

Even though I was alone and nobody was around to hear me I couldn't do it, at first.

"Remember to keep talking to your baby," says a grandmotherly co-worker. "Even if she doesn't respond you should keep up a conversation."

Talking to myself was very difficult to do. In the beginning I had to practice. Later when I was speaking with or at or to my newborn I felt as though I was talking to myself. "I hope no one hears me," I said out loud. My voice bounced from the nursery wall to the window and down to the diaper pail. "Whoa, that was like a tree falling in the woods and no one was there to hear it, except me," I muttered. Muttering was more acceptable. It seemed more natural. I have heard many people in the library, for instance, mutter when they thought that they were whispering. Mumbling seemed to work for me too. No one would look askance if I mumbled to myself. But this speaking aloud so that the baby could hear my voice was startling.

So, time traveled onward however and I went along with it, not muttering, not mumbling but speaking my two cents with every move. "We are turning left now." I would tell the crowd of three children riding along with me in the car. "We are going to the store to buy milk. Oh, here we are turning right. The parking lot is where we will stop."

After four years of a one sided conversation I lost all contact with adults...at least intelligent talk. "I am going to go to the bathroom," I would say. "Be good." However, the women I was with celebrating a birthday at a tea party understood. "Okay mommy," would be the reply.

Now, the three little listeners are grown dealing with their own mutterings. And I am still talking to myself.

"I wonder if this is the right blue for my quilt?" I ask myself. I find that I spoke out loud. If the bolts of fabric didn't muffle my question each customer would respond. I look around and see a shopper to my right (I know she is to my right because of all the turns in the car. Sharp, Huh?) The quilter doesn't notice. Whew! Got away with that one," I mutter.

"Oh, here are the batiks," comes a voice from the left. I look with a quick glance to see if this lady was with a friend or alone, like me. Hoping that she was alone would mean that I wasn't alone in speaking to myself. Drat! She was with a friend. I knew each of them so I saunter over to speak with two adults."I am trying to decide which batik would look the best with my wall hanging, one quilter says. She shows to me her wall hanging. She was smart. She brought the masterpiece with her; something that I did not do.

"I wish I brought my unfinished quilt," I mumble. She thinks that I am commenting on her dilemma. "What do you think?" She looks at me and asks, hoping that I will speak up.

"We're turning right", says I as I guide them to the blues. "Will this dark blue work?" I say out loud, my voice reaches the right and the left of the storefront. I am with adults and they are listening.

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