

Parents Are Hard To Raise S02 Episode 79 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 will 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: [00:00:17] Growing old means something entirely different today than it did in our Grandparents Day. And for us it will be far different again. Diane's special guest, Brenda Bacon, CEO of Brandywine living has spent a career studying the changing needs of our aging society and is here to walk us through the maze of today's senior living options and give us a glimpse of what lies ahead for us. Parents Are Hard To Raise is now available on Spotify and it's 180 million monthly subscribers.

Diane: [00:01:22] Welcome to Parents Are Hard To Raise. Helping families grow older together without losing their minds. I'm elder care expert Diane Berardi.

[00:01:32] Whether we're ready for it or not. There is a Tsunami headed our way. A Silver Tsunami. By the year 2030 the world's population aged 65 and over will double. And by 2100, it will more than triple.

At last count, there is an estimated one point six billion of us baby boomers out there. Over 76 million in the United States alone. And by and large we're pretty powerful and influential group. Likened to a pig in a python. We're moving through time changing the marketplace and social landscape as we go.

We don't approach anything the same way our parents or grandparents did. Especially aging. They accepted aging as a part of life. We on the other hand, as poet Dylan Thomas advised, "Rage rage against the dying of the light." We're not about to go gentle into that good night.

Which is why, when we're looking for senior living and care options, first for our Aging Parents, and later on down the road for ourselves, we're a tough group to please. And for my guest expert this week that is a welcome change.

If I were to list all of her credentials there'd be no time left in the show. So let me just say not only is she an expert on senior living, having founded her current company Brandywine living way back in 1996. But she's a true visionary. She served on a presidential transition team, been a trusted adviser to two governors, sits on several boards of directors, and was recently honored as Humanitarian of the year. And in my opinion, she knows far more about the future needs of boomers and their aging parents than any four people I know.

Brenda Bacon welcome to Parents Are Hard to Raise.

Brenda Bacon: [00:03:27] Thank you, Diane. That's very nice.

Diane: [00:03:28] It's so great to have you here. I wanted to just say I took a tour of a Brandywine living. I took a tour of several Brandywine Living's and let me tell you, I walked in--and you can walk into a place and you just can feel the life and you see the smiles on people's faces and there are so many different activities going on. And, it's a place where you know Mom or Dad will be safe, will be happy, will remain as independent as they can, and it will be home to them. And I just want to tell you what a remarkable job you have done.

[00:04:13] Well thank you. One of the most important things I think for everyone is to have a

reason to get out of bed in the morning. And to look forward to something. So sometimes people think when you go into senior living your day is very regimented and there's nothing to do and it's kind of boring. And we like to think it's a lot of fun. Because all of a sudden you have friends and things to do. You laugh. And that's what we all want for our parents, right? We want them to be happy. We want them to be safe but nothing makes us feel better as baby boomers our parents laugh, like they haven't done in years. Play cards like they haven't done in years. Dance. Or be too busy to take your phone call, or to have you drop by. [laughing]

Diane: [00:05:05] What led you to create assisted living communities?

Brenda Bacon: [00:05:12] Assisted Living a relatively young industry, in terms of industries. So you would say it may be 20 25 years old. It's changed a lot and will change a lot as you said in your introduction as it starts to encounter the baby boomer generation. Baby boomers now are the shoppers for their patents, for senior living or for assisted living. In the future they will be the people making the choice and as you said Baby Boomers will make their own choices that are very different than ours. Before senior living or assisted living became available as an option, people had to go into a nursing home. Even if they only needed minimal assistance. Assistance with medication or anything they had to be in a nursing home setting, which as you know is a very facility like setting, high medical model and very little socialization because they're focused on the health care needs as it should be.

[00:06:20] Assisted living gives people the option to have more of a social interaction. It is like living in a small town. But the support staff and care is there, so you don't have to... Think about it is living in a luxury building or luxury home and having no need.

[00:06:41] Well, you've got a chauffeur. You have a chef. You have wait staff. You have people that drive you, you have transportation. And you have choices. You can decide that. You have a pub right down the hall. Okay, and happy hour every day. So those are the things that assisted living can offer. But also you have the security and the peace of mind of knowing that someone's there. We like to say we're up all night so you don't have to be.

