted to come and visit. I said, this form is really not for me.

[00:06:15] "Well just cross out what doesn't pertain to you!"

[00:06:17] I'm like, the whole form doesn't pertain to me. And, this is like a huge organization, so I'm like Okay.

[00:06:26] So I cross out, and I just put my stuff. So I go back and she says, "Okay, someone will contact you." And I'm thinking, I don't think so...

[00:06:35] I still haven't heard.

[00:06:37] So, what if you're driving by and there's a place. Of course you're going to just pop in. And you should, because you get a feel for a place as soon as you walk in. I certainly did.

And a lot of the websites, if you're online and you're looking at places and you're looking at a Web site, you know they have that pop up where the person says, "Can I help you?" and you say, "I want to make an appointment."

Or some places just have you fill in something, or some say call.

Or some say "stop in," which is very nice. Except sometimes, even when you just stop in, they're not happy to see you. But I would say, in my travels, most people were wonderful and I'm happy for that.

[00:07:22] So... The first place I went to was a continuing care retirement community. Those combine independent living, assisted living and nursing in one setting. And they have nursing for long or short-term care, some of them. Some of them also have physical, occupational, speech therapy on site.

[00:07:51] Now, the assisted living part... and some assisted living are just assisted living.

I went into several. And I would say, every assisted living I went into, people were wonderful. And you got a great feeling when you walked in.

Now, I as you know, if you've listened to my shows, you know I'm a very, very big proponent of home care. I want people to stay in their home and age in their home, if they choose to do that. And people's idea, I think, of assisted living is, they think of them as nursing homes. And they are not.

[00:08:35] But I was so impressed by so many of the assisted living.

Now, I was saying to my executive producer, who knows Annette and Joe... He knows my mom and dad. My father, no. He wouldn't. It doesn't matter, he's home. He's home by himself. It doesn't matter. He would be home. My mom would love it. Love the place!

[00:08:55] A lot of these assisted livings, they're like hotels. Who wouldn't love it? We were so impressed. So I am a big proponent of home care. You know, if you want to stay in your home, if you choose to. As one person said to me, "No one comes into our place and says, 'I want to move here.'"

[00:09:14] Now I think though, if the decision is made, I can tell you that if I brought my mom into a place she'd be like, "Yes! I'll move in. I'll leave dad home... I'll leave our father home."

[00:09:27] But you have to check out assisted Living's. Because if you're not sure; if you feel Mom or Dad can't be home alone anymore, or you've tried different things...

Because it's not just housing. It's taking care of everything. You don't have to do anything. You're fed. You have housekeeping. You have your own apartment. You have entertainment. It's wonderful.

[00:09:58] They have... there's movies. There's popcorn machines. These are the places I went. They have trips. They have bus trips. It reminded me of a hotel or a cruise. And there is an activities director. And in one place I went to, oh my gosh. She was wonderful. It reminded me of a cruise.

They have all kinds of classes. Different classes. They can help your mom or dad if they need help with personal care. The apartments are beautiful. Some are high-rise. Some have apartments. Some have multiple floors. I mean, they all vary. But that's where you would want to definitely take a tour and ask questions.

[00:10:50] And I have such a much better impression of them because I was thinking, Assisted Living's, they maybe do too much for people. They don't. They allow you to be independent, and they help you be independent. Most of them do.

[00:11:11] So, we're going to continue talking about all my adventures this week. But if you're a woman, or there's a woman in your life, I'm going to tell you about something that you absolutely need to know.

[00:11:21] I Want to tell you about my friend Katie. Katie is a nurse and she was attacked on her way home from work. She was totally taken by surprise. And although Katie is only 5 feet tall and 106 pounds she was easily able to drop her 6 foot 4, 250-pound attacker to his knees and get away unharmed.

Katie wasn't just lucky that day. She was prepared.

In her pocketbook, a harmless looking lipstick, which really contained a powerful man stopping aerosol propellant.

It's not like it was in our grandmother's day. Today just going to and from work or to the mall can have tragic consequences. The FBI says a violent crime is committed every 15 seconds in the United States. And a forcible rape happens every five minutes. And chances are when something happens, no one will be around to help.

It looks just like a lipstick. So no one will suspect a thing. Which is important since experts say, getting the jump on your attacker is all about the element of surprise.

