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*Life is a Team Sport*

This is Jill Duffy with Community Comment

As young children we are surrounded by our parents, sisters, brothers, and extended family, and then we enter kindergarten where our world begins to expand exponentially. It's not just ABC/123 or learning to stay within the lines- it's the beginning of a life long discoveries and interactions and ~~we're~~ accompanied by our teachers, students, parents of our friends, neighbors...and occasionally the Principal.

We take on challenges, experience setbacks, and fortunately, for many of us there are community members who indelibly imprint a positive outlook or provide us words of encouragement at that perfect moment. Throughout our young lives we develop a sense of self, of preference and values.

As adults we forge friendships, and relationships and embark upon endeavors as we chase our dreams – sometimes our choices are well thought out and sometimes those choices leave a lot to be desired. I suppose that's part of what builds character.

And what we learn over time is that while life will deal us each a unique hand, it most definitely is not a series of random acts – we each have a tremendous amount of control over our own destiny, and the patterns and choices we make will, determine, [in large], the course and quality of life that we live.

Sometimes that is the hardest lesson to impart upon our children.

My sister and I were talking about this, because our children are in their teen years and like every parent, we struggle with the dilemma of wanting to protect them, but provide them the latitude to grow, to make their own choices, to do the right thing and understand the consequences their actions, all the while trying to make sure their choices won't get them into too much trouble or close doors of opportunities to them.

Another sister weighed in to remark 'Life is a Team Sport' and the words resonated with each of us as we reflected upon our own experiences and the people who have contributed to our lives and often times, that person doesn't even know the impact they had – for this particular sister, it was the young college kid who took time to practice softball with her when girls on a Little League team were still an anomaly. Such a simple act with such lasting impact.

Within each of our lives there are at least one or two defining moments that serve as a bookmark. Sometimes we recognize it immediately, and sometimes we don't see until we have the time to sit and reflect. Sometimes it's an event, and often it is a person...and in our formative years, more often than not, it's a teacher.

Besides parents and friends, teachers spend a lot of time with our children. Sometimes there's a good personality match, sometimes not, and sometimes...there's that one teacher that recognizes a jewel and sees the potential of what a person could become and they provide the spark , opportunity and encouragement.

To my boy's teacher Ms. Rohn, thank you for everything that you do – I am so glad you are part of his "Team".

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