

Understanding Montessori

The Kids Talk Way



Lighten Up
November 22, 2009

Thank goodness for my mother-in-law. Her sense of humor has always been helpful.

Years ago, my in-laws came to stay with the girls, then four and five, for a few days while my husband and I headed off on a company-sponsored trip. This five-day trip was the first time we had been away more than overnight.

Upon our return home, the girls couldn't wait to tell me about their adventure making cookies with grandma.

"We dropped the flour canister," they laughed. "Flour went everywhere. It was all over the floor. It was all over our clothes."

The yellow plastic flour canister held ten pounds of flour, and I had filled it before I left. I gasped as I visualized the kitchen in an explosion of wheat dust.

My youngest daughter continued the saga, directed more to her dad. "Momma would have gotten mad and said the beaver word." She turned and shook her finger at me. "But Grandma just laughed and laughed and put flour on our noses. It was so funny!"

Oops! There it was. The truth as big as an elephant. Standing right there in my kitchen.

Maybe I was taking this "clean house thing" too seriously. Maybe I needed to see the humor in the mishaps. Maybe I needed a few lessons on how to make lemonade when you're handed a lemon.

In my kitchen that day I began to learn that you can take bad luck and turn it into a tragedy or a comedy. Life, no matter how you plan or try, is going to put a few messes in your way, throw you a few curve balls and put you on the sidelines when you want to be out playing the game.

Things aren't always going to go your way. Some folks might say, you're lucky if one thing out of a hundred goes your way.

In retrospect, ten pounds of spilled flour was one of the best things that ever happened to me. The incident allowed me to see myself from my children's point of view. Children truly are our best teachers. My daughters' snapshot of myself forced me to make a conscious effort to be more positive.

Some advantageous adages that I have collected since that day:

- Keep on the sunny side.
- There is a silver lining in every cloud.
- Better to light a candle than curse the darkness.
- Always look at what you have left. Never look at what you have lost.
- Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times.
- Those who wish to sing always find a song.
- There is no sadder sight than a young pessimist.
- Though we all have the seeds of fear and anger within us, we must learn not to water those seeds and instead nourish our positive qualities--those of compassion, understanding and loving kindness.
- Aerodynamically, the bumblebee shouldn't be able to fly; but the bumblebee doesn't know it, so it goes on flying anyway.
- Let's put the "fun" back in dysfunctional.
- Few cases of eye strain have been developed by looking on the bright side of things.
- If you view all the things that happen to you, both good and bad, as opportunities, then you operate out of a higher level of consciousness.
- In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.
- Reflect upon your present blessings, of which every man has many--not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.

These expressions hold wisdom. Listen to your children. They spotlight the truth. Laugh, and when life hands you a lemon, start squeezing. A smidge of flour on the nose might be in order, too.

Thanks, Sug.

Next week: Seek First to Understand, Then Be Understood