

Opinion: Learning from strangers

By Debra Carpenter, Huffington Post

“Come on, it’s time to go! I’m burning up out here!”

I sat at the neighborhood park, ablaze with the summer heat and more than a little irritated that my daughter was taking so long to finish her “last” go around on the jungle gym. She continued to play, blissfully unaware of my growing aggravation.

I called for her again, this time with a scary edge to my voice – “I SAID, IT’S TIME TO GO! WE HAVE THINGS TO DO!”

The woman sitting next to me turned to me, touched my arm, and smiled understandingly. If she had smiled any other way – sarcastically, condescendingly, or even gleefully – I might have yelled at her, too.

But no, she seemed understanding and kind and way better at the parenting thing than I was. Her two grandchildren were peacefully playing and had been since we got there. Without her saying a word, I could already tell – this woman was wise.

Read the whole story