

Oblivious to the Obvious: Wishfully Mindful Parenting

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Acknowledgments

A few years ago, when I was transitioning from academia to other sorts of verbal adventures, a dear friend, Malka Gunauer, invited me to participate in a women's get-together. At that event, by dint of circumstance, I found myself telling a tall tale involving falafel balls, preteen fashion sense, and "special American pricing." In response, members of the audience told me: to keep my hot sauce to myself, to realign my skirt, and to consider once more jotting down my ideas.

Shortly thereafter, another extraordinary friend, Brynie Greisman, took it upon herself to yell at me ever so softly about my creative work. Her tenacious applications of cheer and of guilt, applied in careful proportions, helped me to churn out more poetry and prose than might be considered proper for a middle-age woman.

Meanwhile, the managing editor of an outstanding speculative fiction publication, Don Webb of *Bewildering Stories*, and the editor of a very special continuum parenting publication, Veronika Sophia Robinson of *The Mother Magazine*, also took an interest in my output. Those two wonderful folk encouraged me to write, respectively, about gelatinous monsters and goopy small fry and helped me to overcome the shadows that lurk among my analytical recesses. It didn't hurt my confidence, either, when those same editors invited me to participate in meaningful ways in their magazines.

These days, I credit my children for keeping me motivated. They yell at me to shut myself in my office and order me not to come out until I've finished a new piece or have applied sufficient effort to rewriting an old one. They even see fit to bribe me with promises of folded laundry, emptied dishwashers and completed homework if only I would abide their rules, which, in turn, they deem are set "for Mom's own good."

Foreward

Whereas my preferred method of parenting has remained unwearied analysis, it is not beyond my ken to resort to screaming (a little) or to sitting on the sofa and crying (a lot). Otherwise, I'm content to shuttle my kids among activities, to listen to their lore about friendships, and to remember toothpaste or underwear for those family members who venture out regularly.

To wit, I'm often too busy caring for my teenagers to contemplate my navel. In fact, if I had five extra minutes, I would not do more sit-ups or mop the floor. Rather, I'd bake quinoa pie and feed it to my imaginary hedgehogs so that those astonishing muses might inspire me to create yet more verbal snapshots of my children. Our diaper days disappeared too quickly and these hours, during which the not-so-little ones rage alongside of their hormones, too, are passing swiftly.

When necessary, I steal time for parenting by sleeping a little less and laughing a little more. I try to remember that "all endings are good and that if the experience isn't good, it isn't the ending." To wit, whereas I still run from dust bunnies, I now try to reframe, most of the time, parenting's jolts as being concealed sugar lumps.

Please join me in this imperfect appreciation. Ever so wishfully mindful, we'll visit North America and the Middle East. We'll breathe through challenges which illuminate the awesome, quintessential nature of babies and tests which reveal the innate good in adolescents. We'll reflect on how to balance our nurturing of our dear ones with our nurturing of ourselves. In the process, we'll backtrack, trip up, and otherwise act like ordinary grown ups. We'll also smile, sigh, sing, and develop.

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Jerusalem, Israel
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Dedication

“Owning” a Mommy Writer can be a tribulation of a particular kind. In thanks, I dedicate this book to my older and to my younger daughters and to my older and to my younger sons. As well, I extend honor to my life partner, without whom the children, over and above the rest of the excitement, would not have been possible.

Credits

Elements of *Oblivious to the Obvious* have appeared prior, as follows:

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- "Creativity and the Frump," http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/joy/entry/creativity_and_the_frumpt_posted.
- "Diurnal, Nocturnal, and Crepuscular Family Members," http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/joy/entry/diurnal_nocturnal_and_crepuscular_family_members.
- "Mission Almost Possible," http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/joy/entry/mission_almost_possible.
- "Nurturing While Acculturating" as "Parenting While in Klita, Part I" http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/joy/entry/parenting_while_in_klita_part.
- "Something Furry," http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/joy/entry/something_furry.
- "Terrified," http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/joy/entry/terrified_posted_by_dr_hannah.
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