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GOLF BALLS and a little HOT CHOCOLATE

Written By: Harry Gribnitz

A philosophy professor stood before his class with a very large empty mayonnaise jar in his hands. Wordlessly, he proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He asked his students if the jar was full. The class agreed that it was full. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. With a little shaking of the jar, the pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. Once again the professor asked his students if the jar was full. They agreed it was full. The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. The sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with an enthusiastic and unanimous "yes".

The professor then produced a thermos bottle from under the table. He poured a thermos full of hot chocolate into the jar "filled" with golf balls, pebbles and sand. The steaming hot chocolate effectively filled the empty spaces in the jar with liquid and filled the classroom with the smell of chocolate. The students laughed as the soothing smell filled their nostrils.

"Now" said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things – your family, your children, your friends, your health, your favorite passions- things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else – the small stuff."

"If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the golf balls and pebbles. The same goes for life. If you spend all of your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play and talk with your children. Take your partner out to dinner. Play another 18. There is always time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the hot chocolate represented. The professor smiled, "I'm glad you asked; it just goes to show that no matter how full your life may seem, there is always room for a little hot chocolate to make it feel and smell even better."

Thanks,

Harry Gribnitz

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PS: I would like to thank one of those special people in my life for sharing this story. I would also like to remind you that it is not too late to adopt a special friend into your life. Please see the opportunity on the back of this letter from the Humane Society of Kent County.