

Bartender of the Month

Lisa Nichols at Chilli Willie's



One day while on vacation, Lisa Nichols was driving down the Overseas Highway with her mother and her two small children when she spotted Chilli Willie's. With a hungry family in the car, she did what any smart mother would do and turned into- the establishment. Since Chilli Willie's is the ONLY restaurant in all of the Upper Keys with a game room for children, it is a smart pick for any parent.

While Nichols and her mother watched a game on one of the many TVs the children entertained themselves in the game room. On that very same day Nichols applied for a job there and was hired on the spot. She then returned to Mt. Dora, where she was born and raised, packed her things and moved to the fabulous Florida Keys.

Now, six years later, Nichols continues to work at Chili Willie's as one of their great bartenders. Since moving to the Keys she and her family have also become

very much a part of our community. They enjoy all the Keys have to offer whether they are boating, riding waverunners, or active in football, baseball and soccer which Nichols coaches.

"Chillie Willie's has a great, friendly atmosphere," says Nichols. "I absolutely love all the local customers. We all know each other by name."

In addition to all the fun and great food Chilli Willie's offers, they have added a New Moon Party to the successful restaurant. At the beginning of each month (see ad at top of page) Big Tony brings in his Karaoke equipment and photographer Sandra Spaulding. You can dress up in a variety of costumes, use props, sing and have your picture taken for free.

"It's a blast", says Nichols. "And really entertaining!"

Nichols didn't want to end our interview without saying thank you to all the friends, customers and co-workers who make her job so much fun.

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Putting Yourself First

Daily Self-Care

Putting yourself first means that it may be necessary to say no to someone else in order to say yes to yourself.

We have all heard the instructions of an airline attendant reminding us to put on our own oxygen mask before we help anyone else with theirs. This advice is often cited as a metaphor for self-care because it so accurately expresses why it is important. It seems to say, ironically, that if you can't take care of yourself for yourself, do it for others. Few situations in our daily lives mimic the wake-up call of an airplane emergency, so it's easy to keep putting self-care off—easy, that is, until we get sick, overwhelmed, or exhausted, and suddenly don't have the energy to care for the people who count on us. That's when we realize we haven't been getting the oxygen we need to sustain ourselves. We begin to understand that taking care of ourselves is neither selfish nor indulgent; it's just plain practical.

Putting yourself first means that it may be necessary to say no to

someone else in order to say yes to yourself. For many of us, there is always something we feel we could be doing for someone else, and it helps to remember the oxygen metaphor. You can even encourage yourself by saying "I am caring for myself so that I am better able to care for others" or some other mantra that will encourage you. It also helps to remember that self-care doesn't have to be composed of massively time-consuming acts. In fact, the best prescription for taking care of yourself is probably small, daily rituals; for example, taking one half-hour for yourself at the beginning and end of the day to meditate, journal, or just be. You might also transform the occasional daily shower or bath into a half-hour self-pampering session.

Whatever you decide, making some small gesture where you put yourself first every day will pay off in spades for you and the ones you love. The oxygen you need is all around you; sometimes you just need to be reminded to breathe.

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