

My Life's Purpose

By Lynne Glucoft

I grew up my whole life wanting to be a mother. I had no idea what job or occupation I wanted – it must have changed twenty or thirty times during the course of my childhood and I had seven jobs before I had kids. I used to put my stuffed animal under my blanket and put it over my stomach and pretend I was pregnant. Baby dolls were my favorite toys. So, when I became a mother for the first time, it was the most joyous time of my life. I did everything with little Michael that a first-time mother could do. I was heartbroken when at the age of 21 months; the doctor diagnosed him with autism. I knew something was wrong, he never played normally like other kids did but I certainly was not expecting to hear that word. I knew very little about it. But, how quickly I accepted it and learned about it. Although I had been told that he would “get better” because he started therapy so young, the progress was evident but slow. Michael is now almost eight. He's still not fully toilet trained and non-verbal. The severity of his condition hit me hard. Michael needs twenty-four hour supervision.

However, from the day he was born, I felt like Michael gave me a purpose in life. I don't think I quite knew who I was before he came along. Now I have a daughter, who's typical and has enriched my life even more. Presently, the purpose of my life has become the overwhelming task of doing (and I do mean this in every sense of the word) the most I can for Michael. Sometimes I try too hard and get disheartened when he's not progressing quickly enough. Sometimes I try too little because I'm so exhausted and drained. I feel like I give so much that I have no joy, other than his progress, in my own life. Most of all, though, when I reach Michael, there's no other high in the world I've ever experienced like it. I know that he needs me, that he appreciates me and all that I do for him. He works so hard because he knows he has his mom's love and support. That gives me such a feeling of satisfaction and self-gratification. I know now that is why I was put on this earth. I've always been told I have a lot of love in my heart. If that extra love is needed for this child, then I am glad I have it. Both my children are my life's blessing. Fueling Michael's progression has given me a purpose that I never had before. A passion that I never knew was there. A strength for learning and teaching others that I never gave myself credit for. For Michael's autism, I am thankful. I know that sounds ridiculous. But I love that kid as much or more than any mother could love a typical child.

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