

## **She had a license to make you feel good A fleeting moment is enough time to make you think**

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A few weeks ago, I had one of those magical moments, one of those new ways of looking at things that makes life much rosier.

It happened on Creedmoor Road. In the midst of the Preludes, Mercedeses, Acuras and Cadillacs desperately weaving in and out, trying to gain that extra second of time, was a slightly battered blue Volkswagen bug putt-putting along.

I had just finished glaring at the manicured, impeccably dressed lady in a brand new Thunderbird who had a seemingly permanent frown etched into her face and was just a bit too close to my bumper, when the little bug pulled up next to me at the light. It was driven by a dark-haired woman with earphones and a gentle smile.

Her license plate: "IT'S ME."

Then I looked over and saw the crayoned sign taped in her window. In a child's handwriting, it read: "I may be messy and misplace things but no one dies from it so it's OK."

I couldn't make out the credit, written in red felt-tip pen, but the author, and the woman who proudly displayed this handmade credo made my week.

I have a wonderful image of this woman, someone whose dishes aren't always done, but her kids bring their friends home because Mom is "fun." A stark contrast to the rest of us, fighting each other for space on the four-lane career track we chase down each morning.

The woman and her VW gave me back my rose-colored glasses and rejuvenated the child in me. Sometimes, I think, we try so hard to be grown up that we forget that play is as important a part of life as work.

Her philosophy will take me a long way when the laundry's piling up, bills need to be paid, the baby's crying for attention, and I feel pulled to pieces. Maybe some women can do it all, but I suspect most of us have permanent frowns like the woman in the Thunderbird. And the kids don't bring friends home because the living room, dining room, etc. are off-limits.

Maybe I can't do it all, but I can have it all. A happy child, a happy husband, and, most important, a happy me. Dust bunnies may invade the bedroom and cat hairs dot the sink, but that won't kill me or my family.

"I may be messy and misplace things, but no one dies from it so it's OK" is now taped to my bathroom mirror, a reminder of what's really important.

As the light turned green, the Thunderbird swerved and got in front, racing down the road. I kept pace with the Volkswagen, trying to get the lady's attention so I could at least thank her with a nod. She was in her own world, a fine one from what I could see.

When we pulled up at the next light, the Thunderbird was there, idling angrily next to us.

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