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Living The Good Life

Ah ... living the good life ... isn't that what we all dream of? You know, the feeling you get about midway through your best vacation, when you say ... this is the life! If only I could do this full time. Well, maybe you can. Not likely you can be on vacation full time, but chances are good you are already living the good life.

Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.

Life is good! Yet we often neglect to notice. Instead we see what is bad, what is not working or how other people need to change to fit our picture. Our brain focuses on what needs fixing at the expense of embracing what works. We spend so much time regretting the past and anticipating the future, we miss out on the precious present.

Yesterday is history; tomorrow is a mystery. Today is what counts. That is why we call it the present.

How does one get the most out of life, anyway? Do you squeeze in as much as you can, living as fast as you can? You know, the proverbial 'type A' person ... the maximizing perfectionist. Or do we realize that less is more and take life one moment at a time, turning life's lemons into lemonade? There is no right or wrong approach. The good life is different for everyone, and applying someone else's definition to your life is a blueprint for disappointment and possible disaster.

We get so caught up in daily life, so focused on taking care of business that we lose focus on what is truly important. Somehow we get so busy that it is only

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when our body is no longer healthy, our children are grown or our relationships are broken that we realize the damage is done. We look in the mirror and don't even recognize the person looking back.

Achieving balance is a popular topic. I prefer to consider equilibrium. Balance suggests either/or, taking from one side to balance out the other. Equilibrium is more like the tides and waves of the ocean. They evolve with the universe, flowing naturally without consistent need for human intervention. When we embrace the rhythm of nature, swim when the water is warm and walk when the tide is low, we allow our lives to unfold as they are destined to be.

So, now what? All sounds good, but what does it mean for me, the person ready to take action but uncertain where to begin? I offer for your consideration:

Live: Live your life to the fullest every day. Take risks, set goals, dream dreams. A dream is a goal with a deadline. Define and refine your dreams and take action toward them every day. Always remember to enjoy what is yours right now.

Love: Love yourself and others with all your heart, your mind and your soul.

Acceptance and belonging are cornerstones to our effectiveness in the world. Our relationships are the single most influential factor that shape and define our lives. Surround yourself with loving friends, family and networks that support your values, goals and interests.

Learn: Learn all that you can about everything that captures your attention. Knowledge is power and wisdom is one thing that no one can ever take from you. Learning feeds the mind, body and spirit, preparing us to embrace and engage life fully.

Leave a Legacy: Give back some of the abundance you have acquired. Share your gifts with the world in a way that reflects your values. Passion is the desire to "Pass I On." When you embrace your passion and share it with others, you leave a living legacy.

Living 'the good life' is more about who you are than what you do. It means honoring your true values by living from the heart. Living 'the good life' is not about what you acquire or achieve, but about the degree to which you connect with, acknowledge and share your unique gifts.

It is not what you gather but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived. **CM**



Photo Courtesy of Gail Ostrishko

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