Diane: [00:07:13] Right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:07:14] Because as baby boomers with their parents we are up worried all the time.

Diane: [00:07:18] Yes exactly. You know I have a client and she's alone. Her husband died, and she's alone in her home. And her daughter who lives about two hours away is busy, she has children and she doesn't, she can't visit all the time. And so, she had set up she had taken her mom on a tour of an assisted living near her home and set everything up. And I had gone with her and everything was set. And mom said, no I want to stay in my own home. And so the daughter kind of she just threw her hands up and said, "Okay. But you're going to have to have help in the home." And she didn't want a live-in. And for some that works out. Some people don't want someone else living-- a person they don't know-- living in their home. And she still is in her home. But I'll visit her and she'll say to me "I'm so lonely."

Brenda Bacon: [00:08:21] Yes. Yes.

Diane: [00:08:21] And that loneliness... You know you always hear me talk about socialization and that loneliness is the killer. So I say to her, what about let's go. Let's see another assisted living. Why don't we try that again? I think you're ready.

[00:08:40] When do you think it's time for people to say, for children to say, okay mom, we have to do that? Or what do we do?

Brenda Bacon: [00:08:53] It's not an easy process. Clearly. I mean and it's usually the adult daughter-- the oldest adult daughter-- who gets involved in actually pushing the process along. I will tell you Brandywine has 29 communities in six states. And my 89-year-old mother-in-law lives with us. Okay? [laughing]

Diane: [00:09:17] Oh my. [laughing]

[00:09:20] [laughing] So, I'm not suggesting that I have the answer to this, but...

[00:09:20] We love my mother-in-law living with us. She's lived with us for the past five years, now. We've got all of the precautions in place and everything. And she's very active. But she's got a lot of interaction. You know because my husband and I are there, my son's in and out. All of her nieces and nephews you know she's very accessible to them because she's there with us. But we also have the support there at home now. Now, still in the middle of the night, if I hear a noise, I'll think she's fallen. And I'll run down the stairs. And so you have that kind of dynamic.

[00:10:02] But I want to go back to just the whole issue of socialization and interaction. And that is what I think that we as adult children have to look for first. Because what was going on with my mother-in-law is she was living in her own home in Philadelphia and she, other than talking to friends on the phone, she very rarely went out, unless it was to go to the doctor, or one of us went over to take her out to something, or it was a birthday, or an anniversary. But for day-to-day... No not much going on.

[00:10:37] And so, and I believe that isolation and loneliness are both physically and emotionally probably the biggest ager's there are.

Diane: [00:10:48] Yes exactly.

Brenda Bacon: [00:10:50] And so now you know you have, whether you are living-- whatever your living situation is-- or you're in assisted living.

[00:10:59] You have friends and people to talk to so it doesn't necessarily-- it kind of depends on the person and what their situation is, what you need to do, the steps you need to take.

[00:11:09] We're going to continue talking with Brenda Bacon, of Brandywine Living, but of 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.

[00:11:24] 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: [00:13:25] You're listening to Parents Are Hard To Raise. Now, thanks to you, the number one Eldercare talk show on Planet Earth. Listen to this and other episodes on demand using the iHeart Radio app. iPhone users can listen on Apple Podcasts and Android users on Google Podcasts.

Diane: [00:13:48] There's so many new ways to listen to our show, it's hard to keep track. Spotify. Roku. You can listen on your smartphone with Apple podcasts and Google podcasts. You can get an Apple TV, Direct TV, and even just ask Alexa to play the show for you. It's great, because you don't have to be tied to a radio anymore. You can listen when you want, where you want, for as long as you want. And if you're listening to the show one of these new ways, please do me a favor. Please share this new technology. Help someone learn about the show and show them a new way to listen. I was so excited because I showed someone this week how to listen to the show from his smartphone.

[00:14:29] So we're here talking with Brenda Bacon from Brandywine Living.

[00:14:34] Brenda, what do you see as the difference between baby boomers as customers versus the Silent Generation as residents?

