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Want a wonderful life? Then start NOW.

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“What do I want to be when I grow up” isn’t the best question to finding our passion and purpose. That question puts an uncomfortable focus on the fact that “we don’t know what we want to be”. The more we focus on the idea that “we don’t know what we want” – the farther away it feels. The farther away it seems, the more we float aimlessly. Before long, 10, 20, 30 years have gone by and we’re still asking ourselves “What do I want to be when I grow up”?

Keep it simple, silly.

We all want the same thing. We want a wonderful life. Some days we may not know exactly how to get there, but we do know that we want wonderful things.

I may not know exactly what I want to be, do or have to create that wonderful life. So – maybe the better question is “What can I do **NOW** – to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life.”

Power is in our NOW.

That’s all sounds “nice”. But let’s get practical. How do I actually do this?

We’re typically concerned over just a few things:

- 1) Career/money
- 2) Healthy/body
- 3) Relationships

Those things not only mean different things to different people, but they also mean different things to the same person at different phases of our lives.

So let’s give some examples of the better use of NOW in some of those for areas.

[More examples that include finances, relationships and health are at <http://www.examiner.com/time-management-in-raleigh/want-a-wonderful-life-then-start-now>]

Career example at age 20:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I’m ½ through my college curriculum and I still don’t know what to major in. My parents are pressuring me to decide, my college advisors are required to track my progress toward a decision, and my friends have all decide. I’m frustrated and feel lost. I’ll just go out with my friends, go shopping, go drinking and I’ll think about it later.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I’m ½ through my college curriculum and I still don’t know what to major in. While I may not know what I want to do in my profession, I am enjoying the college environment, the friends I am making, the learning. I do realize that completing college will provide me with the foundation to go in any direction that I want. While I may not know what I want to be, I do know what I admire in others and what roles attract me. I can align and learn from specific mentors that I admire and am attracted to. I know what classes I really enjoy and even the classes I don’t enjoy give me clarity on what I am attracted to. Any degree will give me that additional foundational base. And I can experiment with various intern or part-time positions to better explore what I want to be, do or have.

Career example at age 25:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I have my first job. I don’t know if it’s something I really want to do all my life. I don’t know if this is “my passion” or “my purpose”. I don’t really see a future at this position, but it’s a job. I have to make money to pay the bills and rent.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I have my first job. While I may not know if this will be “long-term”, I appreciate this opportunity, the consistent pay, and learning from my co-workers. This is a great first job. And I know it won’t be my last. We’re meant to experiment, explore and move about. Therefore, I will keep my eyes open. I will align and network with specific mentors. I will continue to position myself to do more of the tasks I enjoy. And even the tasks I don’t enjoy give me clarity on what I am attracted to. I can experiment with various side-projects and job-rotating positions to better explore what I want to be, do or have. I can continue to network with the people I really admire.

Career example at age 35:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I've been trying to climb the corporate ladder for 10 years. I still don't know what I really want to be. I've been doing this for HIM and that for HER – hoping to get a promotion. And nothing comes of it. I have to actually change companies to get a lousy promotion or raise.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I have been enjoying this company for 10 years. I've used my inner knowing and intuition to guide me on which projects to put my passion and effort in. It's really been worthwhile and I've been getting promotions and acknowledgements in the areas I've enjoyed. Now, I feel I am currently at a plateau. I've had this feeling for a few months now that this place has taken me as far as I can. I feel I need to either leave this company or focus on the next executive step. In either case, going back to school for my MBA or equivalent is the next step. It will be a challenge to juggle both work and school. But the coursework will be in line with what I love to do, so it will be challenging and fun.

Career example at age 45:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I've been working the corporate environment for 20 years. I still don't know what I really want to be. The economy is in terrible shape. Now the company is downsizing and I'm laid off. What do I do now?

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- The company is downsizing and I elected to take the severance package. It provides some funds for retraining as well as several weeks of pay. Ever since getting my MBA, I continued my education in business and my entrepreneurial training. I've been able to save a substantial amount through my various increases and promotions. And I've been experimenting with my business ideas as a hobby for awhile now. Last November I actually sat down with my financial advisor and put together a business plan for something on my own. I was just trying to decide when to do it. This event could not have come at a better time. It's actually providing me with additional funds as well as inspiration to actually do this. This is actually wonderful.

[More examples that include finances, relationships and health are at <http://www.examiner.com/time-management-in-raleigh/want-a-wonderful-life-then-start-now>]

Financial example at age 20:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I'm living at home and I hate it. My parents are always on my back about my choices. I'm a grown up. They can't treat me like a kid all the time. I wish I could move out but I don't have any money.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I'm living at home and it's challenging. I like the idea of being on my own, living my own life, doing what I want to do, when I want to do it. My parents are helping me out by providing me room and board (at no charge) while I complete my schooling, which is in alignment with my goals. So, my parents mean well, but I'm still looking forward to being on my own. So, what can I do right now to assure I continue to have a wonderful life moving forward? Well, I can get a part-time job. The fact that my parents aren't charging me rent will allow me to continue to save my money at a faster rate. In the meantime, I will show my appreciation to my folks by assisting with the household chores and expenses. By tangibly showing my appreciation, responsibility and respect in this manner, my folks will be happier and less anxious about my future. Everyone will be happier in this difficult situation.

