

Thinking of raw fish and family

I got to sit down and enjoy some sushi with my oldest daughter and her husband last weekend. It was part of a great weekend. But this is about the raw fish.

Many years ago, when my oldest was the only child, our little family would go to a Japanese restaurant at least 1 time per month. It was there I first tried Sushi with my wife. As we grew to know the owners, they would let our little girl play with their daughter if the restaurant wasn't that busy. I'm not sure what they fed her, but she was fed, and it never turned up on our bill. I'm wondering if she didn't have sushi way back then. Unfortunately, that little Japanese restaurant closed, and there was not another place to get Sushi in the area for many years. We moved to the country and our choice were cut back even further. I went without sushi for a long time. While Japanese food was one of my wife's favorites, the raw fish wasn't on her top ten. I never pushed the matter, since there is other excellent food that we both enjoyed.

Fast forward a few years, and we are celebrating my oldest's birthday. As was our custom, the birthday celebrant got to choose the restaurant. The younger sisters were not thrilled with the choice of restaurants, but the father was. I got to experience Sushi again. It seemed so much better than the last time I had it. Had my tastes changed, or was the preparation better? Or had time just dulled my memory? I'm not sure, but since that day, I've held Sushi as a special treat when having a meal.

As with the first time, and all other times I've had Sushi, the meal is more than just a time to eat food. Sushi seems to be a shared experience more than most meals. You try some of this, and a little of that. You find things you really enjoy

and then some thing you may not care for as much. As time goes by, you learn what you like, and skip things you don't. But it seems there is always room for something you don't remember having before.

Different places serve different things. Sushi, like most dishes, varies from place to place. More than that it seems to vary from visit to visit more than most foods. Is it the freshness of the fish? The time of year it was caught? The way it was cut? I'm not sure what influences all of the variance but it seems real to me.

And finally it is sharing with family. Most of my daughters will still make a face or two if we invite them for sushi. They either don't like fish at all, or would prefer it warm. ☐ But with my eldest and her husband, the experience is one I enjoy. Good natured fighting over that last bit of eel. Who took the most ginger? Trying to get my daughter to try the spicy roll. And, for some reason, always wanting just one more piece.

Family, friends, food and sharing these things make life a joy.

One more time around please.

When I see the huge structures of steel or wood, my heart fills with anticipation. The thrill of a Roller Coaster makes me feel years younger. But then my body starts to react in ways it never used to. A queasy feeling enters. I think to myself, that it is only in my head, but more often than not, my stomach shows me who is boss.

The funny thing is that this doesn't usually start on the

large coasters. The ones that send the stomach turning are the little ones. It all started with the carnival type rides. The ones that go in circles multiple times. They never fail to turn the motion sickness on.

Even with some medication, the queasy feeling was felt. Not as bad as some times, but the day would need some pacing. But without a line to wait in, pacing was only the distance between two rides. So, I had to sit out a couple of rides. Even with that, I had more rides on roller coasters than I've had in a long, long time.

4 times on the Beast

I think 4 on the Diamondback, but it may have been 3.

1 each on the Racer, Vortex and the Backlot Stunt Coaster. I think I also road the Adventure Express if that was the one with the lame ending. That is a lot of coaster riding in 8 hours (9 hours VIP with 1 hour for lunch). Not to mention 4 times on the White Water canyon ride, once each on Congo Falls and a shoot the rapids ride and bumper cars.

During a normal day at a theme park you can expect to hit 7 or 8 coasters in a 10 to 12 hour day. More if the lines are shorter. I road 11 or 12 times, my tangent's friends road on a few more coasters than I did. As I said, I needed a break every now and again.

Tour of the Beast was just great and so was the show we caught. I can't say much about the lunch, since I was in no mood to eat.

All of this was great and I would have said it ranks right near the top of my theme park excursions, but there was more. I spent some time with some wonderful people, and that made the two days in Cincinnati grand.

A day was remembered

and celebrated in my heart.

A 7th birthday came and went without you being here to celebrate it with us. We have spread apart a bit this little family of ours. 3 not much more than an hour away, one more than 18 hours away (at least by car). And I know you were missed.

On your birthday, I had to take your dog to the vet. He needed some care, and would be in observation for two days. I had taken him in for a checkup the week before, making sure all of his shots were up to date. He was scheduled for a couple of days in a puppy vacation. I had scheduled time with some friends and he would have been in good hands. But then I got the news he needed some medical care. I was at a in a bit of a quandary. Should I go on my trip while he was at the vets, or take that time to be around for him.

