Family is not always about being comfortable. Case in point: “The Spinning Wheel of Doom.” That is not its real name, but that is the *nom de guerre* I give it. Also the “Wheel of Death” (after riding it the first dozen times).

You all know it: The small-time carnival comes to town with tinker-toy rides and easy-win (never-win) contests of skill. And there it is, lit up like a 1950s horror movie spaceship. The man (or woman) with the tattoos and gold tooth (or missing teeth) opens up the side door and you settle in to the 70s-era cushions. The walls spin faster and faster until you are pinned against the wall, and can even climb up it with aid of the G-force.

Now, once or perhaps twice is fine, but 20 times in a row, egged on by your 5- and 7-year-old children, stretches the parent-child bond. And when the operator of the ride nervously tells you, “You might consider taking a break,” you wonder if you are a good father or instead an enabler to your children’s self-destructive tendencies.

But at the end of the day, even after the vertigo has made you wish for stillness, the family bond is just that much stronger. And it could be worse: You could be that man or woman who runs the Wheel of Death 10 hours straight most days of the week, stationary in the center while the people at the inner walls of the ride circumnavigate you. Meanwhile, another world outside spins at one full turn of the planet each day.

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