

A Walk in the Zoo

By *Barbara L. Kika*, MSW, LCSW, Personal Life Coach

Copyright 2007

Emily was thrilled to see the animals all around her. In her two-year-old excitement and vast experience, she knew they were to be found behind every fence and wall.

There came the time when Emily wanted to go in one direction and her parents had chosen another.

“Emily! Be a good listener. Come this way,” spoken in that warning tone parents invariably use. “This way, Emily. Be a good listener.”

So she stood at the crossroad: her body facing the way *she* wanted to go, her head snapping back and forth between her parents’ way and hers. The feet were firmly planted in her chosen direction as the tension mounted. Now, her head and shoulders were swinging from one way to the other. Indecision! Obedience, or go where *I* choose?

Her inner turmoil was more and more clearly reflected in her body as her arms began wind milling about, too. Which to choose? My will or obedience?

“Emily!” One final parental imperative.

This did the trick. Her face changed, her body and her feet swung in the direction she was called to come.

And yet...she walked, eyes downcast, in the commanded direction. Her small face wore the *largest* possible frown as she clumped along the bricked edging, refusing to join her parents on the main path.

The battle of the will was won on the outside, but still seemed to be playing out on the inside: “I’ll do what you say but I don’t have to *like* it.”

Oh, Emily! You are well and truly in the battle of humanity: my will or Thy will. As we grow older, the battle may not be so evident, but it is so often there, in the downcast eye and the independent path along the edge of the main one. In our growing maturity, we get better at hiding the evidence of our struggle. There may not be a human voice, quietly directing us but we hear the voice of our Father and we, too, must decide: which way will we walk?