Inside this innocent looking lipstick is the same powerful stuff used by police and the military to disarm even the most powerful, armed aggressor. In fact, National Park rangers used the very same formula that's inside this little lipstick to stop two-thousand pound vicious grizzly bears dead in their tracks. It's like carrying a personal bodyguard with you in your purse or your pocket.

Darkness brings danger. Murderers and rapists use darkness to their advantage. We all know what it's like to be walking at night and hear footsteps coming at us from behind. Who's there? If it's somebody bad, will you be protected? Your life may depend on it.

My friend Katie's close call needs to be a wake up call for all of us. Myself included. Pick up a Lipstick Bodyguard and keep it with you always.

Announcer: [00:13:23] You're listening to Parents Are Hard To Raise. Now, thanks to you, the number one eldercare talk show on planet earth. Now available on Spotify and it's 180 million monthly subscribers. iPhone users can listen on Apple podcasts and Android users on Google Podcasts.

Diane: [00:13:45] We're so excited to be part of Spotify network. And I want to say a huge welcome to the 180 million monthly subscribers. Welcome to the Parents Are Hard to Raise family.

[00:13:58] We know from your e-mails that more and more of you are choosing to listen to the show on demand, whenever and wherever you want. Using the iHeart Radio app. Roku. Alexa. On Apple podcast. Google podcasts. Or whatever your favorite way is. So I'm asking you for a favor. Please show at least one other person how to listen that way. A lot of people our age are technically challenged, myself included, because everyone laughs at me here. So help us out, by helping one other person discover a new way to listen. Thank you.

[00:14:37] So we were talking about Assisted Living's and I just want to say, assisted Living's... I've been to many, in many different states, and they are getting better and better every year. I want to move to one.

[00:14:52] I also visited adult day centers. And we talked about social adult centers. And I visited also medical adult day centers.

[00:15:04] And these are really great for mom and dad or the client going to the center because they're socializing with other people who have maybe the same needs as they do. They can have, if they're a medical center, they can have their medications administered. There were even people there with feeding tubes and they can attend. So it's a great community setting. They have nutrition. They have different things for people to do. And it's a great respite for you as a caregiver, if you're a caregiver for mom or dad.

[00:15:40] And usually they're Monday through Friday. But some of them have Saturday hours. Some of them have weekend, even Sunday evening hours. And the one I visited even is open on the holiday. They were open on Labor Day.

[00:15:55] And I also went to senior centers.

Now, in New Jersey... And my mom is very much opposed to this... not every town has one. And she's right. Every town should. She thought it was a law. [laughing] But it's not. But she's right, because there is such a need. You know, you might have mom or dad and maybe their spouse passed away and they're all by themselves. And what do they do? You work or you don't live in the area, and they sit home. They don't eat right. They watch television. They get depressed.

[00:16:38] This is a great place for people to get together. They have, some of the places I visited, they use county transportation. You know, if Mom or Dad can't drive there and some people can't, some people can. Some have their own transportation and they come and get you. They go to plays. They go to different places. Some have meals catered. Some people bring their own food. Certain days they go to different stores. It's a wonderful time for people to get together. You should see the stuff... the paintings people did, or jewelry they made. I was just so amazed.

[00:17:22] And one good thing. It's really nice, because these people you're seeing, if you're in a senior center you're seeing the same people everyday. And you can see if Sally's losing weight or Sally's getting a little forgetful. Or you don't think she's eating. Or maybe her clothes aren't washed. Because you're seeing them, sometimes more than family.

[00:17:48] I was in one place and someone said to another client there, "Oh... is your daughter back from vacation?" And the woman said, "Yes. But that doesn't mean I see her." And that's so sad.

[00:18:01] So these senior centers are a great way for people to get together. There's a huge gap for people who just need socialization. Or need someone maybe to take them somewhere or take them shopping.

[00:18:18] And I was talking to people who work there and they were saying, a lot of these people make plans. If we're not open on the weekend, they make plans and they get together by themselves and they do things.

[00:18:31] So that's a wonderful thing. You know me, I talk about, you need that social support, that socialization, is so important.

[00:18:41] Years ago we had extended families. Like for me, my grandparents, they lived downstairs, we lived upstairs. And when my grandmother died, my grandfather, of course he was devastated, but he still had family around. We were still there. And I had nine million aunts and

uncles and cousins, and we were always together. There were always people at our house. But it is different today. People move away. And if dad died, and your mom is all alone, and you live away, and you might only be able to come and visit for two weeks of the year... So it's totally a different thing.