Financial example at age 25:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I have my first job. I have my own place – finally! The rent is really high and it's taking most of my income. I won't be saving anything, but I'm still young. I'll get promotions and make more money eventually.
- I have my first credit card. This is freedom and I can do anything I want. I'll charge the car, and my furniture.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I have my first job. I have my own place – finally! And it's awesome. The rent is a little higher than I had anticipated. Even though I have a good amount saved, I think I will look for a pleasant roommate to share expenses and experiences. I don't have to rush into finding a roommate right away. I have enough money for now. So, I'll just keep an eye out for a compatible roommate. I want to make sure that person is responsible and able to afford the rent and expenses.
- I do need a car to get around. But I don't want to start my new life in debt, so I'll purchase a car that I can afford. I have my savings for this purpose. I don't need lots of furniture right away. I rather buy things as I need them and when I really connect with the item. This allows me to afford the things that really means something to me and still stay on my path.

Financial example at age 35:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I haven't been watchful in my funds. Anything I've acquired, my ex-wife now has and I still owe child-support. I'm currently in debt. I need a higher paying job, but I can't afford to ask for a raise. That's a sure fire way to get fired. It seems that the harder I work harder and the deeper in debt I am.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I have a lovely family and life is going well. As my children continue to thrive, we need to consider saving for their college funds, as well as our retirement funds. Going back to school (while will be temporarily challenging on both my time and savings) will help me achieve these things in the coming years. I can also discuss this with my family and ask for their opinion and help. The children are of an age that will understand about finances. We will ask their help with the house chores and keeping us on a budget. It will be good financial education for them on how to budget their own money.

Financial example at age 45:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- Now that I am laid-off and only have 2 weeks of savings – what am I supposed to do? The money problems are affecting my second marriage. We're always fighting about money. I have a line on a temporary lower paying job. I really hope I get it.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- Last November I actually sat down with my financial advisor and put together a business plan for something on my own. In my business plan, I forecasted making a profit within three year. My financial advisor and I rearranged certain funds and bonds to be able to sustain our household for three years to match my business plans. I also have target goals and milestones in line with my 3-year business goals. If I'm not lining up with those targets, I can easily re-evaluate and re-align. I will know early on what to tweak as time goes on. My MBA and business education is working for me now. My family is also in line with these goals and is supporting me by being a part of my company.

Body example at age 25:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I'm young. I'll live forever. I can eat and do whatever.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I'm in great shape. In high school I learned early to take good care of my body. I was heavy into various sports and wanted to keep my body fit. I take in the proper portions of things. I avoid heavy drinking, smoking or drugs. I keep a good exercise, toning and aerobic balance. I still play sports and go out dancing. My recreational time isn't artificially generated; it comes from within.

Body example at age 35:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I've put on some weight. Everyone does. Probably because of the beer. But my job and family life is bothersome. I need the recreational drink to get through. I know I need to do something about my body and health – but I don't have any time to go to the gym or workout.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- I feel pretty wonderful. I've kept good eating and exercise habits. My family shares the same thoughts about a healthy lifestyle so it's been very easy to stay on track. My family is wonderful. Although I don't go out and play as much organized sports as I used to – I've blended many new choices into my busy schedule. I am more involved in my children's sports. I coach and practice their sports with them. As a family, we ride our bikes together. I do much of my office networking in the corporate gym. I arrange to take walking breaks with my mentors either around the office or around the lake area. I also find excuses to walk – by either parking a few block away from my destination, walking to the corner store for those few items, walking the dog with the family, etc.

Body example at age 45:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I can't seem to do the things I used to do. I've lost my job. I don't have money for a gym membership. I have to stay focused in making some money and spending less. The cheaper food items like pasta and cheap fast foods fit better in my financial situation than anything else.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- Starting a new company is challenging on both my funds and my time. As I am getting older, my body metabolism is slowing down. So it's even more important to stay active and be aware of the chemicals or type of fuel I put into my body. I read that it's better to reduce my meal size, but supplement with various healthy fruits and nuts during the day to keep my metabolism burning throughout the day. My family is having fun planting our own fresh vegetables and fruits. And I will be downsizing my meal size, and adding some small snack portions. Even though my caloric intake will be reduced, I'll be eating something every 2-3 hours. Although I was able to eat anything when I was younger (because of my metabolism), I'm be aware that processed foods are not the best fuel for my body at this age. I'll continue to increase my physical activities by incorporating my family as well as my new business networking groups. I'll make a point to have networking business meetings around an activity like walking, the gym, or hobby like golf, tennis, racket ball, etc.

