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Mommy, what's a husband?

Monday, February 17, 2014

I know there was some annoyance in my voice when I responded to my daughter. Yes, she was only 4, but she was really smart and very sensible, so much so that we used to call her our "wise" child.

So I asked her, "Think Karen! Who do you always see me with?"

She answered thoughtfully, "Mrs. Thomas?"

She was our neighbor and our children not only played together every day, but we shared carpools to a large number of activities and visited and talked on the phone a lot.

As I thought about it, DH never had the title "husband" around our children. He was "Daddy."

The terms we use in conversation really matter. When we use words familiar to us, we need to consider what they might mean to others.

When I read the headline "Catastrophic Storm in the South," it triggered another memory. Sometimes, not understanding the definition has consequences.

During college I worked in the office of a large Woolworth's store. For those too young to remember, think of Walmart with separate counters and cash registers for each type of item.

We had over 100 registers and collected a lot of cash picked up at regular intervals (my job). We then made bank deposits, saving enough on hand to make payroll (also done in cash).

My co-worker asked "what if I made a bank drop now?" Since we had to fill payroll envelopes by the end of the day, I thought she was kidding. "That would be CATASTROPHIC, I said.

Yes, she dropped most of our cash into the "night deposit" slot of the bank next door. She assumed that "catastrophic" was a good thing, and that I approved of her plan. We had to do lots of scrambling to collect enough cash by the end of day.

Experiences like these taught me not to make assumptions.

When I refer to "diet," I mean it as a noun – the amount and type of food I consume as I strive to maintain a healthy lifestyle. It's something I've learned from my years here on SP.

When I refer to "workout" or "exercise," I'm thinking of an activity that helps me in that quest. It's something that I like to do.

I don't use those words outside of family or SP very often. Among the general population "diet, exercise, workout" have a negative connotation. At the very least they are something to be avoided or done grudgingly.

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When I talk about them in a positive way, I run the risk of hearing other terms - "obsessive" or "skinny" or even "health nut."

Unfortunately, I think I know exactly what is meant by those.

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IFDEEVARUNS2



2670 days ago



TRAVELGRRL



Well, what a scattered blog, and so much to think about! I too find a safe haven in Spark. Most others in my "real world" wouldn't identify.

Great job, BB!
2671 days ago



MARYJEANSL



I remember being so shocked, long ago, when my first child was maybe 2 or 3, and he referred to his father as 'Dave.' My jaw dropped to the floor. It took me a few minutes to figure out that that was what I called his dad. If I had called him 'Daddy,' then my son would have followed suit.

So I started calling him, 'Daddy,' lol, which was a bit amusing for the two of us, but it did have the desired effect.
2672 days ago



EGRAMMY



Thanks for the blog. Hope you find some SP ers in your area so you can enjoy those words with friends.
2672 days ago



PHOENIX1949



It's all relative.
2673 days ago



DR1939



I taught at a midwestern university where most students were first-generation college students. They did not read outside of required reading, their parents did speak in "big words," and they did not watch any television program beyond the simplest comedies or cartoons. I spent a lot of time defining words that I considered basic. When I taught Health Psychology about half of the class were exercise science majors who were very clear on the meaning of "diet," "exercise," etc. The other half were similar to your outside the family. Every lecture and every exam included definitions. BTW, the above did not mean that these students were not smart.
2673 days ago



CD4199227



Words what they mean..... my neighbors occasionally say "oh I saw you out there jogging" JOGGING JOGGING know one jogs we RUN!!!!.....hmmmmmm just take it as a good thing that at least they noticed you.

On Saturday my friend and I were doing our long run and stopped into a coffee shop and the very friendly woman who made our coffee's said "oh are you two running the marathon in town tomorrow??? We looked at each other "what marathon ????" She was referring to a 2.5 mile local run..... FAR CRY from a marathon.....harumph !!!!! Hey she was just trying to show some interest!

2673 days ago



**SPEEDYDOG**

Great story! The word "catastrophic" is overused in the media. I find it humorous that your co-worker likely heard "catastrophic" as "fantastic".

You are quite correct that some people find it necessary to label those that seek a healthy lifestyle as "nuts" or "obsessive". This labeling has much more to do with the discomfort some people have with those that behave differently.

