

## Values

9/9/24

*Prompt: Values you were raised with.*

I can't remember being actually told to do 'this' or 'that' at home except for minor things like when my mother would pull up in the car from the grocery store, my Grandfather would say "Go help your mother." I think my family values just mostly came from osmosis. Once in awhile I would do something wrong though, and was corrected by my mother, still in her calm, quiet way. I, of course, would feel terrible. I'm sure it would have been so much easier to be yelled at. If you get yelled at, you can go away feeling put upon. A gentle remonstrance only leaves you feeling guilty.

I did all the 'boy' type chores around the house because, being an only child, I was the young one with all of the energy as well as the time. I can't remember anyone asking me to do them, let alone ordering me. It was just the thing to do. I think I actually preferred the things like shoveling snow and mowing the lawn to 'girl' chores like vacuuming or dusting.

Being raised by a mother and her father had its advantages and disadvantages. There was never any disagreement that I was aware of. Every evening they would do the dishes together, him washing and her drying. They would discuss plans for future meals and events and keep up on each other's lives. There was never a voice raised in argument in our household. My mother even used a tiny bell to call me home from play rather than loudly calling for me. The down side of this is that I

didn't have the opportunity to watch parents model the skill of working through disagreements.

At my Universalist church, values were a little more explicit but certainly compatible with those at home. One important concept that became a core value for me was that no one has an absolute corner on the truth. It is important to listen to others' ideas and perspectives to broaden your own understanding. That was a really fundamental concept of Universalists, going back to the idea that there are many paths to God. That was why I voted against the merger of the Universalists with the Unitarians. I found my Unitarian peers very smug, like they knew what was true and others did not. History will tell you that I lost that vote, but I adjusted. I found out that all Unitarians were, thankfully, not like my teenage peers.

In raising my own children, I kept with my mother's quiet approach to child rearing. As adults, I commented to them that they never really rebelled as teens. Their rejoinder was that there was nothing to rebel against. How disappointing for them.