

# Can you dance.

I think I will have to admit this video shows someone who can dance better than I do. It doesn't really take a lot.

[Dancing Parrot](#)

I thought I knew how to embed a video, but I can't seem to make it work. Oh well, it is worth the time to click on it.

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## I'm afraid I've been thinking

If the two previous posts weren't enough to give it away, I thought I might just let everyone know. Yes, I've been thinking. A dangerous pastime.

There are a number of things driving the thought processes at this time. My children have either grown up and moved out, or are growing up and moving out soon (youngest is a senior in high school). Out of 4 daughters, number 3 will be getting married very soon (How did I miss that?). A good friend of mine lost his son (about the same age as my oldest daughter). It is spring and review time at work. I'm sure there are a couple of other things that I've misplaced from my brain.

All in all, I've been a bit busy, but today was a slow day. Not a lot planned, but things fell into place. A time for reflective thought. Good, bad or indifferent. Today was a day for thinking. Even the weather was cooperative. Rainy weather is always good for thinking.

And think I did. As far as I can tell, nothing dangerous has

happened yet. □

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## Paths and Traveling

When planning a vacation, you can decide where you want to go and then find the best way to get there. Of course, you may want to get places to stay reserved for the trip. This sometimes makes the trip easier on the nerves.

Or you can one day decide to go on vacation and just drive. When you see something you want to investigate, you can stop and visit. When you get tired, you can find a place to stay. When hungry, you stop and eat. All off the cuff and unplanned. But what happens when there is no place to stay, or anywhere to eat. The whole trip can be easy, but a bit of nervousness when you need a place to stay.

It is much easier today to 'plan' that second style of vacation. With cell phones, computers and GPS units you can make hotel reservations for the end of the day and take off in the direction of your hotel. You can still make unscheduled stops, following a general direction.

But what about a journey where you don't know exactly where you are going? You don't know how you will get there. You do not know the path you need to take. You don't know if you will have a place to rest for the night, or even enough food for the day. Would you want to take that journey?

What would you say if I said you were already on that journey? If you are among the living, you are taking that journey. No matter how well you think your life is mapped out, the path you will take, and the outcome of that journey is all up in the air.

Think back 5, 10 or 15 years. I remember in interviews always being asked where do you expect to be in 5 years. As far as I remember any of the answers, I am not, and never have been where I thought I would be. My priorities changed, life intervened, things happened. Are you where you thought you would be? Is the path you took, the one you had planned?

Where do I want to be in 5 years? What do I want to do in 10? I honestly don't know. I am taking what life gives me right now. I work, I have fun and sometimes I relax. Plans we make can fall by the wayside very quickly. I don't know my path, but I will make it my own. Will there be a place to stay at the end of the day? I certainly hope so. If not, I plan to be resourceful enough to make my own place.

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## Summer Fun At The Movies

While I hopefully will have a jam-packed summer to look forward to, I do plan to see at least a few of the big-budget, popcorn munching, no chance of winning any major awards movies coming soon to a theatre near me.

- [\*X-Men Origins: Wolverine\*](#) (the backstory to arguably, the most popular member of the gang of mutant superheros... opening Friday. If you haven't seen the much publicized copy that surely found its way onto the internet)
- [\*Star Trek\*](#) (the much-hyped reboot of the 43 year old franchise. The trailers look phenomenal... hopefully, as is so often the case, the previews are not the best thing... I'm hoping the delay from Christmas Day to May 8th will be worth the wait))
- *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (the much delayed sixth movie of the seven book franchise. The final book

will be divided into 2 movies. It has been two years since the last cinematic adventure of the students of Hogwarts)

- *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (didn't I tell you that it was a summer of popcorn, senseless movies)
- *Land of the Lost* (Will Farrell in an update of the classic 70s Saturday morning series about dinosaurs)
- *Up* (Pixar's Latest about an old man who hitches his house to a bunch of balloons and up, up, and awaaaaaaaaay he goes. Pixar movies are a must)
- *Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian* (the sequel looks as fun as the original...LOTS)

I probably will not have time to see all of them but will do what I can. I plan to be in one show, help with the realizing of another show, and squeeze in some work this summer. May the summer bring fireworks in the cinemas as well as the sky.

