

Reflections on a puzzle...

One of the first things the Camacho family did before we “hunkered down” for the long haul, was to come up with a list of things for our family to accomplish during the stay at home order. Among other things, my wife Jaime’s suggestion was to complete a puzzle. My first thought of this was, “Wow, I haven’t worked on a puzzle in ages!” So one day, while on a supply run at Target, we went down the puzzle aisle to check out the selection. Needless to say, it was a little picked over! Obviously, other people had the same idea! We went ahead and got one of the last puzzles available. Our thinking was that this would be a communal effort with every member of our family pitching to help right? Wrong!! We quickly realized that this was going to be a two-man job...My wife and I!! So we began the long and tedious process of assembling this 2000-piece puzzle. However, we strategically placed the puzzle at the dinner table in hopes our children would notice it, as they came around the kitchen grazing for sustenance. Hopefully, we thought, seeing the puzzle on the table would pique their interest at some point. A couple of days passed and the frame of the puzzle was coming together. As we did the past couple of nights, me and my wife gathered around the table and started our work. My 16-year-old daughter happened to be in the kitchen to get some water. She asked, how are things going? We once again invited her to partake in our endeavor. To our surprise, she sat down and started helping us! Although she only ended up spending about 15 minutes with us, we figured it was start! Another couple of days went by with minimal participation from our kids. Sure, they would walk by and add a piece here and there, but as far as delving headlong into our endeavor with us...that was still lacking. In spite of this, we were making great progress! Since we began our puzzle on a Monday. We decided to make it our goal to have it completed by Saturday night of the same week. Well, by the time Saturday came around we had about 70% completed. It didn’t look like there was any way we were going to be able to finish the puzzle by Saturday night! As Saturday evening approached, we decided to up the ante and include food as a part of our puzzle ritual. We figured if we included food into the equation, this might attract more participants to the table. This proved to be the catalyst that gathered us around the table and focused us on completing the puzzle! Our collective efforts made it possible to achieve our goal and complete the puzzle by Saturday night! To that end, we also achieved our other, more important goal which was to bring all six family members together! The three hours we spent at the table, exchanging stories, laughing, and interacting with one another was priceless!

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