

**The Important Things...**

In an old box of pictures and other memorabilia that Mrs. Anne dropped off to keep at Collins Home, I came across a tiny worn book of "New Prayers". The pages are yellowed, and the binding is taped together. The verbiage and sentence structure further add to its age. Each little prayer is short and asks for guidance in some of the simplest of life's tasks. For this article, I'd like to share one of the prayers that I hope for each of us at Collins Home, "Recognizing Things That Are Important". "I pray thee, God, to give me perception to recognize those things in life that are important. May I never be too busy to stop and listen when a child or friend wants to talk about something that matters very much. From the many outside tasks that call, as household and family duties diminish, help me to sense the ones that count, the ones where I might help the most. In our home, may the things that matter never be crowded out by the conventional or trivial. May I be aware and informed on the great issues of our times. Help me to live fully, enjoying the busy stream of everyday happenings but not so bound by them but that they can be left when intuition, sharpened by thy spirit, alerts me to the things that matter more. Amen."

We have a lot of 'moments' with our kids that may seem simple or even routine but make a big difference in the lives of our children. A sweet example of this happened one day last week when one of our younger children came in from school and as I lightly hugged his little shoulders and asked, "Hey sweetie, how was school today?" In the sweetest little voice full of inquiry, he responded with, "Did you miss me?" I was a little surprised because I was expecting the usual answer to my question, "It was okay." But in that moment, I realized this little boy needed more. He needed hope and a reassurance that he was cared for and loved...that he was important to us. So, as I looked into those hopeful, yet somewhat wary eyes, I said, "Why yes I did miss you and I'm so happy to see you." The smile in his eyes and the hug I received reminded me that loving our children and giving them hope is one of the most important things we do at Collins Home.