

The Sewing Machine Tipped Over

Love and encouragement, linked together, become a powerful force in human interaction. Max Lucado, author and minister, tells of such a story in his book *You Changed My Life: Stories of Real People with Remarkable Hearts*. Here it is:

Bill was 16 years old when his father suffered a health crisis and consequently had to leave his business. Even after Mr. Tucker regained his health, the Tucker family struggled financially, barely getting by.

Mr. Tucker, an entrepreneurial sort, came up with an idea. He had won the bid to reupholster the chairs at the local movie theater. This stunned his family. He had never stitched a seat. He didn't even own a sewing apparatus.

Still, he found someone to teach him the skill and located an industrial-strength machine. The family scraped together every cent they had to buy it. They drained savings accounts and dug coins out of the sofa. Finally, they had enough.

It was a fine day when Bill rode with his Dad to pick up the equipment. Bill remembers a jovial, hour-long trip discussing the bright horizon this new opportunity afforded them. They loaded the machine in the back of their truck and secured it right behind the cab. Mr. Tucker then invited his son to drive home.

Here's what Bill said happened:

As we were driving along, we were excited, and I, like any 16-year-old driver, was probably not paying enough attention to my speed. Just as we were turning on the cloverleaf to get on the expressway, I will never, ever, ever forget watching that sewing machine, which was already top-heavy, begin to tip. I slammed on the brakes, but it was too late. I saw it go over the side.

I jumped out and ran around the back of the truck. As I rounded the corner, I saw our hope and our dream lying on its side in pieces. And then I saw my Dad just looking. All of his risk and all of his endeavor and all of his struggling and all of his dream, all of his hope to take care of his family, was lying there, shattered.



You know what comes next, don't you? "Stupid, punk kid driving too fast, not paying attention, ruined the family by taking away our livelihood." But that's not what he said.

He looked right at me, "Oh, Bill, I am so sorry." And he walked over, put his arms around me, and said, "Son, this is going to be okay."

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That is a father's love for his son. With those words and that hug, he invested more in that teenager than what was spent on the sewing machine. Bill, you see, talked about that experience and what it meant for him for years to come.

In the busyness of the world we live in, it's easy to overlook such teachable moments – for children, yes, but for those we lead in Life Care and Century Park.

It was President Theodore Roosevelt who said: "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

And the respect that arises because of that truth is the basis for any good relationship.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful (1 Corinthians 13:4-5 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter