

The Mayonnaise Jar and the Two Cups of Coffee!

Materials: large empty jar, golf balls, pebbles, sand, two cups of coffee.

When things in your life seem too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the two cups of coffee.

Stand before the group with the items in front of you (hide the coffee). When the room is quiet, wordlessly pick up a large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceed to fill it with golf balls. Turn and ask the group if the jar is full. *Most agree that it is.*



Pick up the pebbles and pour them into the jar. Shake the jar lightly. The pebbles should roll into the open areas between the golf balls. Ask the group if the jar is full. *Most agree it is.*

Pick up the box of sand and pour it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. Ask once more if the jar is full. *Most will respond that it is.*

Now produce the two cups of coffee from your hidden area. Pour the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. *The group usually laughs.*

“Now, I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things- your family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions- and 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, and 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 pebbles or the golf balls. 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 with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18.”

“There will always be 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.”

Wait and see if anyone asks what the coffee represented. If not, tell them. “This goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there’s always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend.”

A friend sent me this demonstration to read. My immediate reaction to this was to share it with all of you. I interpret the golf balls to be our children, the reason we are all here tonight. I cannot think of a better way to spend our time than with our sons & daughters. I encourage each one of you to sign up as a leader, committee member, or event chairperson and spend that time with your children and their friends. You may be surprised that the number of golf balls in your life may grow!