

Official?

Well, I saw it on facebook. Doesn't that make it true? OK, you don't believe that line, good. Not every thing you see on Facebook is true or, real. Same goes for most of the Internet. I like to make sure I let people know important things face to face or at least on the phone.

Important news should be delivered to those it affects. As you go farther from the center the news does not need to be direct, but where and when does Facebook become an acceptable way of spreading the news.

I've delivered some important news to those that needed to know. After that the news was placed on Facebook. Yes, I guess that made it official. I never thought that I would be placing important information on any social network. I never dreamt of putting it in this type of information in my blog.

I guess important news can be shared in this type of format if that is the only way it can be shared.

I just noticed that I spent a good portion of this post writing about important news. I have shared that news (slightly) in an earlier post, but in my own obtuse way. People who know me, knew what I was talking about. I guess I should, at some point, I should state this in a bit more extensive format. Then again, I won't be doing that now.

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Bathing a dog

If you've met Colin, my little corgi, you will know that he can be a grumpy little dog. He is older and set in his ways. If he doesn't like it, he will grump, growl and grumble until you are done. I was sure that would be the ordeal I would face when I gave him a bath this morning. He has been shedding a lot during this last hot spell, so I thought getting his undercoat cleaned up and thatched would help him be a little cooler. And of course I wanted him neat and clean when he goes on his vacation this week.

Well I was a bit surprised after I got him wet. He grumbled on his way there, he grumbled as the water ran, but when I started scrubbing him down, he just relaxed. I think getting all that fur wet helped cool the little guy down. After the bath was finished, I was 'allowed' to give him a good brushing. He even rolled over and got a good belly rub. That hasn't happened in a few years or more. "Check Paws" or "Rub the belly" were commands used to have him roll on his back. The thought was to make it easier for general grooming. After my dear wife died, those commands seemed to mean hide behind the couch. Today, rub the belly got the expected result. Hmm, maybe he needs more bath, or not...

All said and done, it was a good way to start my day.

Packing for a trip...

I'm almost ready to go on a vacation. I've done as much laundry as possible. I have things ready to go. A few odds and ends to take care of, but I guess I'm ready.

Of course it won't be a good trip unless I forget something. For some reason I always forget an item or two, but that makes the trip right. It has happened for almost every trip as long as I can remember planning them. It adds to the excitement and adventure.

In just a few short days, I will be holding my newest granddaughter. I will be showering the other grandkids with hugs and love. I get to spend time with the family I see the least. That sounds like a good time doesn't it?

And yet, as with most of these trips, there is a little darkness in a corner. There are those I leave behind to be missed. There are those who will never experience this greeting of new life and missed family. I will admit that the feelings of joy and happiness out weigh those little gray clouds; the cloud still seem to linger.

I guess that is life. Ever moving forward, and onward. Only momentary glimpses into the past. Dwelling on past events and futures that might or could have been are left for other times. Looking forward to good times...

Expanding on a thought

Just a few weeks ago, I wrote about knowing if it is love. One response, and further conversation pushed me to write more on the subject.

I'm really only going to expand on the romantic love. Love of friends, parents, children seems to be easier to define and feel. I will also leave off the agape or spiritual love off this expansion. While that is an interesting subject, it is beyond the scope of my interest at present.

What I was curious about was a very simple statement that you “just knew” you had a true love. While I have most certainly felt that way in the past, I was surprised when what I thought was true love just sort of ended. In my “old” age, I’m a bit more pragmatic. It is love, true love, as long as the people involved keep working at it.

Yes, I did just say work at it. A little bit of work on a relationship goes a very long way. What kind of work? Normally just little things that you would do for someone you care about. Sharing chore duties, without being asked. A neck massage after someone has a hard day. An offer of a cold drink on a hot day. Little things to reaffirm the feelings that you share.

Do you think of your partner first? Does doing something just for them make you feel good? Does your partner consider themselves spoiled, or one of the luckiest people alive? If so, you are well on your way to doing the work needed.

The feelings involved will be many and complex. When two people get together in a romantic love, there should be some physical chemistry. This chemistry can and often does lead to intimate expressions of love. Where this goes beyond lust and falls into love is up for debate, but it does happen. It may be something you “just know”, or you may make a more deliberate decision. I don’t know if I have enough knowledge to speak on that subject as much as it really deserves.

