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1. The challenge or theme illustrated by this episode: Balancing personal interests/needs with social responsibilities (this is not a good way of describing it, but it will be clear below).
2. Brief statement of context: Phone conversation with a certain maternal figure in my life. I'll call her "mom." Normal pleasantries and updates have taken place, when we move on to the topic of my upcoming birthday.
3. The conversation

<u>My Thoughts and Feelings</u>	<u>What We Said</u>
	Mom: What would you like for your birthday?
Yes, I am dorky.	Me: I need a new USB thumb drive. Mine is too small. I need to transfer some big files from my desktop to my laptop.
	Mom: Ok, how big? What kind?
This is a nice, pleasant conversation.	Me: One gig. You can get order one online cheaply and then have it sent to me.
	Mom: Where online?
Ok, conversation finished. Need to get back to work.	Me: Go to computershopper.com. I'll send some links [emails links].
	Mom: Now, don't get mad, but I NEED to ask you a question.
When she says that, I know there's trouble coming.	Me: What.
	Mom: What are you going to use it for?
What else would I use it for except to...save things...? Why must she go on and on when I have HOMEWORK to do.	Me: Excuse me? What do you mean? [exasperated tone]
	Mom: I mean, are you going to use it for school, or at work, or for something else?

What IS she talking about now?	Me: What are you talking about? [increasingly exasperated tone]
	Mom: I NEED to know where you are going to use it? For school or for work or for other things? It is VERY important that I know this.
WHY does it matter? This is a stupid conversation. Now I'm getting angry. I just need some freaking memory.	Me: WHY does it matter? I'm going to use it for school! I'm going to use it for work! I may even use it for other things!!
	[brief argument ensues, the subject is changed and then the phone is handed off to another family member]

4. Linger concerns, puzzles, or questions:

I still have no idea why she really needed to know that, except my dad later said that he had told her she didn't need to get a large thumb drive herself since she only ever carries one or two word files from work to home. I do know it isn't nice to yell at my mother, and that I should stop doing so.