Unless the unfortunate happened, I would not be seeing the little guy for two days. Unlike hospitals, there are no visiting hours at the vets office. My being around would not help him at all, so I decided (with a bit of a heavy heart) to go on my trip. I'm glad I did.

On your birthday, I went to the Cincinnati Zoo with some friends. Unfortunately, you never knew them, and they never knew you. I think you would have liked them. It was a good day.

As I wandered around the zoo, I did wonder about the changes that were made. Some of the exhibits were exactly like I remembered them. Others seemed very new to me. Since this was not a zoo we visited often, I imagine most things were new. It

has been a few years since my last trip there. We were still pushing a stroller or two around the last time. I'm sure the manatees were not there on our last visit. I seem to remember more elephants, but I could be thinking of another zoo. I think you would have remembered that. A couple of red pandas (one of your favorite animals) were doing what they do best, sleeping in trees. Just like almost every other time we saw them.

We did spend a full day at the zoo, but like all of our trips, we never seemed to have time for the entire zoo. Extra time spent at this animal, or another seemed to slow down the pace. But then again, what sort of pace should there be at a zoo. If we can't take the time to learn, observe and wonder about animals we share this planet with, why would we care if the places they live are there in the future. That was the lesson we tried to teach our children, so that they could teach theirs.

Again, it was a day well spent, but I wish you could have been there. Miss you still.

Moving Day...

I rented a BIG truck today. I then went to the Froggy's house and help load up things into a van, a couple of pick-ups and The BIG truck. With this thing and that thing happening, the move didn't start as early as we would have liked. It got hot, very hot. The vehicles were loaded up and we left B-town at around 1:45.

BIG truck liked to BOUNCE. I'm not sure if I would have been sore with just moving stuff, but I was sore after driving that BIG truck. It actually handled well, but it bounce me up and

down in the seat for the entire trip to T-town.

At 2:45 we were emptying the vans and pick-ups. We had more help on the unloading end, so it went much faster. We took most of the stuff for storage. That was another adventure that I may write about when I have a bit more energy.

I'm still wondering why today reminded me of George Carlin... The link is not really kid friendly, it is George Carlin on stage...

<https://youtube.com/embed/MvgN5gCuLac>

I don't know your pain.

Sometimes I get inspiration from my little posts on facebook. Sometimes I get inspiration for little posts on facebook from my blog. This is a bit of both.

A blog post with the above title was started on the 20th of May. Five days later, I think the original thoughts are finally gelling. All from a facebook post I made yesterday.

I don't know your pain. I only know my own. I can, however, listen when you need it, advise when you want it, and care for you always, because I call you friend.

There it is. The original idea behind this was that I have a number of friends going through some difficult times right now. I was able to listen to their description of pain and sorrow. I offered a bit of advice when asked. And through it all I think I became a better person.

It takes a lot to try to ignore or temper your own sorrows

when dealing with the problems of others. Your problems, sorrows, worries are of the utmost importance to you. Nothing can be bigger or more intense than the situation you are in. These are your feelings and are rightfully justified.

That being said, if a person shares their situation with you, their problems are going to be bigger than yours, at least in their eyes. To be a truly caring individual, you need to look past your problems and listen to what your friend needs to share. There are times when this cannot be done. In those times, you should beg the others indulgence and say you are at best willing to listen, but advice would not be the best from you right now. Good friends will be able to understand this. There is never a good time to be in a war of who has the worse problems.

And through all of this, maybe you will be able to see that other peoples problems can be bigger and even more intense than your own. Then we come to true understanding of the people we share our lives with.

And that leads me to one of my favorite movie quotes. From the movie "Harvey":

Elwood P. Dowd: Harvey and I sit in the bars... have a drink or two... play the juke box. And soon the faces of all the other people they turn toward mine and they smile. And they're saying, "We don't know your name, mister, but you're a very nice fella." Harvey and I warm ourselves in all these golden moments. We've entered as strangers – soon we have friends. And they come over... and they sit with us... and they drink with us... and they talk to us. They tell about the big terrible things they've done and the big wonderful things they'll do. Their hopes, and their regrets, and their loves, and their hates. All very large, because nobody ever brings anything small into a bar. And then I introduce them to Harvey... and he's bigger and grander than anything they offer me. And when they leave, they leave impressed. The same people seldom come

back; but that's envy, my dear. There's a little bit of envy in the best of us.

The 5th of May...