Brenda Bacon: [00:14:44] I see a lot of differences. As we saw as baby boomers when we were young. I mean the whole time when you look at people who experienced the civil rights movement, and the women's movement, the sexual revolution the fight against the Vietnam War, all of those things. We are people who "decide" what's going to happen to us, rather than have it happen.

[00:15:08] And I think the difference is when people, you know the traditional for the silent generation, you work till you're 60 or 65 and then you're old. You are classified as being old. And that's just not the case anymore. Because in fact, about three years ago, we took senior out of our name. It used to be Brandywine Senior Living. And we took it out. Because baby boomers do not want to be known as seniors.

Diane: [00:15:35] Right. You're right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:15:37] I don't care how old they are, they're never going to accept that term.

[00:15:40] And quite frankly you shouldn't have to declare yourself a Senior in order to access services.

[00:15:48] So you don't want to cook anymore and you don't want to clean and there's no reason to do that. You want to spend your time at the pub or at the movies or whatever you want to do. Then those are things that you should be able to do. So I think what's going to happen with baby boomers is that they are going to demand a very customized lifestyle and have choices on how they want to spend their day.

[00:16:13] So Brandywine, even now we have all day dining. Baby Boomers wouldn't dream of being in a situation where you must eat breakfast from seven to eight, Lunch from 12 to one. And, you know, dinner from five to six. They would not tolerate that.

[00:16:30] They would be I want to eat when I want to eat. Whereas previous generations may have said those are the rules.

Diane: [00:16:37] Right. Exactly yes.

Brenda Bacon: [00:16:39] So I think, those of us who are in the assisted living business really have to change how we approach what we do. It can't be for our convenience and our staffing patterns. It has to be for what our customer wants.

Diane: [00:16:56] Right. That is a true servant leader. You are looking at what your customer wants, not what you think. You know that's... It is amazing. You have to come and visit a Brandywine living. And we're going to find out all your locations in a few minutes.

[00:17:19] How has your company vision evolved from day one to today?

Brenda Bacon: [00:17:25] I think it evolves every day. I think you learn a lot, from not only you're your customers or your residents, but also from your team members. We can't have a happy customer unless we have happy team members. They have to really believe that they are doing something that is more important than just coming to make a bed or to serve a meal. They have to believe that they are actually changing someone's life everyday when they come to work and they do. Our residents get very involved with their team members and they know when they're having a bad day. They know when something is going on because sometimes they see them many times more than they see their own families.

[00:18:07] So when we started out with Brandywine, we knew we wanted an alternative to skilled nursing or being home alone. And so this provides that. We've always had a model where there's a nurse in the building 24-hours a day. Just so you can sleep at night.

Diane: [00:18:27] Right. Exactly.

Brenda Bacon: [00:18:28] You need to have that, and you don't want to have middle of the night calls and all of that. But we've also increased our service and hospitality features over the years. As we see our residents be more interested in doing really unique things. They want to go out to the casino. They want to go to New York to see a show. We have something called Assisted Living week and they do all kinds of crazy, zany things. They put on Plays. They make movies.

Diane: [00:19:02] Oh my gosh, that's great!

Brenda Bacon: [00:19:02] It's fun! It's actually a great deal of fun. Very interesting people. Because what we tend to think about seniors is that they maybe don't have anything to offer anymore. They're only talking about World War 2 or talking about what happened.

[00:19:22] So, you see them as kind of seniors, instead of seeing them as people who are fascinating. Every single person fascinating in their own right. And if you take the time to really talk to them they're more interested in talking about now, they'll share the past with you, but they want to talk about the future too. And that will increase with baby boomers, who will always be looking forward not backward.

Diane: [00:19:49] Right. That's right.

[00:19:53] How do you spend your day?

Brenda Bacon: [00:20:01] Very very eclectic day, most days. I'm either in the office working with our senior team. I travel quite a bit to our buildings. I like to go in the buildings. Brandywine why not a company that has lots of layers of people, vice presidents and senior vice presidents. One of the things that I feel is that you've really got to hear what's going on and see it yourself. Because by the time it gets filtered all the way up to you, it's a whole different thing.

[00:20:32] So walking through a building and stopping and talking to residents and talking to team members probably teaches me more than anything else I could do, than if I hired 15 more people just to see what's going on in the buildings. And so we change and innovate all the time what we're doing as a result of that. Which is exciting.

