greenPROFIT

Kiss My Aster

3/31/2026

Adulting

Amanda Thomsen



Last summer, I read something along the lines of “You’re the kind of person that would rather hire teens and teach them everything than hire an adult and have to deal with what they already know, good or bad,” and it made me utter a deep, guttural sigh.

I saw myself deeply in that remark and I didn’t really like it. So I dug around in my brain to try and make the connections as to “why” I felt that way until I made it make sense. Why have I been so adultphobic?

Then I set out to hire a grownup for the shop because if I’m being honest, it isn’t always me. I’ve been bogged down at my desk to a scary degree. I’m also a little bit lonely and I need someone to lean on while we’re growing like Houttuynia cordata in a wet spot. Also, I think I’ve just hit the limit in how many price stickers I can print. I just can’t do it anymore.

So now the shop has a new manager. I know this is kid stuff for all of you, but it must be a little humorous to watch me struggle. Becky has been a day one customer and is wildly, WILDLY overqualified (but ain’t that just the way when we hire local moms and offer total flexibility so they can be blocks away from their kids in case hullabaloo goes down?). Becky is now the boss and I’m the owner. Becky can manage me because I’m real, real tired of managing myself.

So far, the biggest issue is my self-esteem. I momentarily had some extra free time since she’s taken over a lot of the day-to-day admin stuff. I got really down on myself about how fast she does things, especially when it’s her first time doing it. I was a little storm cloud about it for two days before I figured out that OF COURSE she does things faster! She isn’t interrupted every four minutes like I am when I try to do absolutely anything. Now my time is filling back up with other things that need to be done and she’s stuck at the desk printing 3000000 price stickers and thinking it’s pretty cool.
Becky has already caught me giving out her card when people are asking for donations or telling someone on the phone that I’m her: “Um yeah, just ask for BECKY.” Me, at every opportunity: “Would you like to speak with the manager?” because the owner is boggled and wants to be pouring Diet Coke down her gullet in the back room.

More than a year ago, I had an infuriating, but wholly accurate, conversation with Tyler pinpointing that HE doesn’t want to be in charge, but he didn’t want anyone else in charge, either.

I said, “If I hire an adult to manage us, you’re going to make her life miserable, aren’t you?” and he giggled and said “Absolutely I will.” So when the idea of hiring Becky, who he already knew and liked, came to me in a dream, I knew I’d outsmarted him. And so far, he’s given just a little pushback, but it’s been pretty smooth sailing.

In fact, I had him do her new hire training while I was out of town so he’d be forced to take some ownership in the situation. Admittedly, it wasn’t the nicest position to put Becky in, but she knows the whole story and, heck, she truly is an adult.

I love, love, love my young staff and they are SUPER good at what they do … but when it’s just Becky and me rocking the shop it’s a whole other level in here. I love it. I know the customers love the kids, but they seem to really appreciate the all-adult Sundays, too. Maybe we should have grown up sooner? **GP**

Amanda Thomsen is a funky, punky garden writer and author with her own store, Aster Gardens in Lemont, Illinois. Her store info is at KissMyAster.com, and you can follow her on Facebook, Twitter, Threads AND Instagram @KissMyAster.