

Surviving the little dings and dents of life

Kathy Hedberg/Lewiston Tribune

That old saying, "the first cut is the deepest," may have been referring to something else, but to me it has to do with getting the first ding in my new mandolin.

I'm not normally too protective of my musical instruments; my guitars, which I've had for a long time, look like they've been used as weapons.

But this new mandolin, I bought it last summer and just started learning to play it. Not that good yet, but I love the sound. It's fun to play and I know who made it and where it came from - and the cost. It's all been worth it.

So it hurt the first time I dropped a guitar capo on the top of my new mandolin that was lying on the floor beside me and crunched a little hole in it about the size of a pencil eraser.

That first cut, boy, you really feel it.

People who have brand-new cars know what I'm talking about. You drive them to the shopping center and park in the parking lot and go shopping, and then come back a couple of hours later and what do you know? There's a dent in the side door where some idiot who parked next to you swung open his door too wide.

Whack. It hurts.

Even though everybody knows that nothing stays new and shiny forever, we all try to put off the inevitable for as long as possible. Maybe we're in denial about the price of using something or getting to know somebody or taking up a new activity.

Unless you want to keep it in the garage forever, or the case, or in fantasy land there's going to come a day when there's a dent, a scratch or a rupture and you're going to have to deal with it.

It's like life. You start out pure and fresh, and as you go along you get bumped and bruised and hurt in lots of ways. And it makes you mad and sometimes you want to hit back, and if you've got a guitar you might use it as a weapon, although that's not so good for the guitar.

You finally reach a point where you could just give up. Or you might figure you've learned something in spite of the hard knocks and keep going. That's the smart thing to do.

The mandolin lessons have been coming along. I got a great teacher who's one of the best mandolin players I know, and he hasn't yelled at me yet. I've even performed a couple of times and worked out a few new songs I like.

And just the other day, as I was getting my mandolin out of the case, I noticed a little chink out of the side. How in the heck that happened I have no idea.

Just another ding in the music lesson of life. But it doesn't hurt as much this time because I know I'm a better player.

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