

Sharing the Lane

Now that I was finally at the pool, selfish concerns floated away and I could begin praying for needs in this world, calmed by the serenity of the water. *Where should I start*, I thought. *I'll start at the top*. So, starting with the President, in my liquid prayer chamber, I began sending requests heavenward. Every time I lifted my arm out of the sparkling blue water, I could see the sun pleasantly peering down bursting into light through water drops. For me, nothing beats swimming laps to enter that prayer zone.

“Do you mind if I share the lane?” A grey haired gentleman stood shouting and cupping his mouth, as I slowed down nearing the pool’s edge for a turn.

I nodded my capped blue head, peered through hazy goggles and smiled, pointing to the left of the line which separated the lane I was in. I hadn’t shared a lane in a long time, but today I had a late start and the pool was busy. However, it was a beautiful day and I wasn’t about to let anything affect my happy-tude.

Within moments I was bobbing in the water and small waves began to throw off my normally easy strokes; I had to concentrate more. Flipping around to do my backstrokes I kept hitting the plastic line that separated, now, *our* lane, from the others. Mindful of a possible collision, I began looking up out of the water to see when and where he was in relation to me.

I was sharing a lane. No longer was this *my* lane. My prayers were distracted, my swimming disrupted and my former focus ...was gone. This unsettled water reminded me of entering a new relationship and the ripples and turbulence they cause. *Do I really want a relationship? To share my life and world again? Do I want to lose my life and my space again? God, am I willing to let you bring someone in my life if you do?*

“It’s hard being single, it’s harder being married,” my friend remarked quoting her counselor. “Yes, I agreed, all around us life is always hard...that’s why I’ve been taking it

one day at a time. Until we get to heaven, as much as we can, we need to just live peacefully together and love each other.

Gearing down, I finished my time in the water, losing track of my prayers somewhere back—laps ago.

“Thank you for sharing the lane,” the man with the blue eyes smiled at me as I ducked under the floating barrier, turning to go.

“You’re welcome,” I said, feeling goodhearted and right about the time today spent in the pool. My heart felt warmed by the brief appreciation from this stranger; I was grateful that I had made room for him to meet his goals too. *Isn’t this what life is all about?*

I mulled on the lesson of the morning. *Life is about living together side by side, close enough to be affected by the people in our world.* In my city the medium home square footage is around 2300 square feet, a dramatic increase from my grandparent’s little 900 square-footer. We live in an age where space is an issue and we can find it awkward to be too close to others. Yes, I thought, it was nice to share, and as for relationships there’s never a good reason to keep myself from sharing and caring. I think I’ll just keep my mind open and my lane free... from selfishness.

Do good, be rich in good works and be generous, willing to share. 1 Tim. 6:18

Lord, I have been single for so long that it is easy to be put out by the normal sharing that families live with on a daily basis. Forgive me for self-centered thinking and help me to open my heart so that you can bring people into my life. Please use others in the plans you have for me— and use me to bring about the plans you have for others. Amen.