

Think small?

I have just been reading 'Saturday' by Ian McEwan (he also wrote Atonement, adapted into the eponymous film starring Keira Knightley).

It's a really good read, with an interesting plot and engaging characters. There's a passage in it where the main character, in his late 40s, is talking about his teenage son's philosophy on life. It struck me when I read it as quite a good way to look at life...

'When we go on about the big things, the political situation, global warming, world poverty, it all looks really terrible, with nothing getting better, nothing to look forward to. But when I think small, closer in – you know, a girl I've just met, or this song we're going to do with Chas, or snowboarding next month, then it looks great. So this is going to be my motto – think small.'

That got me thinking about my 'small stuff', which is somewhat different (being a middle-aged woman, it centres more around a cuddle with my hubby, a soppy film, a glass of wine, chocolate...in combination if possible!).

Now I read the McEwan quote again, I realize what he's really talking about is countering big bad stuff with small good stuff.

There's plenty of bad small stuff around too...research suggests that lots of small stresses actually have more impact than one big stressful event. I guess that's where the American motto, "Don't sweat the petty stuff, and don't pet the sweaty stuff" might be useful.

Perhaps thinking of the bigger picture and retaining a sense of how irrelevant small stuff is in the scheme of things mightn't be such a bad idea after all...