



1000 MARBLES

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not have to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are the most enjoyable. A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the kitchen with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me tell you about it.

I turned the volume up on my radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning talk show. I heard an older chap with a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business himself. He was talking about "a thousand marbles" to someone named Tom. I was intrigued and sat down to listen to what he had to say.

"Well Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well, but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. It's hard to believe that a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad that you missed your daughters dance recital ." He continued , "Let me tell you something, Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities in life."

And that's when he began to explain his theory of "A THOUSAND MARBLES."

"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about 75 years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on the average, folks live about seventy-five years. Now then, I multiplied 75 times 25 and came up with 3900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their lifetime." "Now stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part. It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in detail," he went on, "and by the time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to go to three toy stores to round up 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside a large, clear plastic container in my workshop next to the radio. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away. I found that by watching the marble diminish, I focused more on the really important things to me in my life. Think about what I said, the really important things to me. There is nothing like watching your time left on earth run out to help get your priorities straight. Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then God blessed me with a little extra time to be with my loved ones."

Then he concluded with, "It is nice to talk with you Tom, I hope you choose to spend more time with your loved ones and less time at work, and I hope to meet you again some day. Have a good morning."

You could have heard a pin drop when he finished. Even the shows moderator sat quietly for a few moments. The old man had given us a lot to think about. I had planned on doing some work that morning and then go to the gym. Instead, I went upstairs and wore my wife a kiss."C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast."

"What brought this on?" She asked with a smile. "Oh nothing special," I said. "it's been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

HAVE A GREAT WEEKEND! MAY ALL YOUR SATURDAYS BE SPECIAL AND MAY YOU HAVE MANY HAPPY YEARS AFTER YOU LOSE ALL YOUR MARBLES.