

Listen to Life

Wisdom in Life's Stories

December 3, 2006

A free newsletter about learning and getting more from life by paying attention to our own stories and the stories of others, based on the presentations, writings, photography and workshops by Dion McInnis (www.dionmcinnis.com).
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Check out my new blog at blog.myspace.com/dionmcinnis for poetry, rambles and musings

LUKEWARM

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“American’s lives sure must be boring and tepid,” my oldest son said during one of our recent, regular conversations about life and living and the world. “They must be if marketers know we need ‘extreme’ deodorant and stuff to bring excitement to our lives.” I can’t disagree.

We live in a world of fence-riding, political correctness and tolerance taken to the point of absurdity. The only stretching people get is from leaning over backwards to not offend others at work, at home and in the community. “Correctness” has taken the place of genuine respect, and adventure has been replaced by sport vehicles decked out like luxury cars, “extreme” drinks and deodorants and television programming, including reality shows that have little to do with anyone’s real life. The greatest show of passion comes from the vitriol spewed by politicians more intent on bashing each other than leading our country. But I could digress with that topic, and will save that for another day.

We have lost our senses of true independence, self-reliance and self-respect. We have taken to safety, embraced risk aversion as a lifestyle, and belief that life is just. In these womb-temperature lives that we have curled into, we believe we’re safe and secure. And we’re tepid. Lukewarm. De-passioned and dispassionate.

I’m not a chapter and verse quotation guy, so I can’t tell you exactly where these lines are in the bible, but I recall the gist of the message clearly: “you are neither hot nor cold, so I spew you from my mouth.” I’ve cited them when employees feel they have become too emotional or passionate, or when I remind teens to never lose their personalities—in either case, I try to steer them away from tepidity.

One doesn’t need to be an “adventurer” to live a daring life. It takes daring to express an honest opinion, to speak your mind intelligently, to stand up for yourself or others, to try something new though the results may be embarrassing, to tell someone you love them. Adrenalin pumps when you stand for a cause, put meaning in your life, leap at a chance to make a difference, or explore your talents and abilities. Life is extreme if you live it, leaving little room for lukewarm.

Listen to Life is an electronic newsletter that presents lessons for living by listening to life, based on the writing, poetry, photography, presentations and workshops of Dion McInnis. Stories such as these inspired the book, “Listen to Life: Wisdom in Life’s Stories,” published in 2005, available at Barnes and Noble, Amazon and Borders. Dion’s next

book will share his views of being father and son.

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