

A backward series of short thoughts...

Jacque Dorazio



THE LAST PAR

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**I never really gave much thought to the game
until that last hole . . .**

GAME CHANGING

My husband gifted me a set of golf clubs years ago while living in Ohio. My priorities in life at that moment did not include golf. I had enough on my plate than learn a game that appeared to be a crap shoot with each round. . .

Gee, seems a bit like my personal game of life.

Years passed. We moved to our island vacation home in Georgia to enjoy nice weather, the beach, kayak, and perhaps learn how to golf! However, six years after that move we realized it is different to vacation there than to live there permanently. We moved to a 55+ golfing community in Florida.

Once settled, the idea to finally learn how to play golf was initiated and the lessons began. A few games ensued. I liked the game, although frustrating. I knew what I did wrong with my swing yet I still did it wrong again. It was good to meet new people, seasoned golfers, newbies to the game, and hell, I did get some needed exercise. Then, after a dozen or so games, the global pandemic reared it's ugly Covid head.

We were thankful we had moved here. Most of the world was in a lockdown with a shelter-in-place directive. Without driving, we could merely stroll out our front door, walk the trails, ride our bikes, and golf! The holes on the course were fitted with PVC pipe to avoid sticking your hand in the possibly Covid infected hole and not remove the flag. A six foot social distancing range was put in place between people out in public.

A golf game was scheduled one morning. We were paired with a couple women and off we went. The first hole I get my club and go tee off. My husband, Nick yells out, "Devo! Where's your golf shoes?" OMG! I never changed from my sandals when we left home!! Oh, I'll be ok I replied. He was not happy with my stupidity, neither was I! My game was truly sucky that day. Midway through the course I had a couple one over pars. At one point I almost slipped on the grass ... dumb ass I thought. I walked carefully, sideways on the fairways and greens. The two women were good golfers. Each had undergone replacements of lower extremities so they were allowed to drive their carts on the fairways. How nice I thought. But heck, they are this good with physical challenges... what's my excuse?

Ok, 9th hole! Nice straight shot to the green, going to make par on the last hole! Grabbed my putter and headed to my ball only 6 feet away and down I went. My ankle was like a football player you see on tv after a play, no ankle looks like that....

A NEW CHAPTER

Keep your head down and whack it!

As a newbie to this game of golf, I am also a newbie to this new lifestyle. Nick and I often kidded about moving to this “bubble” in Florida. He calls it the toe tag house. I think of it as the campus of the 3 steps to the end.... independent living, assisted, and finally nursing. If someone had told me I would be living here I’d tell them no way! The new life style is an environment of beautifully, maintained landscaping, community pools and lots of golf courses. It’s a mix of mainly northerners who escaped winter’s wrath and now, throughout the year, actively live out their days. Our home is among a concentration of 55+ peeps covering three counties. Thankfully, we are in our own micro bubble, privacy on each side and back of our lanai.

The show begins each morning as the peeps begin their day on the trail walking their canine companions or with new friends. There are roller skaters, bikes, even some Segways. In the park there are the peeps that diligently work out on the equipment while others stroll the paved paths under the live oaks. The road is a calm procession of vehicles; golf carts, bicycles, classic cars, and motorcycles. When we get really old the lanai will be a great people watching vantage

point! And why, you may be thinking, is this even worth writing about?

All my life I have been fascinated by human beings. I have wondered why they tick for other reasons than physicality. From my young years I have crossed paths with so many types: stable, unstable, genuine, mean, or just bullshitters. Hmmm, perhaps the description of golfer's describing their game! In our past professional world Nick and I became detached from the peeps, or sheeple as I tend to think of them. We offered our services to the public over forty years. Nick, with a background in audio engineering, designed and installed high end audio and video systems nationwide. He is known for vintage speaker repair and restoration. My field was graphic design and photography. The psychology of art and design was applied to a variety of retail and service related organizations.

Over the years it got increasingly difficult dealing with people. We observed a level of selfishness by many, an attitude void of respect and knowledge of our professions when the internet began gearing up. When faced with new ways we never faltered. We adapted and moved forward with new business models. Our salvation was the Ohio house nestled in the center of the wooded acres we shared with critters of nature.