Relationship example at age 25:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I'm in my new place but don't have any friends. I couldn't wait to get out of my parents' house –but now I am lonely. I can go to bars and pick-up friends. That will help with the loneliness.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- Even though I am starting a new job in a new state, I am going to keep in touch with my past friends. Facebook and social media makes that very easy. I will be making new friends at the office as well. I will be aware of the risk of mixing business with pleasure – and will be careful. I will also keep an eye out for new friends as I pursue the things that I love. When pursuing things that interest me, I will cross paths with folks of similar interest. And that will make for good friendships. If I keep doing the things I enjoy (at work, at play, at life), I will attract more things that fit my wonderful life.

Relationship example at age 35:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- My spouse and children have left me. Everything I've work for is now gone. . All our friends are now HER friends. I have to start all over again.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- My spouse and children are all growing into their own. My spouse recently went through a “mid-career-crisis” period and is pursuing some of his/her own separate business interests. We’re not growing apart – but we are expanding as a couple. It is interesting to watch my spouse develop into a strong entrepreneur. Even though the home-business is small and more like a hobby at this stage – we’ve been able to make it work. We’ve agreed that while my spouse is exploring with this business, he/she will be the primary care-giver to the children. But I also realize that this home-business and taking care of the children is a full-time job. So when I am at home, we’ll split the chores and make it work. If things don’t get accomplished, then it’s not a big deal. The extra home-business income also helps with the extras in life. Life is good.

Relationship example at age 45:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- My second spouse has left me. I can’t keep a relationship. What’s wrong with me.

What can I do **NOW** to assure that I continue to have a wonderful life?

- Starting a new company is challenging but my spouse’s experience has proven invaluable. We’ve been able to incorporate both companies. Its lots of fun being partners in this adventure.

You can get here from there.

Even though everyone’s definition of a wonder life is different, we all know what a wonderful life feels like. A wonderful life feels joyous, happy, and full of appreciation. So – if we continue to live each day with the purpose of feeling joyous, happy, and appreciative – we’ll have a wonderful life.

But how do I transition from the depressed, no money, no family life version to the “wonderful life” version? Well, maybe we can’t get to “wonderful life” right away. But we can certainly get to “a better life” quickly.

So focusing on “What do I do now to have a better life” is a great transitional question. It does two important things. It validates that we’re at ease with where we are today. And it helps us continue to excitedly anticipate our next steps. Both these steps are important aspects to attracting more exciting.

Let’s take one more look at the following scenario and see how we can turn it around (no matter where we are).

Body example at age 45:

What do I want to be when I grow up?

- I can’t seem to do the things I used to do. I’ve lost my job. I don’t have money for a gym membership. I have to stay focused in making some money and spending less. The cheaper food items like pasta and cheap fast foods fit better in my financial situation than anything else.

What can I do **NOW** to have a better life?

- I could be in better shape. I have time to put some inexpensive exercise programs into my daily routines. Walking and toning exercises don’t need to be done in a gym. Getting into some league. Planting my own vegetables and fruits will save me money as well as healthy lifestyle. Cutting down on the alcohol and smoking will help my financial situation and allow me to afford healthy fuel for my body. I’m feeling more energized and confident as my body is positively responding to my new healthier lifestyle. I feel that my new positive attitude is contagious. My spouse is noticing my new physique and positive attitude. My family is joining me in my healthy lifestyle and exercise program. I’m taking more interest in their individual self-improvement projects as well. My confidence is proving positive in my interviews. My life is beginning to turn around.

Conclusion:

So, it may not be critical to know “for sure” what you want to be when you grow up.

Who’s to say we’re even supposed to “grow up”?

Maybe we’re just supposed to “*grow naturally*” (i.e. “**grow toward our nature**”).

“**Growing toward our nature**” should be pretty easy because (by definition) it’s already inherent in us. We just continue to follow the path or the thought that feels better. As we follow that better feeling path, we feel better and better and better and finally wonderful!

While these are just example, I hope they give you some ideas on how to take better advantage of what is happening NOW to lay a positive ground work for a wonder life.

About the author



Laura is a certified business and personal life coach. Laura offers one-on-one career and life coaching, small group coaching, seminars and workshops.

She has been in the software and testing industry for over 20 years. She's worked with such companies as IBM, Ericsson, Staples, Fidelity Investments and Sogeti in various client advocacy and project management roles. The techniques she uses in her business coaching and client advocacy work saved these companies both time and money, which resulted in on-time, quality

product delivery with higher client satisfaction.

Laura now uses her client focus, project, quality and people management skills in her personal life coaching career.

As a personal life coach, she helps people integrate their goals and dreams into their everyday lives. Laura uses creative and practical tools to help her clients realize what really matters to them. They then follow-through with project and time management techniques to create the reality they really want.

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