



You Are Enough

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

In 2020, I wrote a blog post titled “It Is Enough.” I described the pitfalls of getting caught up in social media and the edited posts that we see instead of focusing on the connections in our real lives. I often read my W.O.W.s to my kids and occasionally they read them or listen to them on their own.

Well today, one of my daughters helped me feel vindicated that maybe some of my messages are getting through to her. And by extension, I hope to others. She took the ACTs today and wrote an essay regarding teens and cell phones. It was a pro/con essay: should teens spend more time or less time on their phones? She didn’t tell me about the whole essay; only about her last statement. I am paraphrasing here: when George Washington was running for president he didn’t tweet out to his followers to vote for him. He went out and made the connections.

How are we doing in this respect?

Zoom has taken a back seat and many more events are in person. Are we making these connections more now? Well from my small corner of the world, I say we haven’t gotten back to pre-Covid. But I wonder if we’ll ever go back to being that open and free. I do think we are making strides in being with people, family and friends, for face-to-face conversations, meals, giggle fests, social gatherings. And each one is a positive step forward, in my opinion.

What about our kids?

Again, I can only speak for my small part of the world, but I see so many more children of all ages socializing and being together than they were during the pandemic. My kids are “in-person” with their friends, and it has made all the difference. But I will say, they have embraced the video option as well and use it for group study sessions (which means I don’t have to drive all over Chandler). They use it when they are getting ready for a big event to check outfits and hairstyles (I do have girls) And they have learned to have those strong connections and relationships via social media and electronic communications.



And what about FOMO?

Fear of missing out or being envious of what another person has. Well, this hasn't gone away as much as I would like. I would still like for my daughters to use social media to learn instead of gawk. And they do sometimes. They are using it for studying, learning new concepts and languages and recipes (remember my post about creativity in the kitchen?) But I personally have taken a giant leap back from having the fear of missing out. I have cut my personal social media time down to almost none. And I am SO much happier for it.

I feel so much more accomplished, confident and satisfied with my life and who I am. I just need to keep plugging along to get my children to join me, even if it is for a little while. I am in it for the long haul. As they say, it isn't a sprint, it is a marathon. That is me. The #marathonrunner.

Will you join me?

So I am extending a challenge to you. Many of you who know me know that I turn my phone off every Shabbat. This is a huge part of my serenity and rejuvenation each week. But I will extend a simpler challenge to you (baby steps).

Once a week, carve out time for an interactive time with a friend or family member. Use the electronic devices only to take photos and be present, in the moment with this other person and enjoy each other's company. I promise you that the rewards will be numerous. And who knows? You might take this time to realize that the only thing you were missing out on was the human connection, whether via Zoom or on a walk. And this connection will help you feel confident and self assured enough to view the social media posts with joy and happiness not jealousy or fear.

Do this to be a role model so your child sees this confident you. Do this for yourself. You are enough.

Shabbat Shalom.