

Teach your child to read??

I was listening to the radio in the car and I heard a commercial for a reading program for kids. It sounded like you sat the kid (under 5) in front of the TV and turned on a video. The 'mother' was happy that she didn't have to do any work!!!

While I'm all for getting kids to read early in life, I am totally against sitting the kid in front of the TV to have them learn? What ever happened to reading to your children? What ever happened to children reading to their parents? I remember reading many stories to my girls. We read almost every day, from Dr Seuss to the Narnia series. Did it help? I can only say that the girls all like to read.

If I hear the commercial again, I will try to post a link. I want to make sure what I hear was correct.

Countdown to Saturday

My youngest is heading off to College this Saturday. This week we are getting things together to make sure she has everything she needs to start the new year.

My daughter needs some special equipment for her college career. The non-special equipment/clothing became special because my daughter is small. The small/petite scrubs have to be hemmed to fit. We went all over the place to find a coverall that even came close to fitting. Rubber boots, same thing. You may ask what she is going into with scrubs, coveralls and boots. Her chosen field is Vet-Tech. So with the current clothing and equipment it looks like she will spend a

part of the semester in a barn or two. The hoof pick she needed kind of gave that away.

We are also picking up a few things so she can set up house keeping in her new apartment. It is a furnished apartment shared with 3 other young ladies. This is my first daughter to live on campus during college. I may go through some empty nest feelings later, but for now I am just excited for my daughter. More on all of this later in the week.

Grief, a state of mind

In early March of 2004, I was introduced to the terminology 'grief monster'. This was a term used by other widows and widowers to indicate their feelings after loss. Using the words grief monster seemed to indicate a battle needed to be fought with grief. I didn't think that was the case then and I don't think it is the case now.

With a new loss, feelings of grief are again merging with my life. I think that the feelings of grief are there for a reason. Grief is a coping mechanism. While grief isn't a comfortable feeling, it should be welcomed. We need time to deal with sadness and loss.

The intensity and duration of our feelings of grief indicate where we are in our grief journey. Since people are different, the length and duration of our journeys are also different. The only way we know how far we've come is to look at how we feel grief.

In these difficult times of loss, I've seen grief as a friend. Not always a friend I want around, but as a needed friend. Tears, anger, frustration are all tools to handle our loss. To

fight these feelings, as if fighting a monster, would be counterproductive to help they can bring.

Grief can and will come at unexpected times. These times may be inconvenient or embarrassing, but they need to be accepted. As an adult male, I have been taught to harness my feelings. I found that after my wife's death, I no longer do this. If tears are needed, tears will be shed. I no longer shy away from my emotions. It has helped with my healing.

There has been new loss in my life. Another grief journey has begun. The road is the same, but different. It is a journey not taken alone, but with the help of others.

A journey begins with one step; a good journey begins with one step reaching for another's hand.

To guide thoughts

Today I started something on this computer that would allow me to channel my thoughts in a more productive way. You see, with everything going on in my life I needed something to prevent me from going down a dark path. In any event, I decided to try using speech recognition on my computer. Instead of typing this post, I decided to dictate it.

This actually takes a great deal more concentration my usual typing. When I am typing, I am able to correct words as I type. With speech recognition, corrections are made after the sentence is finished.

The tutorial suggests that the speech recognition will learn my voice the more I speak to it. As far as I can tell, the

best part about this is that spelling is usually perfect.
(unless I mispronounce the word ☐)

So thank you for letting me get a little negative energy out.

Unfortunately, I had to use wordpad to dictate my post.

What next?

This may be a difficult post to read. It was certainly hard to write.

No happy or witty sayings in this post. This is a story of life, death, mourning and maybe life again.

At the beginning of this year many wonderful things were in the making. My 3rd daughter had her wedding scheduled for June. My fourth daughter was to graduate High School. Those two events happened as planned.

Also occurring early in the year, my two oldest daughters told me they were expecting new arrivals. The oldest was due in September, my second daughter due in November. Expanding of family going full force this year. I was really looking forward to visiting my new grandchildren.

The first bad news came when my 2nd daughter had a miscarriage. I was unable to fly down to Florida and be with her. I am very glad she has a wonderful network of support with her. At that time, I had a countdown to the impending birth on my blog. I quietly removed that and all other mention of that news from my blog. This was news I didn't feel like sharing with the rest of the world. Stick with the good news. Too much bad news news in the world.

Last Thursday brought news that my oldest daughter lost her baby too. Much farther along, she had only a month before the due date. I quietly removed the countdown that that impending birth, and wrote a quick cryptic post. The mind was not working well enough to post anything else. I could write about the cause, but I will let [this site](#) handle that. I just needed to get these words out.

I spent the past few days with my oldest, at the hospital and her house. There were many tears flowing. Hugs given and received. While the words were not initially spoken, we were worried about my oldest daughter's life too. She had a serious medical condition that could have take her as well. In this we were fortunate. Physically she is recovering well. The emotional and spiritual recovery will take more time for all of us.

