

Sunshine on a cloudy day

Written by Deb Egenberger
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The floatie I bought for our backyard swimming pool wasn't exactly what I had planned. I wanted one of those lounge chairs with thick arms that hold a beverage and a body above water.

At a third of the cost, I bought a floating papasan instead that allows me to relax but it doesn't keep me upright.

I was disappointed at first, realizing I got just what I paid for. Then when I laid back and noticed the fluffy cloud formations above, my regret vanished.

The shaking hands, upside down turtle and pointed ice cream cone hovering overhead made me grateful for my horizontal position.

Most people would prefer sunbathing under a bright blue sky uncluttered by poofs of white. I, on the other hand, am partial to the cotton-like formations that test my psyche like a Rorschach inkblot test.

Clouds are fascinating if you take the time to study them. Simply put, they're a bunch of tiny water droplets attracted to each other. The more droplets that gather, the whiter and brighter the cloud becomes.

There are lots of different scientific names for various types of clouds. Cumulus clouds are usually the "pretty" ones but any cloud can turn an average sunrise or sunset into a spectacular one.

Think about it. The sun's golden glow turns from yellow to orange to red and disappears with

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little drama as the burning globe falls below the horizon during a clear sunset.

Add clouds and the colors expand to include streaks and blotches of pinks and purples that are rarely matched in paint cans. The evening show lasts longer also when the light can reflect off those miniscule air particles.

Clouds have gotten a bum rap. These predictors of bad weather, symbols of negativity and gloom actually reflect color to create incredible scenes in the sky.

There is a life lesson in all of this: We do all we can each day to avoid the trials and hardships that obstruct our view of ultimate happiness and yet when we overcome those adversities, we add color and inner beauty to our lives.

Clouds build character, add vividness and separate the bland from the brilliant.

I see that as a silver lining.