

Thruanas Musings

One Little Moment In Time

June, 24, 2005

On my way to the office this morning, my sweet little three year old said "Why do you have to work Mommy?" And somehow, by the grace of all that is good, I didnt say what popped into my mind ("because Mommy has to make money so we can have food and a house and clothes). In a single flash, I realized that whatever I said to him in response could, in one little moment, affect how he looked at work for the rest of his life!

What did I want him to grow up believing? What had I been taught as a child? I distinctly remembered my mother saying, "Your father works hard every day so we can have nice things," and she was right. My father worked very hard. I came to understand, at an early age, that if you wanted to have nice things, you would have to work and work hard! I learned that life is about work and work is about survival- and survival is the most important consideration. And it wasnt just my parents who taught me, it was teachers, friends, and the media who shaped my belief system.

In a split second, I reflected on my own twenty plus years of employment. I could clearly see how I had played out these beliefs, working long hours, making my career the priority, and judging my own successes by the numbers on the balance sheet at the end of each month. I could see the connecting lines I had drawn between work, money, and the fear of "not having". And, as I glanced at the innocent blue eyes in my rear view mirror patiently waiting for an answer, I considered what I want my Wee-One to grow up believing - because at three, whatever mommy says is "fact."

"Mommy goes to work to make the world a better place, Sweetheart. Each of us has a special gift to give each other -something we can do - and doing that special thing is how we take care of each other and the world we share."

"When you go to school," I went on to explain, " and you share your smile ,and you play with your friends, and you learn new things, you are giving your special gift to make the world a better place too, and that is your job!."

My heart leaped inside my chest and I would swear some celestial choir sang out in perfect harmony "YES! Good Answer!" THIS is what I wanted my child to believe.that we work to make the world a better place! I wanted him to feel good about growing up and going to work. I wanted him to see work as something special, not as something that we "have to do" to survive. I pulled up in front of the playground gate, unbuckled my Angel-Boy and hugged him, feeling like the best Mommy in the world!

How would it change our world, I considered as we walked hand-in-hand toward the preschool door, if we each woke up with the intention of sharing our individual gifts with one another each day. What if we believed that how we treat each other, the smiles we share with one another, and the things we learn together actually contributed to making the world a better place? Even better, what if we were taught to look for a job that would make the world a better place, rather than learning to value the job according to its compensation level?!

As I pulled away from the daycare, having given the prerequisite snuggle, I found myself thinking

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about how blessed I am to have the job I have and to have a gift to share. I thought about what I would do "today" to make the world a better place, and I felt something brighten in my soul.

And now, as I sit here in my office writing about my morning, I realize that what I thought was about my child, was really about me - that the one being the teacher was actually the student. Today I discovered a reason to work, a holy and whole reason - to make the world a better place. In that simple learning I have reshaped the past, changed the present and through the innocence of a child, maybe even affected the future, all in one little moment in time.

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