

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO HAVE A HAPPY CHILDHOOD

So many of us live our lives as if the secret purpose is to somehow get everything done. We stay up late, get up early, avoid having fun, and keep our loved ones waiting and wanting for our attention. We put off interacting with our families and postpone any activities of pleasure. "Important things" must be accomplished first. Often we convince ourselves that our obsession with our "to do" list is only temporary; that once we get through the list, we'll be calm, relaxed and happy. However, as soon as items are checked off, new ones replace them. There will always be projects to complete and work to be done. Let us take enjoyment in the process of life --- in the journey. Let us not wait until we reach our "goal", whatever that is --- before we live life to the fullest.

Be a child again, not in a childish way, but in a childlike manner. Jesus tells us, "Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." Let's live a life filled with the love of and appreciation of God's world and the life therein. Try to see this world with the clear eyes of a child. This is difficult to do.

Give yourself permission to do some of the "fun stuff" denied you in your childhood --- take your kids or grandkids along if you need a reason to play. Something as simple as a visit to the Zoo, the Museum, or the Domes will work. Even a walk in the park, especially with a toddler, is an adventure. Remember, lighten up, and don't put a time limit on the journey. How about Discovery World, Imax Theater, Old World Wisconsin, the Art Museum, a water park (don't you forget to go down the giant water slide!)?

Ride a bike, fly a kite, and take a walk along the lakefront. Go sledding, build a snowman, and try snorkeling. Punch holes in a jar lid and capture a caterpillar and see what develops ---

A cocoon, and then what? Enjoy the fireflies on a summer night. Open your eyes to the wonder of life and the universe. Think of the things you did or wished you could have done.

Do it now! Don't waste any more precious moments of your life regretting the things you did not accomplish. It is not what we do in life that we regret, it is the things we did not do. Enjoy the experiences of childhood. Encourage your children and grandchildren to do the same. Have a happy childhood, and take someone else along on the journey!