Don't wait. Guarantee your seat before you go and avoid a sold out show. Skip the box office lines and buy movie tickets at [Fandango.com](http://Fandango.com).



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## Even after 5+ years

I've had some good news. I've had some not so good news. I've had some bad news. For 20 years I would go home and discuss the events of the day with my wife. After 5+ years of being widowed, I still miss that time. Talking about the same things with my daughters or friends just doesn't give the same feelings. Funny how some things just hit me.

My logical and analytical side has been thinking about that very thing the past couple of weeks. Deaths, upcoming family

events, things at work have been in the front of my mind recently. Every one of these events would have be part of the evening discussions. What was so special about those discussions? 'Twas a puzzlement, but I did figure some things out.

1) Depth of personal involvement. On top of being Husband and Wife, we were best friends. We just enjoyed being together. Anything we did was better when we were together. Trying times a bit less trying. Good times were always better. We were very compatible.

2) We did not agree on everything. I was logical and thoughtful, she was more emotional and reacted with her feelings. I was often slow to react to things. Discussions with her made me think of things differently. It was sort of an instant 'out of the box' experience. I never had to come up with another way of looking at things, she was there to do for me, and I did it for her. We were complimentary.

3) Depth of feelings and empathy. We knew each other very well. We shared our deepest thoughts and emotions from almost the beginning of our time together. She knew that I would often have a 'delayed' reaction to something. I knew that the reaction she was having could have been triggered by a unrelated event. In some ways we were truly one.

Over the past few years, I've learned to be on my own again. I became comfortable with myself as an individual. Even when some of my friends see me as a appendage to one of my daughters (or the other way around), I am just me. For 20 years it was J and S (... S and J?), now it is justj. The meaning and reason behind my blog-name comes to light, and that is a good a place to stop as any.

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# Bowling Obsessed

For date night this week, our movie options were limited. We are lucky enough to live nearby cheap movie theaters that allow us to go to the movies weekly, so we see almost everything that comes out. Well, everything we have an interest in seeing, anyway. There are movies such as Krank 2 that you couldn't PAY me to see – I would rather just skip the movie altogether – same with the upcoming Star Trek (no offense to you Trekkies – just not my kind of movie!). So this week we were left to choose between Obsessed, a stalker-thriller with Beyonce Knowles and the new boss Charles (who already left) from the Office or a movie called The Soloist, which is about a Julliard-trained musician who ends up homeless because his schizophrenia stands in the way of his success. The Soloist actually seemed to have some substance, but it also seemed like the kind of movie that could wind up being a tear-jerker or just plain boring. So we went with Obsessed, despite its 4.0 rating on imdb.com (which had slipped to a 3.8 as of today – ouch). Obsessed is a movie about a successful business man who had a beautiful wife (Beyonce) and child – essentially the perfect life – until an obsessed temp gets in the picture. This woman is truly psycho, and I really enjoyed watching how she made this poor man's life unravel. The movie wasn't bad until a few clues shed the light on the movie's secret – Beyonce can't act. Add in bad character development and a weak script, and I can definitely see where the 4.0, er, 3.8 came in. There was one line near the end of the movie that was one of the stupidest lines I've ever heard in any movie. I won't spoil it for you, but let's just say that my husband and I got dirty looks for laughing out loud at its absurdity. On top of all of that, the movie was completely predictable – it must have been based upon (copied) every popular stalker movie ever made – The Crush, The Temp, Hand That Rocks the Cradle... Would I recommend it? To the right person, maybe... you have to like

thrillers; so much so that you'd want to see one that is almost a thriller parody. You have to go to this one in a cynical mood, looking for stuff to make fun of – and you won't be disappointed.

