

The Pirate Ship

This is another tough topic for me to talk about. This experience happened about eighteen years ago. I have only shared it with my immediate family in the last fifteen years. With my new philosophy of “no fear, just love” I have started to tell it to others also.

The 4th of July was approaching. The country was getting ready to celebrate. My neighbor, the one who consumed large quantities of alcohol on a regular basis, was getting ready for her son’s birthday. Fireworks would be set off and lots of people would be drinking lots of alcohol. Wanting an excuse as to why we wouldn’t be able to join the festivities, I called my parents.

On July 3, I talked to my dad and explained the pending drunken birthday party invitation. Yes, I understand that most people invite others to a party further in advance, but this was an individual that would most likely invite us over at the last minute. My dad said that we could come over to visit, but he said my mom would need to be doing the laundry. I didn’t care if she was working on laundry. He said it would be OK, but reminded me again that my mom wouldn’t be able to watch over the boys because she needed to work on the laundry. I thought he was acting weird. Why did he keep talking about laundry? He never worried about it before.

He asked if we were staying cool enough. It had been very hot and is probably why Mom had not been working on laundry. She was probably waiting for a cooler day to run the dryer. They cooled their home by opening windows during the night. I told him that we were running three different room air conditioners and made plans to visit the following day. My plan worked. Later that afternoon, I was able to decline the invitation.

The next morning was beautiful. My mother-in-law had recently bought an inflatable pirate ship pool for Roman and Isaiah. It was cute. It was a perfect way

for us to completely cool off before visiting my parents. Because Isaiah was not quite a year old, I sat in the pool with the boys splashing and playing.

I thought of all the chores I could be doing. I could be doing dishes or cleaning something. Our house still had not been completely remodeled. There was always something that needed done. It didn't matter. It was a perfect moment. The sun was shining. The flowers were in bloom. My children were playing nicely together. I never wanted to forget the moment.

How many times do you think to yourself that you never want to forget a specific moment in time? There are times when I have had great joy. In those times of great happiness, I never stopped to deliberately think about the given moment and deliberately planted it in my head as a time not to be forgotten. I just assumed that I would always remember. On the opposite spectrum of the emotional scale, we remember times of great sadness or shocking news. For my parents, they remember exactly where they were when they found out that JFK had been shot. For me, I don't forget where I was when the Challenger exploded and when the planes hit the towers. In times of great disbelief, you don't vow not to forget. You just don't. It just happens. Yet, there I was, sitting in a little pool several inches deep vowing to myself never to forget the simplistic beauty of the moment.

Then, a strange thing happened. Physically, I was fully aware of sitting in the pool with my two children. Mentally though, I saw the three of us from an overhead view. The image formed in an instant and disappeared just as quickly. I remember thinking that it was very odd. I decided that we probably needed to get out of the pool and get ready for our visit.

"No!!!!" came a shout from inside of my head. The command wasn't angry, just very firm. I was not to get out of the pool. Once again, a strange thought. I argue with my conscious just as everyone does. This was different. It was a command.

There was no arguing. The decision was not for me to make. I needed to obey. OK. I could spend more time in the pool. It didn't really matter to me. Nothing earth shattering was going to happen if we arrived a little later. They wouldn't care. I let the kids play for about 5-10 more minutes and again thought to myself that it was about time to dry off. There was no protest in my head. My brain had gone back to normal. I wasn't thinking of an extraordinarily beautiful moment never to be forgotten, seeing myself from a different perspective, or having shouts of protest from within my own head. I was ready for a nice visit with my parents.

If something like this ever happens to you, take notice. It is a sign...