

We're All Part Smart

By Marilyn Reeves

Whenever I feel like a total loser, whenever I feel like I know nothing at all – like when I'm watching *Jeopardy!* and only get about ten percent of the questions right – I remember one of Jim's favorite sayings: "We're all part smart."

The average person probably has about a million bits of information rattling around in their head. Things they learned in school. Things their parents taught them. Things they learned by reading, watching, and observing. And each of us has a slightly different conglomeration of knowledge from the person sitting next to us.

I'm not talking about an Einstein or a Steven Hawking, whose knowledge of the Universe exceeded the average person's by about tenfold. But even they didn't know everything. In fact, like the rest of us, they said the more things they discovered, the more they realized there was infinitely more to learn.

In my case, my ageing brain has forgotten half the things I used to know. I used to be a good speller. Not anymore. Nowadays I rely on Spellcheck to correct my spelling and in some cases have to resort to the thesaurus to find a word I want to use that simply won't come to mind.

The majority of people are able to learn and retain far more facts and figures – often through rote memorization – than I am able to do. And many of the people I know have had far more life experiences than I have had. Better education. More opportunities to travel. Gotten involved with social and political movements. And most are far better at socializing than I am.

My one forte is that I am perceptive. I have the ability to see the forest and not be blinded by the trees. I can see where certain trends are likely to lead, and can often see below the surface as to what makes a person tick. While I have a few bits and pieces of knowledge still floating around in my head, being able to understand people and situations and predict a likely outcome of unfolding events are the primary gifts I've been given.

I may not know many things, but like my dear friend Jim used to say, "I know this much is true: We're all part smart."