DVD: It once meant drive, view, drive

by Lori_Borgman

You can hardly drive a mile of interstate or thoroughfare without seeing a portable DVD player dangling from the ceiling of a mini-van or strapped to the back of a passenger seat, little round faces basking in the flickering blue glow.

They didnâ€™t have portable DVD players when our children were young. I am loath to admit this, but when our children traveled in the car they actually had to, um, well, uh, well, they had to look out the windows. There, I said it.

No doubt this has adversely affected them and they will one day wind up in a therapistâ€™s office.

Therapist: I see from your patient information sheet that family travel is the issue that brings you here today. It says you were â€œDevoid of Disney.â€• Is that right?Grown child: Yes, thatâ€™s correct. We traveled a lot when we were kids and we never watched â€œBeauty and the Beast,â€• â€œAladdin,â€• â€œLion King,â€• â€œLady and the Tramp,â€• â€œPocahontasâ€• - any of the Disney classics - when we traveled.Therapist: Am I to assume this travel was by covered wagon?Grown child: No, it was by automobile. Early mini-van, before the DVD.Therapist: So without a DVD player, what exactly did you children do in the car?Grown child: Well, mostly we fought. You know â€œshe touched me, no, she touched me first. Donâ€™t look out my window. Thatâ€™s not your window, thatâ€™s my window. He breathed on me. He has his finger in his noseâ€• - that kind of thing.Therapist: That must have been very painful.Grown child: Only when you lost. Therapist: What did your parents do when this fighting took place?Grown child: Often they begged us to go to sleep. Once, when we were heading into St. Louis, they threatened to make us run laps around the arch. Most of the time Dad just kept driving, Mom would yell at us, and when she was completely fed up, sheâ€™d rustle around in a big old bag and pull out a great big -Therapist: What? A great big paddle? Grown child: No, a great big book called â€œMind Joggers.â€• Weâ€™d do mind games, mental math, break codes, do word puzzles, that kind of thing. Mom claims itâ€™s the reason we all scored well on the math part of the SAT.Therapist: Any other activities?Grown child: Sometimes weâ€™d listen to music or sing songs. Mostly we were looking out the window.Therapist: Talk about â€œlooking out the window.â€•Grown child: We saw a lot of fields, corn, wheat, soybeans, endless ribbons of interstate, the Smoky Mountains, sunsets, Mt. Rushmore, thunderstorms, lightning bolts, old battlefields, all the Washington D.C. monuments, the New York harbor, rolling hills, strip malls, the Kansas Flint Hills, historic Savannah, back roads of the Appalachians.

The therapist dabs at a tear in the corner of his eye and begins scribbling on a small pad. â€œWriting a prescription for me?â€• the grown child asks. â€œAnother appointment time?â€•â€œThis is my home number.

Have your parents call next time they take a trip.â€•â€œYouâ€™d like to see how they operate for yourself?â€•â€œNo, Iâ€™d like to send my kids with them.â€•Lori Borgman is author of "I Was a Better Mother Before I Had Kids," available wherever books are sold. Comments may be sent to her at lori@loriborgman.com

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