Diane: [00:20:54] When I visited your Howell, New Jersey Brandywine the director said to me, you know she was so excited she said, our CEO Brenda Bacon, she's here. She's accessible. She comes and visits. And you don't see that. A lot of places you have layers and layers and layers and you know it's crazy.

[00:21:19] I had tried to make an appointment into one particular place. And you had to do it by e-mail, to make an appointment, and I wanted to go the route that you know a child of an aging parent would have to go work for the parent themselves. And so I did that. And then someone got back to me by e-mail. And then they said to call to make an appointment. And then I called, and they said someone would get back to me. And three weeks later, someone got back to me. And I'm thinking oh my gosh, well, I don't know about this place. And I said Okay, they got back to me and they said well we'll have to see when we can fit you in.

Brenda Bacon: [00:22:02] Oh Dear.

Diane: [00:22:02] So I was in the area and I just said to my producer let's just go. And he said well we don't have an appointment. Let's just go and see. Because there must be people who stopped by.

Brenda Bacon: [00:22:12] Sure.

Diane: [00:22:12] You Know they're driving by they see the sign. So we went by and there was a guard gate. And the guard... He didn't have a smile on his face... and he said "Do you have an appointment!".

[00:22:24] And I said, no. You know, I said I tried to get an appointment, but I couldn't so I was wondering if I could just take a tour.

[00:22:30] And he said, "Well, I have to call."

[00:22:32] And so he called.

[00:22:33] He came back and said, "No one can see you now! But you can drive around-- you know the 10 buildings-- walk in and make an appointment there.

[00:22:43] Okay. So we did that.

[00:22:47] And we went in and you know you have to go to, it looked like a hotel desk, and the woman there was sorting through the mail. And I'm standing there... And I cleared my throat and she was still sorting.

[00:23:05] Finally, she looked up.

[00:23:05] She said, "Yes?".

[00:23:06] And I said, Oh well, I wanted to make an appointment for a tour.

[00:23:14] "Fill this out!".

[00:23:14] And It was all questions about you know my parents. So, I said to her, this isn't ... it's not about parents... And I introduce myself and I told her.

[00:23:28] And she said, "Oh. We'll just fill out what you can." [laughing]

[00:23:33] So I'm like, Okay. I did that and then I brought back her.

[00:23:38] She's like, "OK. Someone will be in touch with you."

[00:23:41] And I said, So, I can't make an appointment, now?" And she said, "No."

[00:23:44] And then someone finally did call, but I was like, Oh my gosh...

Brenda Bacon: [00:23:47] Think about that. In what other services or good that you purchase, would you take that kind of treatment?

Diane: [00:23:55] Right right, right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:23:59] No place. Right?

[00:23:59] And Baby boomers will take it less.

Diane: [00:24:01] You're right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:24:03] So that's not going to work for them in the future. And it's not the smart way to do things anyway. What are you afraid of?

[00:24:10] I can understand... You Know there's a certain thing that says well we have to have security. But you don't look like a particularly threatening person. [laughing] So, I don't think that would be the issue.

[00:24:23] It really is inconvenient for them to see you whenever you walk in. And so, they're going to make it fit their schedule. And I would encourage anyone who is looking at assisted living to walk in and look. See what you see. Because nothing that you read in a brochure or anything else is going to take the place of walking the building, yourself.

[00:24:47] Look at the staff members. Look and see if they're happy, they're smiling, they're interacting with you, they're making eye contact with you. Look and see if the residents are engaged and stuff or they're just sitting around kind of staring into space. And you'll get a feel for what it's like and what it can be like for your mom or your dad. If you don't see that kind of engagement going on when you're walking in without that appointment, then that's probably not the place. Or you want to keep looking until you find that. Because how's mom going to be happy? Look at, you know, when you're passing people, if they don't look happy, then that's what's going to happen with your mom.

Diane: [00:25:27] Right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:25:28] But if you're if you walk of our building I think you'll see a lot that our residents will stop you and start to talk to you and engage you as they do with me. And staff people do, too.

[00:25:42] It's a community. It's a home. It's A small town.

