

Mundane Loses Its Meaning When Serving Your Family

What can you learn about fathering from a trip to the supermarket?

One thing I know is that life is full of mundane events. And as fathers, one of our tasks is to make the best of them for our families.

One of my recent trips to the grocery store is a good example. That's about as mundane as it gets. But my experience that day brings up two lessons we can use with our families.

Why was I going to the store? Because my bride, Melanie, said we were out of creamer for our morning coffee. She sets the machine to have the coffee ready when she wakes up, and she likes having different creamer flavors to add to it. Well, that morning she woke up and we were all out. And it was clear that she wanted some.

At first, I was thinking, *Go to the store just for creamer? Can't we get by one day drinking it black, or having something else?* It really wasn't a necessity, and I knew that she knew that!

Then after a minute, I paused and caught myself. I grabbed keys and my teenage son, Chance, and we headed to the store. I figured with all she does for me, the least I could do was drive to the store for something she enjoys.

So, lesson number one, dad: Serve your family members—your bride if you're married, and your kids, for sure. Remind yourself how much they mean to you, and take advantage of every opportunity to demonstrate that.

After we got to the store, I couldn't help noticing the

expressionless looks on all the people's faces there. They were just going through the motions, not speaking, would rather be someplace else, stressed out or whatever. As Chance and I pushed the cart along, that really struck me.

So I reminded Chance about a game I used to play with him at the store. When he was small, I would put him up in the cart and give him a challenge: "Daddy will give you a dollar for every person you get to smile."

So he'd be hanging over the side and staring at people with a big grin on his face, and then he learned to do all kinds of wacky tricks to get people's attention. He got rich in the process.

I gave him the same offer that day and he earned a few bucks, but he's 16 now and more worried about being embarrassed, and a dollar doesn't make it quite as exciting as it used to. Still, I think Chance will agree that lesson No. 2 is worth remembering: Find ways to inject joy and laughter into your children's lives, even if you bribe them!

As you know, family life has a lot of mundane moments. But I'm convinced that how you carry yourself during those times can have a huge impact on your family. Keep making the most of every day.

Action Points for Dads on the Journey

- Do a mundane task or errand for your wife and/or children simply because you appreciate the fact that they are in your life.
- Get in the habit of asking your wife—every day—"What can I do for you?"
- Challenge your child to do something silly that will bring a smile to someone's face. (Pay him for it if you want to.)
- Let your child dare *you* to do something that will bring a smile to his face—even if you risk being embarrassed.

- Come up with something new and unusual that you and your child can do together regularly. Have him or her help you brainstorm. Ask, “What have you wanted to try that we’ve never done?”

I know dads are great at bringing laughter and silliness to everyday situations. How do you do this for your kids? Leave a comment below.

Carey Casey is the CEO of the National Center for Fathering (NCF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the culture of fathering in America by enlisting 6.5 million fathers to make the Championship Fathering Commitment. NCF believes every child needs a dad they can count on, and it uses its resources to inspire and equip men to be the involved fathers, grandfathers and father-figures their children need. Subscribe to Casey’s weekly email tip by clicking [here](#): I want tips on how to be a great dad who loves, coaches, mentors and inspires my children.

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