After the movie, we decided to mix it up a little and go bowling – something we haven't done in a LONG time (I blame my 4 pregnancies – bowling is NOT a recommended sport for expecting women, and I've been pregnant for about one tenth of my life!) So anyway, for my first game, I'm embarrassed to say that I got a measly 99 – not very good for someone who used to bowl in a weekly league for years. My second game was back on par with a 137 – but I was still surprised at how quickly I got the sore muscles of bowler's fatigue. I guess picking up 10 lbs with three fingers uses muscles that haven't been thought about for years. While I'm happy to report that I wasn't sore at all the next day, I do have to say that my first attempt at bowling as a 30-year-old wasn't pretty. I guess I have to practice, especially if I'm ever going to go ahead and join that league I've been talking about doing for years. I just hope I don't hurt myself too badly.

Out of respect for my wonderful hubby, I will not disclose his bowling scores. Let's just say that he didn't stand a chance against the former high school 'Female Intramural Bowler of the Year'. ☐

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## **You Have Now Entered... THE TWILIGHT ZONE!**

It's unusual for me to blog twice in one day, but hey, today itself has been unusual. First, the swine flu has officially

spread to Chicago. Why does that affect me? Because we were planning a trip there this weekend for my nephew's first birthday party. We were up in the air about going for financial reasons, but we decided to go ahead and do it because we really wanted to. Plus, my grandparents live there, and they are elderly and housebound, so going to Illinois is the only way I can see them and the only way they can see my kids. I hated leaving everyone up in the air until the last minute about our visit (we were waiting to hear about my husband's business deal – no word yet!), so we just decided to bite the bullet and commit to going. So I called my Grandma and my sister yesterday, and I told my daughter and emailed my mom this morning, and everyone is ecstatic. But now I see that this dreaded swine flu has hit Illinois – especially the counties where we are going to be visiting. I don't know how big of a deal this is – I mean, it seems as if it will be here in NW Ohio in no time as well, but I don't know that I want to be the family that brings it! Ok, I shouldn't joke about it. But with 4 little kids, it is an issue that makes me reconsider our decision. I guess all we can do is wait and see where things with this are on Friday or Saturday when we plan to leave. Darn swine flu!

There were a few other weird things that happened today (surprise 99¢ / gallon milk at Walgreens, for one!), but they are just little things, too many and too little to mention. Add them all up, and that's why I'm making a second post of the day. The other major weird event is this – I got a mysterious letter in the mail today, and I have to say, it scared me. I think I've been watching too many stalker movies (blogging about that tomorrow). But this letter had my name on it – just my name, not my husband's name or The \_\_\_\_\_ Family or anything – just MY name. And it seems to be typewritten, not even printed on a computer – *typewritten*. Seeing a letter in a security envelope with your name and address typewritten on it without a return address is enough to give anyone pause, I think – but I am also a paranoid

person. If I had gotten this letter in 2001 during the Anthrax attacks (someone was sending the deadly material Anthrax through the mail, and people were killed), I definitely wouldn't have opened it. So anyway, I opened the mysterious letter I got today, and guess what was inside? A thick green piece of paper that turned out to be blank – weird. Even more strange was that there was a Meijer gift card wrapped in the green paper. An *activated* gift card – the TO and FROM are blank.

So who sent this? Is it a joke? An anonymous good deed? A scary stalker? I just don't know... I do appreciate it, if the generous gifter is reading this, I want you to know that I'm thankful, but I'm also a little bit freaked out. It's just a very strange thing to happen, and I hope to get to the bottom of it, at least so the person can get their deserved "thanks!". If you or someone you know sent it, maybe drop me a hint... I am thoroughly confused!

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## **This Economy Stinks!**

A few weeks ago, we found out that one of our favorite summer activities will not be an option this year. [The Fun Spot Amusement Park](#) in Angola, Indiana will not be opening in 2009. This park was absolutely perfect for a family with kids the ages ours will be this summer: 9, 5, 2, and 1. They have (had) lots of rides for the little ones, as well as zoo animals like tigers, lions, parrots, and deer. They also had a few awesome coasters for Mom and Dad, and we were planning on bringing along a friend or a Manny (man who is a nanny; see some of my previous posts) so we could indulge in some coaster action together, a rarity for us. But alas – Fun Spot is a victim of this bad economy. The message on the home page of

their website says it all: "Due to the Economy, Fun Spot Park and Zoo Will Not Be Open For The 2009 Season".

