

To love someone just as they are is the ultimate compliment.

A wonderful mess



I recently heard a story from Stephen Glenn about a famous research scientist who had made several very important medical breakthroughs. He was being interviewed by a newspaper reporter who asked him why he thought he was able to be so much more creative than the average person. What set him so far apart from others?

He responded that, in his opinion, it all came from an experience with his mother that occurred when he was about two years old. He had been trying to remove a bottle of milk from the refrigerator when he lost his grip on the slippery bottle and it fell, spilling its contents all over the kitchen floor—a veritable sea of milk!

When his mother came into the kitchen, instead of yelling at him, giving him a lecture, or punishing him, she said, “Robert, what a great and wonderful mess you have made! I have rarely seen such a huge puddle of milk. Well, the damage has already

been done. Would you like to get down and play in the milk for a few minutes before we clean it up?”

Indeed, he did. After a few minutes, his mother said, “You know, Robert, whenever you make a mess like this, eventually you have to clean it up and restore everything to its proper order. So, how would you like to do that? We could use a sponge, a towel, or a mop. Which do you prefer?” He chose the sponge and together they cleaned up the spilled milk.

His mother then said, “You know, what we have here is a failed experiment in how to effectively carry a big milk bottle with two tiny hands. Let’s go out in the back yard and fill the bottle with water and see if you can discover a way to carry it without dropping it.” The little boy learned that if he grasped the bottle at the top near the lip with both hands, he could carry it without dropping it. What a wonderful lesson!

This renowned scientist then remarked that it was at that moment that he knew he didn’t need to be afraid to make mistakes. Instead, he learned that mistakes were just opportunities for learning something new, which is,

after all, what scientific experiments are all about. Even if the experiment “doesn’t work,” we usually learn something valuable from it.

Wouldn’t it be great if all parents would respond the way Robert’s mother responded to him?

—Jack Canfield
(From *A Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul*)

Always put yourself in others’ shoes. If it hurts you, it probably hurts the other person, too.

Oh, it’s just the little, homey things,
The unobtrusive, friendly things,
The won’t-you-let-me-help-you things
That make the pathway light.
And it’s just the jolly, joking things,
The laugh-with-me-it’s-funny things,
The never-mind-the-trouble things
That make our world seem bright.

For all the countless, famous things,
The wondrous, record-breaking things,
Those never-can-be-equaled things
That all the papers cite,
Can’t match the little, human things,
The just-because-I-like-you things,
Those oh-it’s-simply-nothing things,
That make us happy, quite.

So here’s to all the little things,
The everyday-encountered things,
The smile-and-face-your-trouble things,
“Trust God to put it right,”
The done-and-then-forgotten things,
The can’t-you-see-I-love-you! things,
The hearty I-am-with-you! things
That make life worth the fight.

—Grace Haines

Knowing that you’re loved gives you hope and faith and cheers up your whole outlook! When people feel your love and you tell them it’s God’s love, they kind of feel like, “Maybe somebody up there *does* love me! Maybe everything is going to turn out okay in the end after all!”

—David Brandt Berg