We made the decision to leave Ohio in 2014 and head for the island house. After all, about half of our true friends had passed at a young age and life is speeding by! We lived in a hot bed of cancer statistics, an industrial section of the

country that while certainly drove the economy, the worker bees payed the price from environmental poisoning. So, what were we waiting for? Nick deserved a new chapter of slowing things down. He had literally begun working when he was a youth, selling the neighbor's fresh doughnuts door to door, pedaling ice cream, and delivering TV guides. His interactions with people had a long history. Nick had many difficult times living in a broken home yet, his drive of self was persistent. When we met, he was 17, I was 18. He asked me to marry him five days after meeting, talk about persistence! I knew he was the one- handsome and smart!!! Heck, he had created "in-wall" speakers and mounted them in his room in the 60's!! The following year we were blessed with the arrival of our fabulous son! What we have shared over our 50 years is a union of souls that love and trust each other. Truly the foundation for relationships at any level!

The move to the islands had been challenging. The house was in a traditional neighborhood. We were called "damn Yankees"! Which means- when you visit the south you are a Yankee, move there, you're a "damn Yankee" All the years we came for vacation we stayed to ourselves... when we first got the island house it had not been that way... just imagine having a friendship with a couple for 30 years. They had introduced us to the Savannah area years before. He retired and they moved to the island. We considered the new house just up the street a good investment for a future retirement place, bought it, and hired him as overseer while we were in Ohio- only if he would accept one hundred dollars a month to cut the grass. After a couple years the honeymoon period was over. We came to hang for the

week, the house was flooded.... they had not been in the house from June through October! It was a sad time for us to realize this friendship was not the trusted friendship we had assumed. We did realize they had been going through hard times and it appeared they had acquired a drinking problem to drown their troubles. Sorry, if you have any respect or values for another human being you need to communicate! We had been through several friendships over the years with unfounded endings and certainly a lack of communication. Sure, new acquaintances may view me as forward, a "go ahead and tell us what you really feel" kind of girl. We are all walking the fairways determined to play the ball right. My lesson is be honest with all you encounter and hold on to one simple value, do unto others.

After many years of sheeple experiences, like the one mentioned, we chose not to count on anyone but ourselves. Now we move to this village of sheeple... do we dare to let them seep into our souls again? Perhaps a good rule to maintain is the new social distancing.

Golf. A game of social interaction. Ok, we shall try.

Now, I've met many peeps over the years, some become friends, others acquaintances. All of these souls I have come to believe have traveled along my life path for reasons. They have been negative and positive reasons understood and just plain wtf moments. People in my life are like my short history of golf, I nailed the ball or missed pathetically on the results. I lost balls in the tall grasses or happily found them again. As I sit here agonizing the

current set back of my broken ankle, the standard thoughts emerge... if only I had remembered my golf shoes... only minutes were left to the game and the entire event would have been so different... so close... six feet .



Thank you for taking your time with me into a short scenario of my thoughts thru my challenging moment. More importantly, think about the millions more that are hurting, suffering, and even afraid during this pandemic. I ask all to be kind to each other. No one knows the life story of another and how life's path has affected them. In life, as in golf, it is a crap shoot . . .
keep your head down and whack it!

I am blessed to have my husband Nick. He is my soul, my heart, my life. Fifty years has presented the good and bad of life to us. Yes, we are not void of confrontation, hurting each other's feelings.... but we do love to share laughter and you just never know what he will come up with! Here he is after awaiting a half hour in a drive up banking line- he donned on the mask and the gloves over his ears! With the delight of the tellers we shared he is even afraid it may enter his ears 😊 they asked if there was anything more they could do, yes! he replied, a hamburger with mustard, ketchup, and pickles! A great breakout of laughter was shared... yes, laughter is the best medicine, without the side effects!!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jacque Dorazio is and has been a dreamer. She dreams of the goodness of all living things. When she is faced by a negative event along life's path she often turns to her creative soul to pull her through. She does not withhold her tears. They come deep from within her usually carefree soul.

She has been on a very long life journey. It has taken her across the globe, crossed paths with a very interesting cross section of peeps, and went to Woodstock! With that in mind, "The Last Par" is a first in her backward series of short memoirs that she hopes will produce some kind of positive message that motivates you with a new direction in your life or perhaps realize we really can be a better species. If you happen to walk along her life path you will soon learn she is probably the most honest soul you will ever know... at a six foot distance.