And I didn't go to a Mexican Restaurant. Other plans (thanks C and L) prevented my normal trek to a Mexican Restaurant today. I had Greek Food. No flaming Goat Cheese, but it was very good. Not that I would have wanted to go to a Mexican place without at least one of my daughters, but in a way I missed the trek.

When plans were made, I didn't even think that the 5th of May was in the near future. I'm not sure that would have changed anything. I really want to try the flaming Goat Cheese.

Oh the memories of dining out on Cinco de Mayo. I don't think we missed many. If we could not afford to go out, most of the time we celebrated at home. Why such a big deal about a Mexican-American Holiday? ([not really celebrated much in Mexico](#)) The only reason we had was it was another excuse for eating Mexican food. Not that this family ever needed an excuse. My dear wife's favorite kind of food was Mexican (*other than chocolate), and we went to Mexican restaurants often. And it did help that the girls never really would mind another meal of Tacos.

So today I had Greek food. I was able to share the company of two very good friends. Nice evening, even without the Flaming Goat Cheese. Other than dinner with my daughters, I could not think of a better way to spend the early evening.

Ah, how things change.

I'm still wondering why we never went to Oriental Restaurants to celebrate Chinese New Years. Could it be that somewhere near the time of that date, we were almost sure to go to a Chinese restaurant? Yep, my birthday is near that day every year, and my favorite food is Chinese food (even better than Chocolate!!)

And why do I keep using the extended title of "Flaming Goat Cheese" for the dish Saganaki? Just because it is more fun to type and say. ☐

Ahhh the end of a long day

I got up early this morning when I didn't have to. The dog decide to bark at something, he usually sleeps in late. But I got up and around, checked my email, the news and my blog. Not much happened since last evening on the blog, so I went to get some other things done. I come back in 1/2 hour and the site is blocked. Good April Fools prank, but I couldn't find the back door. Oh well, I had things to do.

Laundry check, dishes check. Pick up daughter, oops she was still in Fort Wayne. Check

Movie with friends Check. All told a very good evening.

Tomorrow I'll may write about my new toy. But I may be busy with it instead.

More Maple Goodness

Another year gone, and the Williams County Maple Syrup day is over. We ate more pancakes, sausage and real fresh from the tree maple syrup. I'm still not sure when we started doing this, but as ia family we've been doing it for years. Another ride out to the sugar shack, where they make the syrup and tap the trees. The family seemed to enjoy themselves.

This year additional family friends showed up. My children went off on there own to be with their friends. I had many pancakes, sausages and cups of coffee. Yum. Of course I purchased some syrup to have the rest of the year and some maple sugar candy to have a bit later.

This day of course reminds me of days gone by. We spent many days like this with family and friends. It was a time to celebrate good food, good friends and good family. These days, from maple syrup days to days at the fair, were days to bask in our lives together. The family we had, the friends we made were the good things in life.

And who says there is nothing going on in the boondocks. ☐

Just Lucky I guess?

Today was a day to realize that I have a wonderful family, very good friends and life, while not perfect, isn't too bad.

Over the years, I've had quite a few rough times. Some worse than others, but most of them were "the worst that could happen" when they occurred. During all of those times, I've been lucky to have a wonderful safety net. That net included

the above mentioned people.

So on this St Patty's Day, I leave those in my safety net this thought.

May you have warm words on a cold evening, A full moon on a dark night, And the road downhill all the way to your door.

Second try...

I know they say that the 3rd time is the charm, but tonight is only my second try. I hope that the gamers will be as ready to play as I am to run this little campaign.

I have been thinking about the many years that I've been away from actually running a role playing game. The rules have changed, the characters have changed, but the game has really stayed the same. It is all about the story and how the players (characters) interact with that story.

That being the case, will my recent years on stage allow me to tell a better story? Will my years of telling stories to my children allow be to tell a better story? I think I may know the answer..

Back in college, I was really into D&D, a friend talked me into being on stage. I was so nervous that I got physically sick after every performance. I vowed never to go on stage again. Some time between then and 1996/97 things changed. I got a job and a family. The pressure of the job actually gave me the confidence to get up in front of people to give them my ideas. My life and my family depended on me being able to do this, so I did it. The pressure of my family, made me realize that some things were much more important than some feelings

of slight humiliation. The family allowed me to be me in all situations. So in 1996/1997 I tried the stage one more time. I must have enjoyed it since I've been doing it every year since then...

Now back to gaming. I am now a much more confident person than I was in the early 80's into the 90's. I'm not afraid of making a fool of myself. I know I can tell a story or two. My gut feeling is that I will be able to run the game better than I did before. Should be fun.