

## Good for the Spirit

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## Just Showing Up

I am not sure how many of you have spent much time around teen football players—or have ever wanted to—but I am an expert at the species. Okay, I am "the mom," a fringe position at best. But I am good at it. I can order pizza, drive rugged and smelly guys around (with four open windows), and put on splints with the best of them.

I am also open to learning what they have to teach, which often ironically, given the injury rate, applies to healing.

As a healer, I have acquired hundreds of techniques and skills, all of which fit neatly in my Bob the Builder-Healer Tool Kit. My shelves overflow with books about healing and spirituality, and recently I have had to erase computer files because I don't have enough storage for all the data, which is mostly about healing. Yet the single most important key to being a healer, if not a person, wasn't clear to me until illustrated by a bunch of teen football players.

It was one of those mornings. I started at 6 a.m. to get my son to football but was soon picking up others' sons as if running a taxi service. Of course, what gets dropped off must get picked up. A few hours later, my car was full—and "aromatic." Off we went to hunt a second breakfast.

Most interesting, the boys started talking about various parents: Who is a good parent and who is not? I kept quiet, but noticed that our lists were somewhat different. Caught in my own judgmentalism, I found myself silently listing the qualities I disliked about some of their "thumbs up" parents: he doesn't have a job; she sits alone; he wears bad shoes. (It's so embarrassing to hear what we are thinking inside.) Finally I asked the boys what they liked so much about these parents.

"They show up," one of the boys said.

"Yup," my son agreed. "No matter what, they show up."

The boys' reference was simple. The good parents show up, and not only for sports. The parents they listed come to conferences, drive in the carpool, are home at night, and make dinner. (Fortunately the latter isn't about quality; we don't all have culinary skills.) I think that so often as healers, we are so trained by our training that we forget that sometimes the most important element is to show up, first and foremost.

When a client makes an appointment, they are entrusting us with their time. During the session, we are further honored with their story, needs, fears, hopes and heart. The more fully present we are, the greater the gift our presence.

When we listen to a client, we enable them to listen to themselves. By respecting their time and needs, we teach them to do the same. We might think our studied wisdom is what is making a difference, but sometimes the fact that we care is even more important. We become a handrail that provides the steadiness they need to achieve inner balance.

The key to showing up is to "be all there." One time my oldest son asked if I had my laptop open while he was performing in a play. "It wasn't me!" I insisted. His question made me realize that we all share a similar deep need: to be totally focused on.

When I am going to work with a client, I tune out everything except that person. I use a simple process called Spirit-to-Spirit to transform into the best self I can be. First, I affirm my own spirit or essence, then I acknowledge the spirit of those present (including that of my client) and finally, I call upon the Greater Spirit, turning myself over to It. I believe that these simple steps establish the power of a passage in Mark 6:

Even when we think we have nothing to offer, when we simply show up and are willing, God blesses the little that we do have and multiples it, just like He did with the fishes and the loaves.

Open to greater guidance, we are now able to be empathetic with the client, but also provide the perspectives they might

be missing. We can understand their story to-date yet help them write their next lines. We can assist them with releasing what is complete and get on with building a bridge to a new tomorrow. We can also simply enjoy them. And all this occurs with exponential grace, because we've shown up.

I am still waiting for that multiplication formula to say, double the amount of pizza I have ordered for the team or triple the sock count, as you know that one sock in every pair will be eaten by the dryer monster. I'd even approve if the subtraction principle were implemented in a new way, perhaps decreasing the months that sports are conducted in rainy, snowy and tornado weather. Nonetheless, it's vital to know that we are enough for whatever task we are handed for whatever we show up for. After all, Spirit will back us up.



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