

Richer than you know

PERSPECTIVE I unexpectedly left work two hours later than usual on Saturday evening.

Feeling a little bit frustrated, thoughts of, "I can't be bothered cooking dinner now!" came to my mind.

I told myself how lazy I was and how I need to take better care of myself.

However, the 'I can't be bothered' thoughts were more dominant. I wanted something that was going to warm me up so I decided to go for vegetable soup at the Chinese restaurant.

I drove into the carpark and immediately noticed something wasn't right. Something caught my eye and simultaneously tugged at my heart.

There was a small white, battered and bruised car in the corner of the carpark. It appeared that the car may have been broken in to at some stage because instead of a window, there was duct tape.

A large towel was draped across the windscreen, and the ends tucked inside the car and secured by the closed doors. Placed in front of the car was a camp chair.

A pair of trousers were draped over the chair. The interior light was on and I could see the shadow of someone inside.

The engine was running, presumably to keep the heater going. It was obvious that someone was living in their car.

My heart and soul said, "You need to let this person know that you care." I hesitated.

Thoughts of, "It's none of your business! Leave it alone!" floated through my mind.

I continued on to the restaurant, tears filling my eyes with every step I took. I'm still grieving for the passing of my sister.

Maybe that makes me a little more sensitive. My emotions are still raw but I knew if I ignored this opportunity to share a little bit of love and kindness, then not only would I be letting myself down, I'd be letting the Divine Plan down too.

I ordered my vegetable soup, spring rolls and fried rice. I walked back to the carpark, tapped on the



window of the little white car and waited.

I didn't know what I would be confronted with but I wasn't afraid because I knew my actions were coming from love.

The door opened and the face of an elderly unshaven man turned to look at me. "Are you OK? You appear to be living in your car," I asked him. "Yes. Yes, I'm living in my car," he acknowledged with a neutral tone of voice.

He did not speak with a tone of being defeated or downtrodden. "Have you had something to eat today?" I asked.

"Yes. I've eaten" "Well, I have some spring rolls and rice for you" and I gave him the food. He was most appreciative.

We introduced ourselves. For a brief moment, I gently touched his forearm and gazed into his eyes.

I then allowed him to close the door of his car, where he returned to his privacy, and the warmth of the heater.

I sat in my own car for a few moments, allowing the events that just took place to permeate through my consciousness.

If I hadn't left work much later than what I usually do, I would have gone home, cooked steamed vegies and legumes for dinner, and would never have had the opportunity to share my love and kindness to someone in need.

Was that the Divine plan, to delay me so I could witness this Soul experiencing the hardships of his human life?

I don't know what led to this man living in his car. And to be honest, I don't know what resources are available to assist this man to rebuild his life.

But I do know this. I was called to take action from my heart and Soul.

Being 'rich' is all in the eye of the beholder.



I was called to share a message of perspective.

No matter what circumstances you're living in right now, there will always be people who are experiencing worse conditions than you.

I'm a permanent resident in a caravan park. I once had someone say to me, "but you're living in a caravan park!" as if it represented extreme poverty but I can assure you, I am rich.

Yes, I live in a caravan and fixed annexe but I have a galley-style kitchen with a four-burner gas cooktop, a large sink, a medium sized fridge and breakfast bar.

I have a bathroom complete with a shower that is larger than the showers in some of the houses I've rented.

I have a fully functioning toilet and a large hand basin.

And I have a washing machine. I have no need to use the facilities in the amenities block because everything is plumbed in.

I have a comfortable bed, a huge loungeroom and an office space. I have heating and cooling.

And I have more storage space than I can possibly fill.

Outside, I have a paved courtyard with numerous pot plants, a birdbath and chiminea.

I have an outdoor lounge, and tables and chairs to relax in.

I have a garden shed and an area to park my car under shade. All of this is situated beneath the canopy of beautiful eucalypt.

And most importantly, I have privacy. For all of this, I pay much less than many people pay to rent a single room in a share house.

I am rich.

There are a number of morals in this story.

1. Always follow the lead from your heart and soul. Love, compassion and kindness is what we all need to feel, express and receive, right now.

2. Never take your life for granted. You're a role model for people you don't even know, and they're watching you.

3. There is richness in simplicity.

4. Express deep gratitude and appreciation for all that you have right now, and for all that you've experienced in your life.

5. Put your life in perspective. Let go of the petty dramas.

They're worthless and tarnish your ability to feel rich. Marilyn can be contacted at marilyn@inspired-healthandwellbeing.com.au

INTEGRATING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTO LEARNING

SCHOOLS are the most strategic and practical place for students to learn about and practice being physically active.

If we create a space where physical activity is integrated with academic lessons, we are creating a space for increased academic motivation, physical wellbeing and better outcomes for our children.

In addition to that it decreases behavioural problems, improves concentration, on-task behaviours, and test scores.

Physical activity during academic instruction can be added to a teacher's lesson planning process to ensure activities reinforce the desired content and help limit time students are sedentary.

Classroom physical activity improves strength and endurance; helps control weight; improves mental health by reducing anxiety, stress, and depression; and increases self-esteem while improving students' cognitive performance.

This includes self-regulatory pro-



cesses like planning, organisation, abstract problem-solving and working memory.

Physical activity supports students who are kinaesthetic learners - learning through movement and physical experiences.

Classroom physical activity also affects students' enjoyment of learning, an important factor in motivating students to learn.

Allowing students the space to collaborate and interact with each other in a fun way creates conditions for them to feel safe, comfortable, accepted, and happy.

The Bluearth Approach is all inclusive and provides teachers with an

opportunity to grow relationships, as does the inclusion of physical activity in the classroom - creating stronger relationships and foundations through shared experience and play.

Teachers and staff are natural role models for students and obtain the same benefits from an increase in physical exercise and a new method of teaching.

One of the challenges teachers face is planning a wardrobe that is professional yet appropriate for physical activity, including shoes.

Perhaps other barriers to success are lack of equipment, space and lack of ongoing professional development on this subject.

Paramount to instilling this throughout a school or education centre is the ability for colleagues to share successes, challenges, and lessons learned from classroom physical activity.

Tips for promoting physical activity in the classroom or workspace:

- Walk and talk meetings
- Identify materials and resour-

ces to promote physical activity and use them

— Identify ways to create and use classroom or office space for physical activity

— Ensure that classroom physical activity is appropriate and safe by communicating safety and behavioural expectations.

— Encouraging physical activity as students or staff move between activities or spaces

— Using physical activity as a reward or incentive

Recently at Ross Park Primary three classes taught by Bluearth accredited teachers Mr. Hempel, Mr. Stedler and Mrs. Mapstone, have been using weekly Bluearth sessions to reiterate the maths concepts they are learning in the classroom space - recently 3D shapes.

The students in small groups of 6-8 people, used only their bodies to create spheres, rectangular prisms, cones, pyramids, cylinders and cubes.

The problem solving strategies the teams used to create different varia-

tions of the same shape was inspiring to watch.

Not only were the students using problem solving skills but balance, core, spatial awareness, risk, communication and co-operation skills.

This is not just suitable for a classroom space - create games around life lessons in your home or perhaps if you are up to the task you can take on the greatest challenge of all: make homework FUN!

Using creativity, physical activity and ingenuity you can transform homework into both an academic lesson and a physical activity movement break.

Google the academic concept and add the works 'physical activity' or 'game' and you will be amazed at what already exists online.

Scary thought - you may achieve the high distinction of fun parent for a brief glimpse of time.

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