

Odette's Story – What Have You Done With My Husband!

I rolled over and looked at the man in bed next to me to make sure he was my husband. He looked right. But the last few days made me wonder.

I have been at my family for years to improve their eating habits. We had relative success at dinner time because they were on their own if they didn't like the healthy food I served. But my husband and teenagers asserted their right to eat cereal for breakfast and pizza for lunch, and I had no control over those meals. I could slip them eggs or green smoothies occasionally, but pressuring them to let go of their favorite foods met with lots of resistance.

Then I got a job.

I felt really bad because I think my family still needs me for many reasons. But I took the job and comforted myself that they all *knew* how to eat better, they just didn't do it. No more getting up early to cook breakfast that would go half uneaten. No more folded laundry delivered to their dressers, no more drop-everything-to-deliver-the-forgotten-backpack to school, nor rides when somebody missed a bus.

And then the miracle happened. The *moment* I let go they started taking care of business. My husband admitted that granola and milk was always followed two hours later by a crash. (How many times had I told him that that granola was more like candy?) He asked me to make green protein shakes two mornings in a row and then he started making them for himself! My son, too. From how he talks you would think he invented protein shakes and avocados. (He can be a little hard to take, but over all, I'm thrilled.) My daughter took a micron more than the typical "no-thank-portion" of sautéed greens. And to top it all off, my husband is the one lecturing the kids about balancing protein, carbs and fat.

Who are you and what have you done with my husband!

Even though I actively work at not judging people at Suppers meetings, I was still pressuring my family to eat differently. Isn't that a form of judgment? Even though I knew, knew, knew to expect a logical miracle, I was surprised when letting go produced the exact results I'd been trying to force for years.

I missed my chance to get this right by starting from when my kids were little. It's much easier when you start early. But I'm grateful that I got a second chance. Once I understood the importance of eating whole food, I didn't lower my standards; I set a good example. I made blunders, but good things came from our struggles. At just the right moment, I let go and they soared.

Sometimes it's pretty hard to sit back and listen to them tell me all the things I've been telling them for years, as if they just thought it up all on their own. So I just take a breath and listen. There's no better way to internalize a lesson than to teach it to somebody else.