



Life Saver Ministries
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Dear Life Savers,

Cathie went on her “Annual Girls Weekend” recently. She goes every year, hence the *annual* part of the name, with 3 friends from high school. They reminisce, catch up, go out to eat, shop, go to the beach...that sort of thing. I don’t mind. She always comes home, at least so far.

The only potential problem is that it leaves me unsupervised for 3 days.

It seems to be a fact that women outlive men by a considerable margin (about 5 years), and married men outlive single men by an even greater margin (about 13 years). There are apparently genetic reasons for women living longer than men, but I attribute the longevity gap between married and unmarried men to unmarried men being unsupervised.

A typical unsupervised men’s conversation usually goes something like this. Unsupervised Man 1: Hey, look at that. That’s awesome. Unsupervised Man 2: I bet you can’t do that. Unsupervised Man 1: Hold my beer.

My recent unsupervised weekend was pretty uneventful. I got my motorcycle inspected and went for a nice ride. I replaced the air and gas filters and spark plug on my chainsaw, then unsuccessfully tried to get it started. After many fruitless pulls of the starter cord I was too frustrated and exhausted to clean the carburetor, so I left that for another day. I watched a *Die Hard* and *Animal House* on Netflix. You know, uneventful guy stuff.

Saturday night, I was browsing Facebook and saw a post about a new rock wall climbing establishment that was located a few miles from my house. They were having a Grand Opening Party, with *free* wall climbing. Being unsupervised, how could I resist? I hopped in the truck and headed over.

I entered the establishment, walked up to the counter and said to the young man standing there, “Hi, I’d like to give this a try.” He asked if I had a harness and climbing shoes. I thought my *I’d like to give this a try* statement implied I had never done it before and, therefore, didn’t have climbing equipment, but maybe not. When I said no, he handed me a harness and said the sneakers I was wearing would work. Then he said that if I needed help, just ask any of their friendly staff persons/instructors.

I walked into the climbing area, looked around, and immediately started to wonder if this was such a great idea. Forty foot walls look a lot higher standing next to them than they do from a distance. I found a friendly staff person, who showed me how to get into the harness and then asked me if I had done this before. I said I hadn’t. He asked if I had ever climbed anything. I said, “A ladder.” He didn’t seem impressed.

The friendly staff person, who spoke with an Australian accent, not that it matters, led me to one of the walls that had auto belay equipment that would catch me and lower me down slowly if I fell or just didn’t want to, or was unable to, climb back down. He showed me how to attach my harness to the auto belay thing and explained how to push off and kind of walk down the wall. Then he suggested I climb up a little way and try it.

I climbed up about 6 feet, let go with my hands, and rather, than walking down the wall as I expected, found myself lying flat on my back on the thankfully well-padded floor. For some reason, I found this very funny and was laughing. The instructor helped me up and explained that it takes a little while for the auto belay to catch, and that I should have climbed higher before letting go. I think maybe he could have explained that earlier.

I quickly got over my embarrassment and started back up the wall, foregoing another trial of the auto belay. About halfway up, I realized this was more difficult than it looked. Some of the hand/fooholds are pretty small and are not located in very convenient places. Of course, my being an out of shape old guy didn’t help.

I made it to the top, and given my recent experience with the auto belay, I decided to climb back down. It was fun. I didn’t die.

Experienced climbers don't rely on auto belay mechanisms. They have a trusted and experienced friend (belay) on the other end of the rope to catch them if they fall and to give them the confidence to attempt difficult portions of the climb.

In life, everyone needs a trusted and experienced friend to catch them when they fall or to give assurance when they face difficult challenges, because everyone falls and faces difficulties. The young ladies who come to My Father's House either don't have people like that, or the ones they trusted weren't trustworthy or experienced enough to keep them from getting hurt or giving up.

My Father's House is a life climbing school. Our staff and volunteers are trustworthy and experienced people who are eager to help these young moms learn to climb the obstacles of life in a safe and loving atmosphere. It takes time to trust someone to be there if you fall. We are willing to take all the time our moms need to build that trust, so that they can climb higher in life.

For belaying, climbers use what's called a dynamic rope. It is designed to absorb the energy of a falling climber by stretching as the rope tightens. This reduces the impact of a fall. The parenting program at My Father's House is designed, not to prevent our residents from ever falling, but to reduce the impact of a fall and give them the confidence they need to reach for educational or job opportunities they might otherwise believe are out of reach.

Experienced climbers will eventually climb solo. They will rely on the skills they have learned and the strengths and reflexes they have developed to meet the challenges of climbing on their own. In the same way, our young moms leave My Father's House and rely on the skills they learned and the strengths they developed to meet the challenges of life for themselves and their children.

One of the cardinal rules of climbing is that the belayer never lets go of the rope. Our moms know that we will be there for them for as long as we can, but more importantly, God will be there for them and their children for the rest of their lives. He won't let go.

Thank you for being part of our belaying team. Happy Mother's Day!



This is Jayvian. He will be one year old next month. Jayvian is always smiling and brings smiles to all of us every day.

Our Annual Walk the Walk for Homeless Children is coming up quickly. It's going to be held on **Saturday, June 8th at 10 AM** (Registration 9 AM) on the beautiful Merrimack River. Please join us for a lot of fun and raise funds to help the kids at My Father's House. You may even get to hit me with a pie. Go to www.mfhwalk.org for details.



To benefit the children of My Father's House

**Saturday
June 8, 2019**
DCR'S Sanapas Pavilion
Pawtucket Blvd, Lowell, MA
You can make a difference
in the life of a child.

MY FATHER'S HOUSE
For more information
www.mfhwalk.org

In His service,
Kevin
Kevin Coffey