Diane: [00:25:47] Yeah. It Definitely is.

[00:25:49] When I first walked in, there was a gentleman and he gave me a thumbs up. [laughing] He was just walking by.

Brenda Bacon: [00:25:59] And he was probably 85 years old and he flirting with you. [laughing].

[00:26:04] As long as it wasn't one of our team members. [laughing]

Diane: [00:26:10] And that's great. I Haven't had a man flirt with me in a long time.[laughing] So, that's great.

[00:26:17] What have you learned this year, that was a surprise?

Brenda Bacon: [00:26:23] What I've learned this year that is a surprise is that, as everybody thinks about aging, the Silver Tsunami that you're talking about... It really is, it comes in truly a tsunami wave. But, when you think about that tsunami's made up of baby boomers, you really have to think about what services do you provide today to the 85 year old is the generation the silent generation and how are you going to migrate your services so that you meet that Silver Tsunami where they are, and not just say we're here when you get this age you better come knock on our door. Because that's not the way it's going to happen.

[00:27:09] So I think that those are... I've also noticed that even people who are in their late 80s or 90s... the building we open in Alexandria, Virginia for example, we have lots of folks touring that building who are still independent. Couples that are in their 80s, who are saying we're looking for the future.

Diane: [00:27:34] That's great.

Brenda Bacon: [00:27:34] I love it! [laughing] And they'll come to all of our events. And they'll

have a good time. And they'll hang out. But they're like, "we really don't need assisted living yet."

[00:27:44] People don't want to be labeled. They don't want to be classified as "Seniors" or needing assisted living or whatever. They need to have more choice of how they want to live. And if we can translate that into you're choosing how you want to live and how you want to spend your days, not that you need to go into assisted living because you fell last week.

Diane: [00:28:08] Right. Exactly.

[00:28:11] Now your assisted livings, they have the memory care unit?

Brenda Bacon: [00:28:17] Yes.

Diane: [00:28:17] Do You find that you have more and more clients coming in? That's expanding I would imagine, as people live longer.

[00:28:25] Yes. As people live longer we are seeing a growth in people needing dementia care and needing to be in an environment where they're well protected.

[00:28:37] That is such a strain on a family. The Resident, plus the whole family is going through that pain in such a different way. Certainly I happen to thank that the baby boomer population is putting so much money behind research with regard to dementia that they're determined they're not going to, you know, have that problem [laughing]. And so they're just gonna solve it before it happens. So we'll see. You know there's a lot of very fascinating research.

[00:29:11] But until... there's a saying among people that really think about and work in this industry... That we're going to provide the care until there's a cure.

[00:29:19] So we can't promise that there is a cure. There are a lot of things you can do now, in terms of programming. And again socialization. And living in the moment with residents who are suffering from dementia.

[00:29:34] So if you walk into an environment where people are constantly saying you know, Elizabeth it's time to eat. You've got to sit down now and eat. And she says, well no. I have to go pick up the children now, because she's living in an age of when she was from 28 to 30 or something like that. And you say, "Your children are grown. Your children aren't here yet to come eat." Then you're just going to agitate that resident. Because that's not their reality. And it might be easier to say, "Oh no... The children aren't ready yet. Let's get something to eat and you can get them later. Is that all right?" And then she's like, " Oh ok as long as my children are safe then I will sit down and have something to eat."

[00:30:16] And so when you're looking at communities, look see if the philosophy in the team is doing what the resident wants, rather than doing what they want, which is, "I need to get this meal served and cleaned up, and get outta here."

Diane: [00:30:36] Yeah.

[00:30:36] What Is your priority for next year?

Brenda Bacon: [00:30:40] My priority for next year is to... I Have lots of priorities for next year... This will be interesting, because I don't want my team to listen to one thing and think I have one priority I actually have 25 priorities, for those of you who work for Brandywine Living [laughing].

[00:30:55] But one of the things that I think we've got to pay attention to is, we're in a full employment environment. That's a really good thing, for a lot of people. And so I'm very happy about that. But we have to be... So we have to be even more the employer of choice to find the right people. Because everybody can't work in assisted living and everybody can't work in a Brandywine. Because you've got to have, you can teach anything but you can't teach heart.

