

Jeff Tigchelaar

The Stay-at-Home Dad (or, Sea Kelp)

I got a little longwinded, apparently, on the Papa Murphy's automated telephone survey and they had to cut me off. I was just getting going on that optional voice message part at the end, telling them how pleased I was with my recent pizza, and how I usually just get a Hot-N-Ready from Caesars but today when I went it was gone, the Little Caesars had just up and left, but driving home, my dejection lifted like a fine plastic surgery when I saw the sign for five-dollar large pepperonis at Papa Murphy's (for a limited time only), which is a much better buy, and a far superior pizza, I would now add, even though you do have to go home and bake it yourself and

right about there is where the beep kicked in, followed by a man's voice thanking me for my time and encouraging me to stop by soon with the coupon for some cookie dough, which, if I'd just shut up a minute and listen, they'd give me the code for momentarily.

Speaking of a man's voice, just before naptime today Sam, my two-year-old, requested his favorite Leonard Cohen song, "Hey, That's No Way to Say Goodbye," and instead of playing the original version I popped in a cover by a Frenchwoman with vocals like God's highest angels, and Sam smiled, and was quiet, but then said "I need a man to sing it" and I said "Well I'd say that lady really nailed it, but if you promise to sleep, I'll sing it for you" and Sam said "I need a *man* to sing it."

Speaking of a man's voice, now it's time for Guided Meditation with Jack Kornfield. I'd gotten the CD for free and finally vowed to give it a listen when, showering yesterday, I'd looked at the little bottle of hotel shampoo, sea kelp, ha, and been reminded of my wife's suggestion, a while back, that maybe I ought to have my little mood issue looked into, like, professionally, because I guess it's not that normal (or, healthy) to be so up and so down and so now that Sam is actually napping and I might have an hour to myself, I strip off the CD's plastic wrapping. I put in the disc, press Play. I sit down and shut my eyes. My mouth. I listen and do as I'm told.