

GETTING TOGETHER WITH THE KIDS

“The greatest gift that God can give us, is to see ourselves as others see us.” I don’t know much about the poetry of Robert Burns, but that line is a winner. And during the few days of my children’s visit, I felt exposed, and it struck me that I am being seen as I really would not like to be seen. They saw my frailties and worse, they saw the interaction between Fran and me. Even though we were going to try not to let them see the tensions and disagreements, it came out. I began to think it is not such a gift to see myself as my children see me.

The visit began with a wonderful evening at Fenway Park watching the Red Sox play the Chicago Cubs. I had gotten extra Red Sox T-shirts and caps and distributed them to everyone. Then we made our way to the Brookline Village T stop. I was having a tough time keeping up with everyone. Aha! The old man is moving a lot slower. And when we got to the ball park, I had trouble handling the stairs. This is not what I wanted my kids to see.

I was a big sport, getting tickets for the 10 of us. But I did not continue to be a sport, by buying hot dogs, pizzas, drinks and ice cream. I let my kids do that. And when they returned home, they returned the T-shirts and caps. I could have insisted that they keep them. Of course, they may not have wanted them.