

Laughing Our Way Through Mistakes

Transitions: The gifts of change

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*“The person who knows how to laugh at himself will never cease to be amused.”
- Shirley Maclaine*

For those of us who are single, we have our share of dating stories, some of which are humorous and others that are not so funny (like the man who carried a tape recorder in his pocket and proudly told me of conversations he secretly monitored).

I recently had a purely delightful date seeing the superb movie, *“Julia and Julie,”* TWICE in one afternoon.

To begin at the beginning, which is where we should have started the movie: My date called to say he was running late, and that we may miss the previews, but we agreed to go anyway.

So upon entering Hollywood Hits in Danvers, we are told we have three minutes until show time. The clerk at the concession stand directs us to theatre #5, only there is no movie by the name of Julia and Julie playing there. Sidestepping to the next door over, at theatre #4, the movie we had chosen is listed. We duck into the crowded theatre sitting center aisle. The movie had already begun, but we immediately became immersed in it.

You can not help but be captured by Meryl Streep’s superior performance and the joy she portrays of Julia Child and her marriage to Paul. The movie was so good that when it was over, my date turns to me and says, “That went by so fast. It leaves you wanting more. That felt like it was only an hour long.” I concurred, thoroughly enjoying every minute of our very short movie.

Truth be told, we only did see an hour—the second hour of the movie. We had stepped into the wrong theatre, which we realized as we passed the ticket booth as we were leaving the cinema. A nagging feeling made us take another look at the posted movie times on the board behind the counter. Well, wouldn’t you know, our movie was playing in two theaters and we had walked into the one which had started an hour earlier.

Upon discovering our error, thanks to the clerk at the ticket counter, we were invited back in 30 minutes to watch the movie at its new start time of 2:55. After laughing at our mistake, we opted to take him up on his offer. So we joined the new movie, and chose halfway through to leave, feeling like we had totally integrated the two halves.

While exiting, my date--feeling a need to explain his walking out on a movie he actually enjoyed-- tells the person next to us that we really liked the movie but had already seen the second half. Met with a stern look, he also ended up stepping on her foot while trying to quickly exit. I inform my date later that, I, too, had stepped on the foot of the woman next to us upon leaving.

By the time we got to the parking lot, we were laughing so hard, I had tears coming down my face. It was the first time I had ever seen the second half of a movie before the first, or enjoyed a movie so much I was willing to risk the embarrassment of re-entering the theatre to embrace the complete experience from start to finish.

Thinking back to that date, I am aware I have laughed a lot lately at my own quirks. All the other times in life when I held it together and projected a more serious tone (like in setting limits for teenagers) were often draining, challenging or dull moments. Finding humor in the routine, or when the routine gets thrown off, is becoming increasingly fun.

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PS—If we had this much fun at the movies, can you imagine what our next planned date at the driving range will be like? Spectators are forewarned: learning to swing a golf club is even more challenging for me than finding (and arriving at) the right movie.

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