

Losing Things

By Chris Spendlove

I don't know about the rest of you, but one of the worst things in the world (aside from oh, say the Holocaust and maybe the Disney Channel) is losing things, especially when those things are things like your wallet, keys, or iPod, and most especially when they should not be lost because you left them where you always leave them. To me, losing these essential, nigh vital possessions is like a stab in the heart--you rely heavily on them, and when they are not where you expect them to be, you are like a sailing ship without the wind. You (or at least I) feel so betrayed--betrayed by the item(s) in question for leaving you helpless and searching; betrayed by the laws of reality for warping themselves in such a way that your world is topsy-turvy; betrayed by your memory for being a cloudy, impregnable soup that won't work when you need it most (but then remembers something hilarious your brother did at the most inopportune times e.g. in church, during a tense moment with a friend/parent, etc.).

There are a few stages that one experiences when they begin to realize something is lost (I have provided some commentary):

1. Denial "Oh, it's not lost, I just put it in that OTHER place that I sometimes... put it..." FALSE. Your lost item is NOT there. Nor is it in the OTHER other place you sometimes put it, nor is it in the usual or unusual places.
2. Frantic panic "Holy cow! what am I gonna do?? I NEED my wallet so I can go to the gym! I NEED my phone so I can get that super-important, business-related phone call that is happening today!" Your first problem here is saying the word "NEED". The the people who govern the laws of reality are jerks, and, by saying you "NEED" the lost item, you are only digging the hole deeper for yourself. Try reverse psychology--"Oh, it's not THAT important... I mean, I don't mind working out at home... or missing the phone call that could make or break my career... whatever, man." Second, by panicking, your body, depending on what kind of person you are, cajoles you into one of the two following stages: anger (what I do) or depression.
3. ANGER "GAH!! How could I lose THAT?!? I am absolutely IRATE!!! I've checked all of the usual, unusual, impossible, and outlandish places in this house, in the cars, and in every retail or eating establishment I've visited in the last month!!" Then, depending on how mad you really are, the expletives start to come. But only under your breath, lest God punish you further for having a filthy mouth.
4. Depression "Whatever... I don't even care anymore.. I'll just tell Mr. Potter to give the job to someone more responsible and dependable.. Someone who can keep track of their things... I'm the worst. Man. Man..." This gets you nowhere, except maybe if your mom is listening, she'll help you look for whatever you lost. She hasn't the foggiest idea of where it might be, but the gesture helps soften the pain.
Then, when (or IF, I should say) you finally find the thing in the place you thought it'd NEVER be (or maybe it WAS actually in a really hidden place), you experience a peculiar mixture of joy, embarrassment, anger, and gratitude. You vow, with God as your witness, that you will never lose this thing again. You might make some remark to your mom about how you need to put GPS tracking devices on your things, and then go upstairs and play video games or read to calm your shaken nerves.

5 days later that thing is lost again.

This process is a vicious cycle--once you go through the trauma, your spirits are even more fragile, so you are prone to misplace items, which begets the cycle again, which deteriorates your self-confidence, which begets the cycle again..

My only suggestion is to buy a house that is shaped like a circle (cylinder) or maybe a sphere. Paint the walls white, and have white flooring (perhaps a soft off-white or eggshell white would be permissible). Have white furniture, no interior walls, and raise your bed, tables, chairs, and ottomans (not the Turkish kind--the footy ones that make it so contemporary cozy...) 3 feet off the ground. By taking these minor precautions, the entire ordeal of losing things can, theoretically, be entirely eliminated.