Diane: [00:31:27] Yes you're right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:31:28] All those other skills on your résumé may be fine for someone else. We need to talk to you would go through an enormous screening process, for integrity, for decision making, but we're looking also for, Do you have the heart to really interact and know that you're doing something special. And that's not the same as working for Amazon or Dunkin Donuts or someplace else. And nothing wrong with those jobs in those companies but it's a whole different situation. And again we've got the right team members we can't live up to the service that we promised family.

Diane: [00:32:09] Sure. Well you must be doing something right. Because I was asking different people, "How long have you been employed?" And, you know, people were saying 12 years, and eight years. So you have people here and that's so important to residents as well. Right?

Brenda Bacon: [00:32:24] Yes. That continuity. Yeah. There are part of their family. They truly are.

Diane: [00:32:30] And you know, we were talking, they tell an employee things that they might not have told their own children.

Brenda Bacon: [00:32:39] They do.

[00:32:39] And it's amazing.

Brenda Bacon: [00:32:42] It is amazing.

Diane: [00:32:42] They feel comfortable.

Brenda Bacon: [00:32:44] They do. And that's a help. The families become part of our family, too. Often families are here, they'll have meals with their parents.

Diane: [00:32:57] Oh, that's great!

Brenda Bacon: [00:32:57] Yeah. they'll hang out. They'll go To a movie. Because what happens now is that they don't feel obligated, like I've gotta go take mom to the doctor, I've gotta go see how she's doing. I've got to make sure she's taking her medicine. I'm worried. She's not happy.

Diane: [00:33:10] Right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:33:11] So, that makes it an unhappy kind of situation. Now you come, you can visit mom, and you have that mom and daughter or son and daughter relationship again, where you're having a meal together or you're laughing, or she said you can't believe what happened yesterday, when we did such and such a thing.

[00:33:29] Well, how long has it been since you heard your mother say that?

Diane: [00:33:32] You're right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:33:32] And so then it becomes a pleasure to come and visit your parent, rather than a task you have to do.

Diane: [00:33:41] Right. I always say to people, you forget what it's like to be that daughter, that son. You know you've been that caregiver or "Mom you have to do this." You know when we had Dr. Lena Aldana on, she was saying she'll get a daughter and a mom coming in, and the daughter's saying "You have to do something with Mom! You have to fix her."

Brenda Bacon: [00:34:13] [laughing] Yes. Yes.

[00:34:13] Yeah. And I think of my own parents. They're in their home and, probably about 15 years ago, I tried to get them to move at least closer to me, in a senior community. And they put a deposit on a home, but my father kept saying, "Can I get that money back?. Can I get that money back?" So I knew, the next day, he was going to get that money back. "We're not ready. We're not ready." And I kept saying, they're in a two-family home. And my grandparents used to live downstairs and they lived upstairs. And now they moved downstairs and they live upstairs for when the kids come visiting. But they still have stairs and they have to go into the basement. And transportation becomes an issue. And food shopping. Taking care of a home. And my father, like many people his age, he wants to do everything himself. And he'll say, I have to cut the lawn. Don't take that away from me, because that's how I get my exercise. And I could still drive. And there's all these are things we worry about.

Brenda Bacon: [00:35:23] So we worry, and it's right for us to worry. But if you're 85, you should still be able to make your own choices.

[00:35:36] You know, having your children tell you what you can eat and you can't eat, unless there's something really severe wrong that you can't eat a particular thing... I say to my sister-in-law and brother-in-laws and to my husband, all of the time. My mother-in-law will be 90 in November. She can eat what she wants. OK. So saying that's not healthy. You really should eat, this, and this, and that... We should be so lucky to live till we're 90. And I think she'll live another 10 years or more.

[00:36:13] And so, I'm not so much concerned about that. I am concerned about her safety, as you are, with your parents.

[00:36:20] So cutting the lawn and stuff like is probably not the safest thing. But that has to be replaced with something. You can't just say, we're going to take away everything that you do and all your choices and you're going to go sit and reminisce with old people for the rest of your life, that's the rest of your life.

[00:36:42] And so what we do is something that is very different, and that is hopefully, and I'm not saying that people raised their hands and say you know I'm ready for Assisted Living, but again an issue where we have to do a better job with that.