Then there are the feelings of caring. You feel a need or desire for the well being of another. Their health is important to you. When does this occur? Who knows.

One more thing that I think is very important, is a feeling of connection. You feel better with a person. You feel better if you know you will see them in a short time. Knowing that you are being thought of can also raise your spirits. I won’t say it is a completion, I feel that was an overworked phrase from

a common place movie, but more like an extension or addition. You become more, because you work together.

So, I've rambled on a bit. Rehashing thoughts I've written before. More for my benefit than anything else. But I will leave you with another thought. How can you know you are in love, if the feelings and emotions involved are something you've never experienced. I've been there, I know (as far as a person can) what love should and can be. But over the years I've forgotten what it was like not to "know". I based my feelings on my limited experience and what I observed in others. If I had no good examples, if my experience was less than what it was, how could I ever "know". I never really thought about it in that way before. But I guess I'm thinking of it now...

Change happens

The very pulse of our lives is change. It doesn't matter if we want to accept it or not, change will happen in our lives. Some of the change is good, some really isn't good. I think what really matters is how we accept the change when it happens.

We live and we experience birth, growth and death. We have children, parents, friends, lovers come into our lives. Those people often leave our lives too. We change jobs, churches, homes.

I'm sure I wrote something similar in the past, but again, I am experiencing some significant changes in my life. New life was brought into this world in the form of a new granddaughter. I hope to see this new little one very soon. I can not begin to express the joy I feel.

My youngest has graduated from school, moved out and got a job this year. I am both proud and feeling very old that my youngest is old enough to be starting her own life. But wait, I was planning on her being out of the house two years earlier than this, but she decided to go to school instead. Hmm. It is time that this little one spreads her wings to take on the world.

The other two daughters have had some changes in their lives too. This affects their father too. While I can't do everything I would like to for them, they are in my heart always. More to come on this as time passes. They are in the very midst of change.

And finally there are some drastic changes going on with my life. I would have never thought that I would be where I am. In 1984 I never thought that I would be a widower by 2003. I never thought that I would need to build another relationship in my 50s. Change that happened many years ago diverted the path I had planned. I won't say that this path is better or worse than the one planned, but so far it is a good path. I feel more content with life than I have been. I find more comfort in the little things. In fact, you could say I am happy. And the hermit in me has taken a back seat again. Someone special has entered my life, or should I say that we chose to let our lives merge. I must say that I'm looking forward to see what turns this path will take.

I'm not just stopping to smell the roses, I want to count each rose, each petal and each thorn. To do so is to experience all life can give you.

How do you know

How do you know when you have found love and when love has found you?

An interesting question. A very interesting conversation. How do you know when love is so very hard to define. Many people feel like they are in love, only to find that this feeling fades in time. Do we often confuse lust, desire or loneliness with love? Do we confuse our other feelings with love? So it is a difficult question to answer. We really need to pin down what love is.

We know all kinds of love. Some of us "love" certain foods. We love our pets. We love our children. We love our friends. We love our spouses, or any other term you want to use for a romantic love. Except for the food, all of those other loves denote some form of caring or concern for someone or something else. While we feel that animals can return our affections, most think that the love we feel toward our pets is a one way deal. With people the love can be and often is something shared between two people. How that love is expressed or even identified depends on who and how we love.

Now since the original query was relating to a more romantic type love, I will just skim over the other "loves". Love of children, siblings, parents and friends don't always need to be reciprocated. While we like the people we love to return our caring, it is often not essential to our outpouring of love. It is nice to have and does allow for more expression of our love. But we have all seen where someone cares deeply for another, but that caring is not returned. It can change how we feel, but often does not.

With a romantic love, it is almost mandatory that the love be returned. Without that return it is difficult to show, expand and grow in that love. But what is that love? In my very

humble opinion, love is a combination of many different feelings and relationship experiences. Our physical chemistry, our mental compatibility, our communication level, our specific likes and dislikes, and various other conditions that define who we are play into what we think love is. And through this, love grows, changes and becomes defined by the people in a loving relationship. Knowing that it will change is important to remember.

