

We are all together on this journey we call life...



BY MICHELLE BOIVIN

Well, I am finally back at 'er... writing that is. My apologies to our faithful GRN readers for missing last week's column! The past two weeks have been a complete blur—filled with endless meetings, client projects, home renovations, potty training, teenage angst, piles of laundry and not enough time in the day to do it all!

On top of everything, my entire family (including me) was sick in bed for three days with the flu. Not a pretty sight – good thing we have two washrooms!

Needless to say, a few deadlines were not met—including last week's column. I actually got a few phone calls and emails from readers wondering where their weekly "story to inspire" was. Wow! I must admit—it sure is nice to be missed!

And to make up for lost time, I will share a neat little story now that we can all learn from.

A few days ago, I pulled into the 7-11 parking lot on William Avenue for a nice hot cappuccino. With minus 30 temps and some time to kill between meetings, I ran quickly inside (so my nose wouldn't freeze off) and grabbed a few goodies.

Inside the store was a young woman and two little kids. She was pacing back and forth while the two little ones ran around the aisles. As I paid for my stuff, I could hear her voice rise in frustration.

Part of me wanted to mind my own business, but judging from the sound of her voice and the look on the kids faces, I could sense that something was not right. I snuck a few glances her way. For a moment, I wasn't sure whether to approach her or to avoid the ensuing drama all together.

Before I had a chance to do either, she was out the door making her way towards the payphone. As I got closer to my vehicle, I could hear yelling and the repeated slamming of the handset. "See," I thought to myself, "this girl is trouble. She probably got in a fight with her boyfriend or something".

But when I got to my van, I could see two sweet little round faces pressed up against the store window. So I turned back.

Walking up to the girl, I asked her if she needed any help. At first, she looked at me with suspicion. But then her face softened and she said she had locked her keys in her car. She was calling her brother on the phone for help - but he couldn't hear her – hence the yelling, and in frustration she had bashed the phone a few times. Boy was my judgment wrong!

So we rounded up the kids, got in the van and drove home to pick up her extra set of keys. We chatted a bit, and I quickly learned that this young woman was so not what I had perceived.

A single mother, she had moved to the city from the reserve to further her

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and connect with a young woman who could have been me—13 years ago.

In that moment, I was reminded that we are all together on this journey we call life.

Each of us struggles at one time or another. And sometimes, all we need is a friendly face to stop and say hi, to lend a helping hand, or to show some kindness and concern. As Aboriginal people, it is our role and our responsibility to work together to help one another. And to Candice, if you're reading this – keep your eyes on the prize and believe in yourself. You will get there. And the view is awesome!

I welcome all feedback and story ideas...Got a "story to inspire"? Drop me a line at mboivin1@mts.net

education. Enrolled at Yellow Quill College, she was taking pre-med courses to upgrade and get into University in the fall. She went on to tell me about her son and how he was her inspiration to succeed. I shared a bit about my own journey, and how the birth of my first daughter gave me the kick in the pants I needed get my life into gear.

As we drove back to the store, I realized that this was not just a chance meeting, but instead an opportunity put before me by the Creator. An opportunity to learn and be humbled by my judgments, a chance to encourage

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