Where is President Obama? I thought his campaign promises entailed the repairing of the economy? The Fun Spot in Angola was perfect for our family – it was only about 45 minutes away, the price was right – it was only \$56 for our entire family to see the zoo and ride the rides and even the waterslides all day. And that was before using any coupons that were always available (they would even offer good grade discounts that allowed our oldest FREE admission!) Compare these prices to Cedar Point, which is 2 hours away AND would cost our entire family \$128 for one day, not to mention that Cedar Point is much less targeted to young kids – plus Cedar Point has long lines in which to wait, something that wasn't a concern at Fun Spot. I can only hope Fun Spot will re-open in 2010 or at least before my kids grow up – we have some amazing family memories of Fun Spot, and I can only hope there will be more to come!

Adding to my angst about losing Fun Spot, I just found out yesterday that Ball Quest in Defiance, Ohio will not be open this season either. Ball Quest had a mini-golf course, a driving range, and batting cages. We had lots of fun there last summer as well, and it was a place we visited often with friends. We even had some batting cage tokens left over! But the sign on the gate of Ball Quest says, "Not open due to increased taxes. Thank County Commissioner Kime". Ouch – a little bitterness, it seems? Ball Quest was a small family owned business. My friend once showed me the "tea room" they had decorated beautifully in a Victorian motif. I wonder what will happen to gorgeous room and its antique furniture, complete with an antique wooden high chair? I really loved min-golfing at Ball Quest – the course went up a small hill that overlooked beautiful NW Ohio farm fields... and I'm not sure if there are other batting cages nearby! Yet another source of family entertainment – GONE! If they keep going at

this rate, we'll be left with nothing in no time! People complain all the time that families just don't do as much together as they used to and as they should, but if family entertainment keeps getting shut down, that trend will only continue and increase! Here is a picture of my girls having a blast at Fun Spot last year – their baby brother was to be born only two weeks later. It was over 85° that day, and I was physically miserable, but we all still had SO much fun!



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## YAY

I was called by the manager at Goodwill this morning. Starting Friday, I will be working two to three days a week at Goodwill!!!!!! I know this is not going to be a very long blog, but I really do not care at the moment. I am just so happy about getting some money to go into my bank account (to come back out, of course, for the wedding) and maybe this way, I will be able to keep a \$1,000 in my account by the time I am done paying for things. If not, I will certainly be close to it. I cannot believe that this is happening. I still haven't recieved a call from Movie Gallery, but with me having some money coming in with Goodwill, I am not as upset about it. Plus, with Sonic opening in June or sometime around there, I

can always apply there if I need to or feel that I want to.  
But, YAY!!!!!!!!!!!!

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## **It was a pitchers' dual**

I really was enjoying a good ball game until the 7th inning. After that inning it was no longer a ball game, it was a slaughter. And yes, my favorite team got slaughtered.

Maybe it is the competitor in me, but I've always liked close games. It never mattered win or lose. I even enjoy a good slug fest for one team if it just happens to go that way all night. I don't really enjoy good tight ball games for 5+ innings and then have one blow out inning. I generally just turn those game off. Yes, it does make it more difficult when the team I want to win is on the losing side, but I've turned them off in both directions. Congrats to the Yankees and their excellent pitching performance. That side of the game was well worth paying attention to. The top of the 7th, well that was just sad. A poorly played ball, some lousy pitching and some good hitting made it a laugher. I'm just wondering what Tiger pitcher(s) will be sent back to the minors or even released after this game. Three pitchers did little to prove they should be in the majors tonight. I'm don't usually complain on one inning of work, but a relief pitcher should throw strikes. If the other team smacks the ball around fine, but walks and especially back to back walks should happen rarely.

Oh well, that is my rant for the night.