

Good Advice

Have you ever received unwanted advice? Some people have a tendency to make judgments about your life and offer their recommendations for your situation without being asked. They mean well most of the time, but in the end where can you really find good advice?

Last fall my husband and I were visiting with our son's family in Hortonville while enjoying a delicious meal. There were a few conversations going on at once and I was in conversation with my grandson about swimming. He enjoys swimming and has been offering me tips as I continue to practice my newly acquired skill. I suggested that perhaps we could go swimming on Grandma Day, which is tradition I started with the grandchildren in honor of their birthday. In response, Alexa, the electronic information device from across the room piped up and said, "Well, I'm not sure about that". We all looked at each other and started laughing. I had not asked for her advice and was actually not too fond of the idea that "she" was listening in on our conversation. How could "she" judge whether swimming with my grandson was a good idea or not?!

I have thought about the impact technology continues to have on our lives and I wonder how many people are turning to electronic devices like Alexa, Google, Siri or some other named device for advice? Is this the way we want to make decisions in our lives? Do we actually want to base our decisions on the advice of an inanimate object sitting on a shelf across the room?

My work allows me to be with people who are experiencing difficult times in their life. I have the privilege of hearing their stories and helping them discover their next steps. These individuals don't need my advice or the advice of others, but rather they need to be heard while they uncover the wisdom they hold deep within. As they find their own good advice they begin to put the pieces of their life back together.

We as human beings need each other. We need others to hear our stories without being quick to give advice. We need others to just listen and we need to listen to others. There is no possible way that you or I can understand the heart of another. We can't. Even if we have been through similar circumstances we cannot know the path

another walks with all of their unique life experiences.

Technology cannot give advice. Remember this. Do not be quick to ask questions of an inanimate object expecting to get good advice. It may be able to supply data, statistics, and reminders, but it cannot give you advice. The spirit within provides good advice and we have access to this advice through relationships; relationships with people who allow us to be, who allow us time to discover the wisdom of our hearts. We also access our spiritual wisdom through our relationship with our higher power, the one who never interrupts our questioning.

The most powerful advice comes in the silence of presence. Being with another as they listen for the stirring of their own spiritual wisdom is an inspiring experience. Never underestimate the human connection and its ability to take us to a deeper location of good advice.

Questions to ponder:

- Where do I seek good advice?
- How does my spiritual relationship with a higher power affect my decisions?
- Who can I sit quietly with while I search my heart for answers in difficult times?

May God's Peace Be Yours,
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*Though good advice lies
deep within a person's
heart, the wise will
draw it out.* Proverbs 20:5