I did say something about life again didn't I. There is a little bright spot in all of this. I've written a few posts about my daughter's friends. These are people I consider to be my friends also. Our ages and backgrounds vary widely, but they are true friends. People who will be there for my daughter and son-in-law. My children came home to a clean house, because someone thought this would be a good thing to do. They didn't ask, they acted. The bedroom for the newborn was in the final stages of finishing, but the door was off the hinges. It was put back in place and closed. Friends and family will supply food, companionship, or solitude when needed or wanted. Can we ever ask for more?

Through all of this, I've had many old wounds opened again. I keep wondering if each new death will bring back the memories of others. Faces I've not seen in years, faces I never saw, came into my thoughts and dreams. The past and future molds into one. The laugh of a child not heard may be one of the saddest moments in life.

and the bottom drops out

Semi cryptic post here, I'm not ready to write about it, if ever. Just to say some changes are very, very bad. I may not be posting for some time. Take care folks.

Things change

Well moving days are coming up. Yes, I did say moving days. There will be at least two of them.

The first will be next week at work. We are moving to a new building, and we are scheduled to move as soon as it passes inspection. That should occur this week. A little farther to drive, but it should be a nicer work environment. We will see how that goes. Good news, no students in the halls. Bad news, the way the cubicles are set up, my back will face the entrance. I never did like having my back to the door.

Then at the end of the month, my youngest heads off to college. That may take a trip or two depending on how much she needs to move into her college room. When I went to school, I was able to fit everything I needed into the back of a Chevy Chevette, I have a truck now, and I still wonder how many trips I will need to take.

At this point in time, I guess I should be feeling a bit of the 'empty nest' syndrome. I'm not sure I will in the same way other parents do. The whole point in my parenting was to get my children ready for the world. It is time for this one to

spread her wings and see how she flies. A bit of anxiety, sure, but I'm ready to let her try more on her own.

There is another part of the empty nest that I really never expected when I first thought of this some 10 years ago when the first daughter spread her wings. I have the nest to myself. The question I really need to ask is "How will I spread my wings?" For more than a quarter of a century (over 1/2 my life) I've been a parent. For most of that time I've been a husband and then a widower. Before that I was in my childhood. What am I going to do with the time I will have for myself? What will I be when I grow up? ☐

Life is all about the change...

Hello. How are you? It's been a while.

I haven't really been in a mood to write anything recently.

I've been reading the comics again, and once again [Funky Winkerbean](#) has me thinking.

The current story line has a character return after being presumed dead. His 'widow' in the story has remarried and lived with the thought of him being gone forever.

I'm not sure how the story will sort out, but the concept of it bothers me a little bit. As I've said before, the author of this comic does not shy away from touchy subjects, and this is no exception. What would this do to family, friends and others when a person they know to be dead, comes back to life?

On a material note... Do you have to pay back any insurance,

Soc. Sec. benefits, and other things only received on one's death?

On an emotional note... What happens to the new people in the lives of loved ones? People grow and change over time and generally change together when their lives are shared. People who are apart change in different ways. Rough go.

And on others... There is another family that lost a loved one in this strip. Are they overcome with envy when they see someone else come back from the dead, and not their lost love?

And this is only a daily comic in the newspapers. Deep thoughts for the funny pages.

As a widower, there were many (are many?) times that I wish my dear wife could come back, but I know that this is only a wish. As in the song "One More Day" by Diamond Rio, we keep wishing for that one extra day, but what happens if we actually get it?

4,934 vs 1,321

No, that isn't the score of some sporting event. That is the count of my spam comments vs. my accepted comments (as of 11:17 pm on Jul 22 2009). A spam count of 5,284 would be 4x. I'm glad the new filter is in place, and I don't have to delete all the spam by hand anymore.

For a while, I was wondering if I was actually blocking good comments with the vast number of spam messages that are received in a day. I did notice that I am getting a lot of 'over seas' visitors to my little blog. Some are actually visiting, some just go to the same posts over and over again.

Kind of messes up with my keeping track of what is interesting to people.

Don't worry about me, I'm just on a numbers kick this evening. This is the second time today I was having fun with numbers.

Remind me again, why do I like computers?

I had to re-install windows on my laptop today. Now I have to make sure that everything that should be working is. Then there are some other programs I use that will need to be re-installed. This machine is getting older, so I may have to shop for a new hard drive soon. Seems like there are more 'bad' sections recently. I'm glad I backup my data files with some regularity. I would hate to lose pictures of my kids, grandkids, weddings, and other fun occasions.

The bigger problem is the small fact that I have a lot of computers in this house. It seems like I was re-installing some operating system just last week. Oh, I was, it was on my 'play' machines where I keep installing different versions of Linux.

I have noticed one thing, my touch pad seems to be a bit more sensitive. I keep having my cursor jump all around the screen as I type this. I've had to go back and correct mistakes as the cursor jumps to places earlier in this post. I need to check that out too. Grumble...

Oh well, I got the sound to work again.... Now if I can just find my CD with 100 card games on it... ☐