

The Toddler, The C-Word, The Indian Consulate, and Artspeak

The Toddler now has begun "parroting" – repeating what we say in our house. So what this means is that The Toddler can now be heard to say things like "The Fireman Came Back," "Uh Oh! Phone!" and "Oh Sh*t." I thought the minute I heard the inevitable swear word leak out of The Toddler's mouth I would completely freak out. But it's just kind of amusing. Since this is a phrase commonly put forth by both me and The Husband, we cannot point an accusatory finger at the other. We have to just laugh embarrassedly and try to remember to modify our behavior the next time we stub our toes or drop something important.

Now, the other day, The Toddler put forth a sentence with The C-Word, and this was a different story.

"Gram. Went Church. Gram Went Church."

What???

"Gram Went Church."

All motion stops. Husband and I look at each other, silently, a terrible feeling in the pit of my stomach.

Husband: "Did he just say what I think he said?"

Gram: "Gram Went Church."

Me: "Yes."

Where did he pick up this kind of language? He's never been to church. We have a multi-religious family and believe that God, Goddess, Energy, or whatever you want to call it, can be found everywhere, and not just in Church, and we believe you need to be Good All The Time, and not just on Sundays. We don't talk about Church here.

What does it mean for the C-Word to have elapsed from my baby's mouth? There will be the day in the future that I'm dreading, when we'll have to explain to him that even though a classmate of his says he's going to hell because he doesn't go to the same church,

that doesn't mean he's really going to hell. That's the discussion I dread. But in the long run, I know everything will be ok. One day, The Toddler will be The Teenager and will decide what religion he will adhere to based upon his own beliefs and experiences.

I thought about The Toddler going to Church today as I drove up to Chicago to the Indian Consulate to get my Indian Visa. I stepped out of the car in front of the NBC building and stared up at the skyscrapers like I was the country bumpkin in a movie. There were all sorts of people all lined up in rows in the ground floor of the building waiting in line to get into one of those yelling audience talk shows. The Consulate was on the 8th floor and was filled with women wearing the most beautiful dresses I've ever seen in my life and more people waiting for something. You kind of get the feeling that people in a big city spend most of their time waiting for stuff. The Consulate was too busy to process my application today so I left my passport and photo Ids with them and then called my parents to complain, and my dad replied to me that I should know an Alderman, and then I spent a good 15 minutes feeling bad for letting my father down by not knowing an Alderman. Then I went shopping.

On the way back from Chicago I practiced a 5-minute Art speech I will give tomorrow, for work. The speech is a tour that I will give to a class from a different school and it's a speech where I have to do Artspeak. Now, because I cannot speak Artspeak, and it would be a bad Art Speech if it didn't include Artspeak, I practiced some Art Words for my 5-minute speech while driving in the rental car for 3 hours. This gave me 36 practices. I practiced saying the words "informed by," "concepts," "explored," and I especially practiced saying "The boundaries between performance and surveillance have become blurred."