

I Think You Are Wonderful

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Children, parents, singles, seniors and our countrymen all benefit from encouraging words that reinforce the difference we make, that acknowledge that someone noticed our efforts and that tell us someone cares.

One day from my friend Barb Elder I learned about Kathleen and James McGinnis, founders of *Parenting for Peace and Justice*. From their work here are two examples of how you can encourage the wonder in others:

ONE: Think of the words in the song *See Me Beautiful* by Red Grammer. "See me beautiful; see the best in me. It may take some time; it may be hard to find; but see me beautiful." As I am repeatedly reminded even when people are messing up, they are doing their best (rapists and terrorists exempt). Look for the fine and beautiful intentions in those around you.

TWO: Play the "I think you are wonderful" game with anyone you know well and love. Here are two examples:

With my life partner, Les:

1. Patricia: *Les, why do I say, "I think you are wonderful?"*
2. Les: *Because I bring home a good income.*
3. Patricia: *That's true. I was thinking of something else.*
4. Les: *Because I pitch in with the housework.*
5. Patricia: *That's true and I was thinking of something else.*
6. Les: *Because I do my own thing and support you in doing yours.*
7. Patricia: *That's true. What I was thinking of this--I love how you touch me gently and ask "How's ma dear?"*

With my granddaughter, Buffy:

1. Patricia: *Buffy, why do I say, "I think you are wonderful?"*
Buffy: *I don't know.* Patricia: *It's OK. If you don't know, make it up.*
2. Buffy: *Because I look after the baby.*
3. Patricia: *That's true and I was thinking of something else.*
4. Buffy: *Because I do my homework.*
5. Patricia: *That's true and I was thinking of something else.*
6. Buffy: *Because I help Mom a lot.*
7. Patricia: *That's true and I was thinking about what a cheerful and appreciative person you are.*

Notice that in these interactions the receiver obtains seven acknowledgements. Three are created by the receiver and if true are supported by the sender. The final and last one is icing on the cupcake. Enjoy

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