

***Role Reversal?…***

I “celebrated” (not sure that’s the right word) a birthday last month…my 65th…Yes, I’m now a card-carrying member of the “Medicare club.” Let me throw in here that I married a younger woman (Lyn) who happens to have the same birthday as me. One less thing for me (particularly as I age) to forget, right? ☺

Since we have the same birthday, we don’t often celebrate much. Recently, our son, Drew, who is 29, came by with a confession. He said that he’d kind of forgot about our birthday the first part of the day. Having said that, he cooked an incredible dinner for us to celebrate the following weekend! Back to Drew’s “confession.” He said it was kind of like a mirror, showing him how easy it is to not think of others. He brought it up to us and then asked if we observed any signs in him of self-centeredness or self-absorption. Wow! Talk about the “child parenting the parent”!! Bam!

I pride myself in being self-aware. However, I can tell you, at 29, I don’t believe I would have thought of asking my parents the question Drew asked us. My confession: when I’m sick or in pain (or, as Lyn gently pointed out, when I’m “on a mission”/have my agenda), my world shrinks. It becomes all about me. It’s very difficult, if not near impossible, in those situations, for me to get outside myself – even to think of others, let alone to put their needs above my own.

So, I’m SO proud of Drew! Another reminder to not only build my self-awareness muscle, but to have people in our lives of whom we can ask such questions.

* *Am I closing in on myself?*
* *Do you think I’m aware of how my words and actions impact others?*
* *When I do “that,” how does that make you feel?*
* *What do you see in me that I might not be seeing?*
* *What’s it like to be on the other side of me?*

When that self-awareness muscle is exercised, might there be other muscles that grow? Kindness? Gentleness? Patience? Self-control? Last time I checked, there weren’t any laws against those things…And if those muscles grow, might I become a better version of myself? AND, what if that growth isn’t primarily for me, but for those around me…if it really isn’t *all about me*? In 10 years, if I were to look back at the “gym” that built those muscles, would I be glad I “joined that gym”? I think I would…