[00:19:20] You know, 20 years ago the average American had three best friends. And you told those friends everything good. You told them the bad and the ugly. We shared everything. Today, we have an average of one and a half true friends. And that decrease in close friends, it brings up more isolation, more loneliness. And it decreases the quality of life and it decreases the quantity of years. Studies have shown that people with the most social connectedness live longer.

And when you think about it, women are living longer than men, a lot of women have better social support networks. Women engage with each other. They express their feelings to each other. So that social component is so important.

[00:20:17] And you see that in the places that I visited; all the places that I visited. You know, in the adult day services. In the assisted living. In the continuing care retirement communities.

[00:20:33] In these villages... I couldn't get into that one, but... In these villages where they have the apartments and I think people go in and they have the dining rooms the restaurants. It's kind of like a whole community, where you don't have to leave. And in these senior centers.

[00:20:51] And I want to say, in your town, check if there is a senior center. Check your parents town. And if there isn't, find out why. I'm going to start doing that. I'm going to be calling all these towns, and I'm going to say why isn't there one?

[00:21:05] And if there is one... They need your support. They need your support. Find out what they need. Call and talk to the director and say, what can I do? Can I make a donation? Can I make a donation of my time? You know, maybe you're a yoga instructor or something. Or can I make a donation with...

A lot of these senior centers, they make things for women's shelters or for the Vets. They do different things. And so you can find out.

I was in one, and one woman was bringing in yarn. They make blankets. They make baby blankets. I believe Target gives great donations, that's what one of these centers was saying. So find out what you can do, 'cause that's important.

And I think that's a great way for people who are just home and they want to stay home, but they're sitting there all day and they're not engaged. They're not meeting other people. And it might take a little coaxing on your part, but I can guarantee, if you bring mom or you bring Dad...

[00:22:26] They play poker! Not for money. [laughing] But they have guys playing cards. They have pool tables. So my father would be like, "No..." But I might be able to get him to one of those, because he'll play cards. I know that.

[00:22:46] I remember taking my grandfather. I remember driving my grandfather to a senior center. And this was way back. I'm not going to even tell you how many years ago it was. And I remember he went, and I picked him up and I'm like, Grandpa, how'd you like it!" Because we were working and we wanted to get him out of the house and you could drop him off in the morning, and he didn't need a bus, it was right up our hill, so it was right there. And he said to me, "No... There's too many old people there." [laughing].

[00:23:20] But I think if we were to coax him to continue, I think he would have made some friends. And I think it would have been good for him. So I really encourage you to check out your town and see, if there is no Senior Center, we want to find out why. And what can we do to get one?

[00:23:42] And if there is, how can we help? Because the towns subsidize, and what can we do?

[00:23:53] So, we're going to do a series again on the experts in the assisted living, and the senior centers, the day care, the continuing care retirement communities. And any other locations for seniors... Housing or communities.

But I had brought my executive producer with me visiting these different places and we were talking and we said you know what? It'd be cool if we can kinda go on the road and broadcast from some of these places and even do some interviews in these senior centers, and talk to people.

These people... They're wonderful. They have a wealth of knowledge. And they're great. We walked into one senior center and people came up to us and they were eating breakfast. And there's cake everywhere everywhere! I'm gonna tell ya that, there's cake everywhere [laughing]. And they're all eating breakfast, "can we help you?" And I said, I was looking for so-and-so and they're like... Well, I'll take you!

[00:25:03] They're great people. A wealth of knowledge. And you could learn so much from them. And they all have stories. And it's wonderful.

[00:25:12] And I couldn't believe how many people were like 104. And I was like, you have to be kidding. This Woman does not look 104. It's just wonderful. And you know what? She's socializing. She's out and she's doing things. So we've gotta keep our parents moving. We've gotta keep them socializing. We've gotta keep them doing things.

[00:25:37] I really hope this episode helped you with something you may be going through with this moment. Please keep emailing your questions and comments, and tell me as much as you can. Because what you share can help someone else.

[00:25:50] You can reach me at Diane@ParentsAreHardToRaise.org, or just click the green button on our home page.

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[00:26:41] We're all about helping each other and Parents Are Hard To Raise. One of the ways you can help someone else find our show to give it a high rating. Give it a five star rating. Help someone find the show. Also show them how to do it.

[00:26:55] Thank you so much for listening. Till next time... May you forget everything you don't

want to remember, and remember everything you don't want to forget.

[00:27:05] See you again next week.