[00:36:57] But. They have to be able to see a future that isn't just sitting around waiting to die.

Diane: [00:37:04] Yes. Exactly.

Brenda Bacon: [00:37:04] We have to have a reason to get up every morning and look forward to

the day. And our residents are up and dressed and makeup on. And they haven't worn makeup in years. And they are choosing what they're going to do. And they're interacting with people. So if you're in a community that has 100 people, you still have your own suite. Your own private bathroom. Your decisions about how much time you going to spend interacting with people how much you spend, just in your room watching you know MSNBC or Fox News, or one of the stories, or whatever you like.

[00:37:42] But you've got to be able to make those choices. And when you walk out, if there is a hundred people are out there, you're not going to be best friends with everybody. But there are going to be five or six people that you kinda like.

Diane: [00:37:55] Right. Exactly.

Brenda Bacon: [00:37:57] You know... and that you can laugh with. And you have some current or past interests that are in common. And it's really good to be able to open the door and just walk down the hall, and you know, grab your friend, have dinner with them. Nobody likes to eat alone.

[00:38:15] You know, that's another thing, with our parents, they don't eat regularly. They don't want to cook just for one person.

Diane: [00:38:23] You're right. They don't.

[00:38:24] They've been cooking for family all their lives and it seems like a waste for one person. So, they're not eating. But now, mealtime is like our most social... well, that and Happy Hour! [laughing]

[00:38:34] Happy Hour 's really the hit of the day. [laughing]

Diane: [00:38:41] I think that that's great! It's gotta be a crowded room. And everybody's socializing.

Brenda Bacon: [00:38:51] Yep. For Residents and Family Members.

Diane: [00:38:52] So that's wonderful. And family members can come and visit at any time?

Brenda Bacon: [00:38:57] Absolutely. This Is their parents home. So as they, I mean clearly the doors are locked at 8 o'clock and we have to let them in because we don't want people wandering in, so we have that kind of protection. But, this is your mom's home. And so you should be able to come visit your mom anytime you want.

Diane: [00:39:15] Right.

Brenda Bacon: [00:39:17] And that's our philosophy. There aren't certain times. The more families that are in the building the better.

Diane: [00:39:25] Yeah I think that's great.

[00:39:30] Brenda. How can families find Brandywine Living.

Brenda Bacon: [00:39:35] We have a toll free number that they can call. They can go on the Internet and find us. If they drive past a Brandywine, there 29 of them in six states, they can just walk in. The 800 number is 1-8-7-7-4 Brandy. And we answer 24 hours a day.

Diane: [00:39:59] Thank you so much for being on Parents Are Hard To Raise. We appreciate it and... you did great!

Brenda Bacon: [00:40:07] Well, thank you. It was a lot of fun. And I'm going to buy one of the lipstick things.

[00:40:15] As an executive woman, I travel a lot, all over the place. And I need this!

Diane: [00:40:23] And I've seen that. I've witnessed that. And we do want to thank Lipstick Bodyguard. They are a great sponsor and a great product.

Brenda Bacon: [00:40:31] Wonderful.

Diane: [00:40:32] I hope you got something out of this episode. I know I did. I love getting your emails and questions. You can reach me at [Diane@ParentsAreHardToRaise dot org](mailto:Diane@ParentsAreHardToRaise.org). Or just click the green button on our home page.

[00:40:45] Remember, aside from old time radio there's tons of ways to listen to our show. Subscribe to our show on iHeart Radio. Listen through Roku. Spotify. iPhone users can subscribe an Apple podcast. Android users on Google podcasts. Tell Alexa you want to listen to the show.

[00:41:02] Please show someone how to find our show. And if you like the show, give us a five star rating, that will help other people find our show.

[00:41:10] Parents Are Hard To Raise CounterThink Media production. The music used in this broadcast was managed by Cosmo Music, New York, New York.

[00:41:19] Our New York Producer is Joshua Green. Our Broadcast engineer is Well Gambino. And from our London studios, the melodic voice of our announcer, "Miss Dolly D."

[00:41:27] 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.

[00:41:36] See you again next week!