

Little things in life

Many years ago, when my oldest daughter was my only daughter I took her to a movie. She was being a bit of a handful at home, and my dear wife was confined to bed rest with limited mobility. The circumstances requiring that rest are for a different time, this is a bit more light hearted. With that said I embarked with my 3.5 year old daughter for a day of father/daughter fun.

Fun was a conditional word for the day. My darling little girl would not sit still for much of anything. She was (and still is) on the go most of the time. The only thing I know of that does slow her down is a good book. At that time, good books only lasted 5 to 10 minutes tops. My wife questioned my decision of taking her to a movie, but since she wasn't going to be there, she wished me good luck as I left the apartment.

The conversation on the way to the theater went something like this:

"What is a movie Daddy?"

"It is kind of like your cartoons, without the commercials."

"But, I like commercials Daddy, they show me all the new toys."

"I think you will like the movie."

"What is the movie about Daddy?"

"I don't know, I haven't seen it. It has bears in it."

"I like bears. Are these friendly bears, I only like friendly bears."

"Well, it is called 'The Care Bears Movie', so I think they are friendly."

"WHAT is a Care Bear? Is it like a polar BEAR? You know, the white ones."

"No, not a polar bear, these bears are blue, pink, and other colors."

"I've never seen a pink bear. I think I will like that one."

Will there be red ones? I like red. I like blue too. I wonder if there are purple bears. I would like to meet a purple bear. Do you think I will ever meet a purple bear Daddy?. That would be neat. I think a purple bear would be lots of fun. I wonder if the bears growl. Do you think they growl Daddy? Most bears growl you know. Bears are big and they eat meat. Did you know they eat meat. I saw the bears at the zoo eat fish and other stuff. The fish wasn't cooked. Did you know they don't cook the food for bears? I wonder if there are other animals in the movie. I like all kinds of animals. Mommy likes Raccoons. I like them too. They always wear masks. Did you know that you can't take off a Raccoon's mask Daddy?...."

Yes, my daughter just started rambling after a bit. Funny how that didn't change much. I don't think I had much to say after she started going. If this was going to be the way the afternoon went, the movie was going to be really long. We got to the theater and it was packed full of very young children and their frazzled parents or grandparents. I'm sure there were a couple of frazzled friends, uncles and aunts around too. The theater was just full of noisy, energetic children.

And then the movie started. There was a pre-movie to the main feature. If I recall correctly it was a "Rainbow Brite" short. The kids, if possible got louder during that short. It didn't seem to hold anyones attention. I was glad it was a short film, and that the main film was just over an hour.

But then the main feature started. I'm not sure how it started, it has been a while since I've seen it, but a hush fell over the theater. Every child in the room was staring at the screen. It was amazing. As the children started to get a bit antsy, the movie switched course. As they got scared, it switched course again. The attention of all of the children was rapt during the 77 minutes of the movie. My attention was on the course of the movie and the affect it had on the audience. I had never been in a movie that seemed to be completely made for its target audience. I was impressed. I

heard similar ponderings from other parents as we left the theater. I would have to tell this to my dear wife. If it had been possible, it would have amazed her too. My daughter, fell in love with Care Bears that day....

At some later date, we were doing a bit of shopping. At the checkout counter there was a package of "Care Bear" underwear in my daughter's size. I said to my lovely wife that we should get some for the dear daughter. I was told that she didn't need them. This wasn't about need, it was about giving her something she would really like. The cost wasn't much. They weren't the best, and wouldn't last that long. But they would make a little girl happy for a while. Little things like that can really make a difference. I'm not sure my wife understood at the time. She hadn't seen the movie yet, and it seemed like a silly thing to get. Of course it was silly. It was a spur of the moment decision. That's why they put those things at the check out counters.

As it turned out, I was entirely correct in my assumption that they would be accepted with glee. I think we had to go out to get at least one more set, since they were the underwear of choice for a long time.

Little things in life make lasting impressions. My daughter will still tell of getting the "Care Bear" underwear to this day. She remembers it from all those years ago. The reason behind the first father/daughter movie day is still etched in my brain, but the results of that day are engraved with a deeper groove. Time spent with those you love. Sharing things that you enjoy. Sharing new experiences. Little things that grow into bigger things. They become family stories. They shape our memories.

Little things in life don't take much effort, but the reward can be great.

I hope the little things in your life were good memories. I

know that "little things" do not have to be good things, but I find as I look back I remember fewer of the bad things. Memories are like that. For that I am thankful.

As a side note, the three of us went to see that movie one more time. Little one wanted to share it with her mommy. The same thing happened in the theater again. In all these years, I've never seen that reaction to a movie again. Maybe that isn't such a little thing after all.