After defining love (at least I hope I did), we can ask how we know if we found love or if love found us. You need to open your heart, emotions and mind to see what you feel. You need to ask and talk to your partner to find out what they think and feel. If compatible, and the two define their relationship as love, then you have found love and love has found you. But, and this is a big but, you must always remember that love changes. People change and the relationship between those two people will change. By keeping the lines of communication open, two people can keep love open and growing. Everything else is really secondary if communication is absent.

Many may ask how in the world I know any of this. I have experienced love in my life, and that love grew and changed for 20 years. I've known feelings that were close to love, but the lines of communication were never really open. I've confused feelings of desire and loneliness with love. I know what love did for me and how it changed my life. I also know that because of the love I shared, I am open and would welcome a new loving relationship. Love made me a better person than I was, and opened my eyes to all two people could be together.

We were better together than we ever could have been apart.

Or to answer the questions posed. When you are you better together than you are apart, you have found love and it found you.

A new adventure

I realize that most of us wake up everyday planning for a new adventure. We make sure that every thing we will need is in it's place and off we go to find a new challenge. Wait a minute, you don't do that? You wake up knowing that your day will be almost a carbon copy of the day before? You aren't looking forward to that daily grind? Life is static?

Do you remember the adventures? Your feelings before they happened? That can't hold me back attitude that a true adventure brings? Think about the feelings of that first day of school. The night before Christmas. The day before a special family trip. The first day at a new job. That drive to get going and tackle anything given to you that day.

We know what the feelings are like, but they don't happen everyday for most of us. I am determined to try to make each day an adventure. New experiences are just waiting for me to find them. And if this old man can find the old drive for a few extra days in the week, that would be something.

So tomorrow I will be off on a new grand adventure. Anyone with me?

Different Directions

As we go through life we have many choices laid out in front of us. Paths to travel, things to see, places to go and people to meet. As we make our choices, the paths, things, places and

people change, move and diverge. Each choice, by its nature, limits the things that will happen in our lives. Because of this, people will often ask "What if?" or "If only I could?". Or to steal from a play I recently saw, "I wish I had..." Paths not taken, roads closed and detours set up.

There are many times in my life that I have played the games of "what if or I wish I had". Normally, when I feel life isn't going in the direction I like, I fall deep into those games.

And of course as we grow and gain experience we play those games to make plans for the future. What if I take this job? If I would put my money here. I think I will buy this thing. These thoughts can lead to comfort. Knowing that you planned for your future. Anticipating coming events. Or they can cause some trepidation. Fear of that Dr. Visit, maybe that big meeting coming up, or even wondering if something will or won't happen.

As with most things in life, these games, the planning are all wonderful if done in moderation. Too much wondering about the past "what ifs" leads us to forget about the present and the future. Too many "If i do this, or I think I wills" can lead us to stagnation contemplating our futures. Not enough of either can lead to an extreme "go with the flow" attitude. Not preparing for the future or learning from the past.

So after all this, here is to reaching that choice in life. Here is to following the path that you choose. Taking some trips back down memory lane, and those trips made while planning for the future. While we live, there is always a new direction to take, just up the road...

no more questions

no more coming back for “just one more thing”.

Yesterday (24/jun/2011) Actor Peter Falk died. I don't normally write about the death of actors, but Peter Falk was one of my favorites. I loved the frumpy detective he played in Columbo and The Cheap Detective or even Murder by Death. His characters were similar, but they all had great depth. A man who seemed to know his craft and he did it well. I think later I will dig out my copy of one of the movies he was in, just to remember. I think I will need to pick up a season or two of Columbo, because there is “just one more thing”...

Life's lessons from children's books

I learned in my young adult life that there was a lot of good things to learn from Children's books. These books have good things to teach children and, if you let them, adults. As you read to a child, make sure you pay attention to all of the things these books have to say.

I enjoyed reading to my girls, but I really enjoyed sitting back and listening while my wife read to each daughter. From the works of various authors we learn that life can be fun, sad, scary and comforting.

Through stories, you learn that you shouldn't touch things that do not belong to you. While in real life the town does not fill up with pasta, things can break and that could hurt someone you care about.

You learn that being polite should be a good habit and not something you need written on your hands. You learn that good friends can have fights and still be friends.

Sometimes bunnies do the wrong things, but they find that their mother still loves them. Yes, I've learned a lot over the years just from reading children's books. More than I can remember, but maybe after some bread and jam, I will try something new.