A lot of activities have jargon that are unique. Some of these special terms are descriptive shorthand for complex concepts. Other terms are just fun. But some snobs use the terms to show that they are "in" and you are not.

I enjoy the esoteric pastime of mountain biking. Here are some terms unique to mountain biking.

Rail: To negotiate curves without skidding.

Bunny Hop: A complex maneuver that results in the bike bouncing over obstacles.

Clean: To negotiate a difficult trail with skill and finesse.

Stoked: To be both excited and happy about some facet of the sport.

Dialed-in: To have your bike set up perfectly.

Endo: A type of crash where the rider flies over the front of the bike.

Runners say things like "5k" or "10k" and "bib".

But now if I say, "I had a catastrophic endo", you would know that means.

Thanks, Bruce

2673 days ago

**HAYBURNER1969**

Ha ha, I remember when that happened! "Mrs. Thomas."

2673 days ago

**CD13758606**

Catastrophic! LOL

I never use "diet" even for myself, as I have negative association.

good blog.



2673 days ago

**BOILHAM**

Love this blog. I notice my vocabulary changes with my surroundings. Depending on with whom I am conversing, some might think I'm being 'uppity' by saying 'with whom'. Suppose that comes with having friends from widely varying backgrounds. Too sensitive for my own good?

Good blog, though!

2673 days ago

**MISCHAKEO**

I teach kids who do not speak English well. I do not make assumptions as there are so many words..especially idioms that they do not understand. That catastrophic was amusing.

I think the beauty of Spark is that we do understand each other's terms..and can talk endlessly about exercise, diet, and workouts. People here value trying to maintain a healthy life style. I also do not talk about these daily efforts with most except for my family and a few close friends.

That was an interesting blog with good points.

2673 days ago

**CD5500762**

2673 days ago

**GINIEMIE**

Well it's my health program and healthy food, but it still drives people nuts and you still have people thinking chicken fingers are healthy!-well if they are made right maybe!!!!

My daughter never heard my husband say mommy/mom. He always said "honey", when Lisa finally started talking I was honey and he was daddy. It was funny. She did hear mommy from her numerous aunts, uncles, her grandparents etc-but honey stuck.

Thanks for making me trip in memory lane.



2673 days ago



WATERMELLEN



This blog made me chuckle: and think. Our kids always heard us refer to each other by our first names, never as "mummy" and "daddy": and so from a very early age they also called us by our first names. No disrespect from either of them intended, just a recognition that to each other we've always been first and foremost husband and wife I suppose: which foundation of stability perhaps also made it possible to be reasonably decent parents. (I see a lot of couples splitting in my work because they've forgotten to put it each other first . . . and I do occasionally get a "Mum" at least from DS now!).

And I agree that "diet" has a bad rap as a "four letter word": but the reality is, monitoring food intake for nutrition including aggregate calories is a life-long commitment for those of us who want to maintain a healthy weight. Not a temporary fix. In that sense I'll diet till I die and that's OK.
2673 days ago



TERI-RIFIC



LOL on "catastrophic" Similarly, I learned when teaching someone to drive when you yell, "GET OVER GET OVER" You have to specify which way.
2673 days ago



CD12146214



Luckily for me my husband is a cyclist so he gets training plans, taper, clean diet etc. I too do not use the same terminology with the general population!
2673 days ago



BUSYGRANNYS



Great blog!! I too, use the word "diet" very sparingly outside of those who "get it"... Thanks for sharing your thoughts and experiences!

Have a great day!
2673 days ago



CLUMBOY



love the terminology of diet as a noun.



maybe she thought you said "copacetic"
have a lovely day!
2673 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM



One of the things I love about Spark People is that so many of us "get it"... the meaning of "diet" in the classic sense: what we eat. The meaning of exercise and workout, and their place in a balanced lifestyle. And we can talk about what's working and what's not openly, without wearing each other out!

We wear the rest of our "friends" who may not share our passion with our talk. I had a phone call from my brother, MOBYCARP, yesterday, and we bubbled a lot about running and training. This is probably not a "normal" brother sister kind of interaction, but it is for us, at this point in our lives. The reinforcement of the positives of being fit is what keeps us fit.

In short... "getting it", "kindred spirits", "what's a husband?"... are all signs that we need the Spark!



And I'm so grateful it's here! Thanks for being such a great Spark, yourself!
2673 days ago

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