

Blessed? You bet!

Written by Gayle Nobel

Friday, 20 May 2011 20:17 - Last Updated Friday, 20 May 2011 14:53

Friday is once again, guest blogger day. Thank you Dinah for these beautiful pearls of wisdom.

Last night JJ and I went to a performance by Judy Collins. The double dating couple seated behind us were engaged in constant conversation prior to the show's beginning and all during a lengthy intermission between the opening act and main event. Actually, the conversation was between the two women. I am prone to eavesdropping on such interactions. I apologize for my rudeness and I rationalize that my ADD is at its root. However, a portion of their words gave me pause and today after working with one of my young clients I couldn't keep from ruminating on them. I believe these ladies were discussing the young adult daughter of another acquaintance. A remark was made about the daughter struggling in a class at junior college and some statement to the effect that college level work is rigorous and may have been beyond the girl's capabilities. A paraphrase of the ensuing words would be: "You know, your children are successful. My children are successful. We are blessed to have such successful children."

Their words felt somewhat irritating at first. The woman didn't elaborate on their children's success or successes so I can't really determine what standards or criteria were being considered. I could imagine, though, from their demeanor, apparel and previous conversational topics that their children's success most likely had to do with academic and economic achievements. How fortunate for them. My thoughts immediately skip to the children and parents with whom I've worked over the past 39 years. Oh, my! In the world of developmental disabilities, special education, autism - the standards and criteria for success have expanded beyond the norms. My students, clients, friends and their parents so enrich my life. And their successes are not measured in terms of academic or economic achievement. If there are such equations - if women are blessed because their children are successful - then are women whose children don't attain 'success' fall into an unblessed or non-blessed chasm? Irritating - that premise is irritating, not to mention faulty.

By most societal standards my own three children are marginally successful as adults. Only one of our adult sons holds a conventional job - and it is unconventional from most perspectives. Another son is a professional musician who plays gigs, gives music lessons, thinks deeply. My youngest son forsook a teaching career to nanny (or 'manny' as he calls himself) his niece and nephew. Financial or material success is not much of a consideration for any of them. Remarkably, I feel so blessed to be their mother. If they are happy on their life's journey - how can I not feel blessed.

~~Dinah Ross Jones, Speech Pathologist

Note: Dinah was my son's very first speech therapist 26 years ago! Later on, we ended up having a mutual friend and discovering we live in the same neighborhood. Gotta love life's serendipitous connections.

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