What It's All About ...

March 24, 2018 By Lisa Vento Nielsen

What is it all about? Life, love, relationships, fun, etc.... what is it that we all want to be/ do? For me, sometimes, it is to shirk off my responsibilities (of which there are many) and be on my own and just write and/or enjoy my time — time without cleaning, feeding, caring, loving, etc. etc. ...

As a mom, I guess I should feel bad about that — but I do not. My kids are amazing little people but they are draining and still unsure in the grand scheme of things if this new mommy, this one who has only one boob and less patience, is here for good or if I will die or if the other, rounder more singularly focused mom will show back up one day.

I feel for them, I really do — especially because I know what issues can be fraught within a mother/child relationship. I know that they see me as being the ultimate caregiver and that there is not anyone else in the house or the land who can compare to what I do and how I do it. I know they know that the extracurricular, the events, activities, etc are all somehow orchestrated by me and that I ultimately am the captain of their ship/lives/etc.

It is overwhelming for them and for me. It is also making them want more from their dad who God bless him is only able to do what he can do. I knew from the get-go that he was no Mr. Mom and although he stepped up amazingly so during my illness, that time has passed.

All things considered, I had spent many years contemplating divorce and being a single parent as most times, I did feel as though I was one anyway. Now, with my new perspective and interest in expanding my role from just "mom" to you know, "Lisa," it is still hard to get others to play nice and handle the otherness of being the caregiver, even for a little while.

I have started letting my kids sleep out, something the old me would have never ever done. It is a luxury for me as we do still struggle with the bedtime routine and getting everyone settled so Morpheus can come and take me away — and as a breast cancer survivor, it is even harder to get that much-needed rest.

I am realizing how much I had been depriving myself before I got cancer — how much I put myself lower than last and did not think I mattered at all besides being the person to clean up and take care of everyone. I do not want to be that person anymore but I still have to fill those roles so it is a very hard dichotomy in my soul and in my life.

If I had more help at home, I might be less tired and less irritable (occasionally). I might be more able to manage the grand ideas and schemes I have in my mind that could help our accounts go

from negative to positive. I might but then I might not.

I might just use the time to sneak away as I did now just to write down the things that are inside my soul, that bother me, that make me want to spend this time, writing it out, getting it out of my head so I can then go back downstairs to the cleaning, the feeding, the caring, the “mom” role that I cannot bring myself to reject or to hate as my life really is contained within these walls — if my kids are ok, I am ok…

At times, though, I recognize they are not “ok” they are still scarred, still scared and waiting for someone, anyone to convince them that all will be all right and I see my own childhood traumas and scars in them… This makes me feel even worse — and guilty no matter how much my analytical brain knows that I did not cause my own cancer and that therefore, none of this could be my “fault,” I still feel guilty. I think being a mom is full of guilt and pure love of self and others but it is mainly, at times, guilt.

Guilt at being the one who has to put the quash on any big plans — I am currently dreading the upcoming spring break because too little money + two little children + 10 days off = DISASTER no matter how many ways I try to spell it. I have to get on planning play dates and other low cost alternatives to the potential of having to drag them out every day to tire them out when the weather is crap and the finances are even crappier.

Yes, though I promise myself to let go of the finances that does not mean than everything is suddenly free.

So I continue this tightrope of not giving in, not falling into the despair of feeling defeated — I have gotten this far and as long as I do not need chemo this week or this year or this decade then fuck the rest. Though, I am hiding in my room for a few hours more if I can — shhhh, don’t tell anyone.

This is what I do in the time between…

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