

Squeeze the joy out of every single moment

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?The best way to pay for a lovely moment is to enjoy it.? Richard Bach

It's funny how small moments in our daily lives can have profound meaning and impact.

Maybe it's all a matter of perspective and simply taking note of the small things.

We are presented with untold millions of precious little moments. The key is to completely absorb yourself in it while it's happening.

Wrap your eyes and ears around it like a blanket and feel its warmth!

Last week, my wife and I took two of our children to Snow Valley for an afternoon of fun. Kim wanted to introduce both of them to skiing, since she's quite an accomplished skier herself. She really wanted her kids to embrace the sport, as she did.

In case you're asking, yes Kim spent a day trying to teach this left-handed, left-footed man the sport several years ago, with very limited success.

I admire those who excel at anything, especially sports related activities. To see seven-year-olds whipping around like pros is just amazing.

I can't tell you how much my chest swelled and heart expanded as I saw my children take to the slopes. Sure there was trepidation and the typical teen frustration, but I?really enjoyed this afternoon.

I also enjoyed big brother helping little sister out. Maybe there, on the snow, true feelings slip through and love shines. It did for me. My wife and I huddled together watching the events unfold. To some, this may seem relatively bland or even boring. But to us it became much more.

Later that afternoon, we stopped by the outlet mall to get Kim a birthday present at Coach. Both her and Liam share March 15 as their special days. While shopping can be tiresome for us males, a surprising thing happened. Both of my older two kids stepped up to the plate and paid for the gifts, without prompting! I'm still somewhat confounded by it all, but it made this frugal consumer quite happy.

You can't teach generosity, or perhaps we did and didn't even know it!

My son turned 18 and he is no longer a boy, but a man. He's also a towering young man so now I?owe him respect of stature.

He is now ready to engage in post-secondary learning and begin to chart a course for his life.

Based on what I?witnessed last week, I?think he will become a fine man.

Today's career paths are challenging, and many studies and reports indicate the new generation moves from job to job, profession to profession. I suppose it doesn't really matter how someone gets to their destination, as long as they make it. I liken it to swimming in a lake, and eventually reaching shore, pulling yourself up on the beach and basking in the sun.

There are a lot of things parents have to do, and are obligated to do, on a regular basis. That includes shuttling the kids to and fro and constantly running errands to ensure our offspring have everything they need.

This can take a lot of enjoyment out of life, and blur those special moments. Chores are called chores for that very reason.

I?have just recently learned something new, which proves that yes, old dogs can learn new tricks.

The key to enjoying life is to strip away the crap ??the negative trappings ??to reveal something enjoyable. It's like cracking a nut to get to the goodness deep inside. We know there's a nugget in there somewhere, and it often takes a lot of effort, but once it's revealed it's priceless.

I likely inherited some of my ?grumpiness? from my dad and my wife says I complain too much. To me, I?think it's more a case of trying to apply logic and common sense to a world that's lacking in both of these qualities.

I?think we also tend to complicate things. I?worry and dread the long drive to London where my daughter Lexie attends university.

But, alas, the drives tend to be pleasant journeys if the weather's nice. Long drives can actually be cleansing, I've found. I?constantly worry about everyone's safety, especially when travelling these days.

Henry David Thoreau said we have to live in the present, launch ourselves on every wave and find eternity in each moment.

I?think we are so busy and our lives a bit too hectic for our own good. When was the last time you simply spent a quiet moment just sitting and looking at the trees outside your window? I?think I?had one of those moments last week at Snow Valley!

It has been a while since we were away in the tropics, but we try to get away to a lake every summer. I?find just looking at the water and hearing the waves lap the shore so intoxicatingly soothing, that nothing compares. In those moments, all the stress melts away

and the most pressing chore is getting up for another drink.

We in North America have yet to fully understand the down time shared by our European and Mediterranean counterparts. Life in some parts of the world involves a mid-day siesta, a time to take a break, relax and recharge. Maybe if we were forced to take stock on a regular basis, we'd be happier and more productive.

Viktor Frankl said we should take a step back, and shrink the "big picture." What's important, he said, is not the whole meaning of life, but the specific meaning of a person's life in a given moment.

If we take his advice and look at it that way, we'll find we have many more successes than failures; more bright spots than dark times.

We know the bleak periods will come, so we should revel in the sunlight. My mom's most favourite moments were sitting in the back yard, closing her eyes and letting the sun kiss her cheeks.

I like those moments, too.

