

OH, TO BE YOUNG AGAIN

TWENTY THINGS I WISH SOMEONE HAD TOLD ME WHEN I WAS EIGHTEEN

1. Chase your dreams while you are able Life is tricky, and if you aren't careful, you can find yourself with a family and a mortgage before you know it. Take some time now to think about what you are passionate about. Find out what your dream is and chase it while you are young and still have the time, enthusiasm, and energy to do it.

2. You will regret the opportunities you didn't take much more than the ones that didn't pan out Of all the things I regret in my life, most of them are things I didn't do rather than mistakes I made. Many times in my early adulthood, I would find out about an opportunity and then talk myself out of going for it. The self-doubt and worrying about all of the what-ifs can be crippling.

3. Be prepared to make lots and lots of mistakes When you make mistakes, you know that you are growing. And, as long as you are growing, you know that you are alive. If you never made a mistake, you wouldn't be challenged. What fun is that?

4. Try on new ideas When you hear of an idea or opportunity that sounds interesting, try it out. Don't let the fear of looking silly or being embarrassed prevent you from exploring new things. No one is really watching you as hard as you think, and there is no shame in being brave.

5. Always be honest, with yourself and with others Lying is just a waste of time. Be honest in your relationship, but most of all, be honest with yourself. Don't let other people tell you how you should feel or who you should be, and don't try to be the person you think you should be or beat yourself up for not feeling the way you think you should. If you make honesty a priority, you can just be the person you are.

6. You don't have to go to college right away If you don't know what your passion is, how on earth can you chase it? There is this assumption that after high school, you have to go to college. If you don't feel like you are ready to succeed in that environment, take a year off and figure out what it is that you love. There is absolutely nothing wrong with starting college a year late or even going to a trade school rather than opting to pursue a degree.

7. Trust your instincts In almost any situation, trust your gut. When you tune in to your intuition and your instincts, you are almost always right. If you feel like something is really important to do, do it. Don't try to second guess yourself over and over and don't do things that you feel aren't right just because you want to be "nice."

8. If you are stuck worrying about something so much that you can't sleep, get up and write it out When you are in a vicious cycle of doubt and worry, the best way to get it off your chest is to write it down. Once you have it out on paper, it doesn't have to be stuck in your head keeping you from getting a good night's sleep.

9. It's more important to know where to find the answer If you know how to research and find out the answer, then you don't need to try to remember every single fact. It is impossible to know everything. Instead, just learn how to research.

10. Live within your means You don't have to have a lot of money to do the things you want and to have a great time. You can never win the game of who has the best, most expensive stuff. So, don't even bother. Lunch in the park can be just as much fun as a day at the mall. It just depends on your outlook.

11. Play everyday As we grow up, we stop being willing to just play. There is always room to be creative and silly.

12. If you don't know what to say, don't say anything Sticking your foot in your mouth is always worse than being shy. If someone says something you don't like, or you just don't know how to respond, just don't say anything at all. Let them break the silence.

13. Be who you are Being yourself always seems so overused to me, but it is still true. When you work hard at growing and being the person you were born to be, rather than the person you think you ought to be, you will have a very happy life. Not everyone was born to be in a cubicle. Just be careful to leave yourself room to grow.

14. Use the resources you have, instead of waiting until you have more It is easy to think that if only you had something, (a college degree, a better car, a different partner, a pile of cash) you could reach your goal. Instead of focusing on the things you don't have, look at the resources you have and put them to use furthering your cause.

15. Never stop asking questions We could all learn a lesson from 3 year olds. They want to know why and how everything came about. When you get into the habit of asking questions, you will come to realize that sometimes the search is more important than the answer.

16. Try your best to never burn bridges You may not think that it is worth the effort to treat everyone in your life with respect and integrity, but you never know what the future may hold. Sometimes a chance encounter can lead to something new and exciting.

17. Most people can't read minds, so tell them what you are thinking If you want something, tell everyone you can. You can't get upset with someone for not doing what you wanted them to do if you never asked them to do it.

18. Just do it Even if you don't have all the resources you think you need, or you aren't sure if it's the right time, just do it. Let the rest work itself out. If you think that an opportunity is right for you, don't second guess yourself. If later you find that you made a mistake, you can always fix it or move on. Either way, you'll be better off than if you never took a risk.

19. Spend some time everyday being quiet with yourself The most important relationship you will ever have is with yourself. Don't be afraid of being alone or just sitting quietly with yourself. Sometimes your greatest truths will come out in a whisper when you are being quiet.

20. Assume love We always seem to be so quick to assume that people are looking at us, that they are judging us, that they secretly don't like us. Why are we so quick to think the worst of ourselves? When you don't know the situation, assume that people are looking at us with love, that they are admiring our courage, and that they think we are great until there is reason to think otherwise.

TEXT ADAPTED FROM: nedhardy.com

