

10 Life Lessons People Learn Too Late

Before you know it you'll be asking, "How did it get so late so soon?" So take time to figure yourself out. Take time to realize what you want and need. Take time to take risks. Take time to love, laugh, cry, learn, and forgive. Life is shorter than it often seems.

Here are ten things you need to know, before it's too late:

1. This moment is your life. – Your life is not between the moments of your birth and death. Your life is between now and your next breath. The present – the here and now – is all the life you ever get. So live each moment in full, in kindness and peace, without fear and regret. And do the best you can with what you have in this moment; because that is all you can ever expect of anyone, including yourself. Read *The Power of Now* .
2. A lifetime isn't very long. – This is your life, and you've got to fight for it. Fight for what's right. Fight for what you believe in. Fight for what's important to you. Fight for the people you love, and never forget to tell them how much they mean to you. Realize that right now you're lucky because you still have a chance. So stop for a moment and think. Whatever you still need to do, start doing it today. There are only so many tomorrows.
3. The sacrifices you make today will pay dividends in the future.– When it comes to working hard to achieve a dream – earning a degree, building a business, or any other personal achievement that takes time and commitment – one thing you have to ask yourself is: "Am I willing to live a few years of my life like many people won't, so I can spend the rest of my life like many people can't?"
4. When you procrastinate, you become a slave to yesterday. – But when you are proactive, it's as if yesterday is a kind friend that helps take a load off your back. So do something right now that your future self will thank you for. Trust me, tomorrow you'll be happy you started today. Read *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* .
5. Failures are only lessons. – Good things come to those who still hope even though they've been disappointed, to those who still believe even though they've tasted failure, to those who still love even though they've been hurt. So never regret anything that has happened in your life; it cannot be changed, undone or forgotten. Take it all as lessons learned and move on with grace.
6. You are your most important relationship. – Happiness is when you feel good about yourself without feeling the need for anyone else's approval. You must first have a healthy relationship with yourself before you can have a healthy relationship with others. You have to feel worthwhile and acceptable in your own eyes, so that you'll be able to look confidently into the eyes of the people around you and connect with them.

7. A person's actions speak the truth. – You're going to come across people in your life who will say all the right words at all the right times; but in the end, it's always their actions you should judge them by. So pay attention to what people do. Their actions will tell you everything you need to know.

8. Small acts of kindness can make the world a better place. – Smile at people who look like they are having a rough day. Be kind to them. Kindness is the only investment that never fails. And wherever there is a human being, there's an opportunity for kindness. Learn to give, even if it's just a smile, not because you have too much, but because you understand there are so many others who feel like they have nothing at all. Read *Way of the Peaceful Warrior* .

9. Behind every beautiful life, there has been some kind of pain. – You fall, you rise, you make mistakes, you live, you learn. You're human, not perfect. You've been hurt, but you're alive. Think of what a precious privilege it is to be alive – to breathe, to think, to enjoy, and to chase the things you love. Sometimes there is sadness in our journey, but there is also lots of beauty. We must keep putting one foot in front of the other even when we hurt, for we will never know what is waiting for us just around the bend.

10. Time and experience heals pain. – Several years ago when I asked my grandmother about overcoming pain, this is how she explained it to me: Look at the circles below. The black circles represent our relative life experiences. Mine is larger because I am older and have experienced more in my lifetime. The smaller red circles represent a negative event in our lives. Assume we both experienced the same exact event, whatever the nature. Notice that the negative event circles are the same size for each of us; but also notice what percentage of the area they occupy in each of the black circles. Your negative event seems much larger to you because it is a greater percentage of your total life experiences. I am not diminishing the importance of this event; I simply have a different perspective on it. What you need to understand is that an overwhelmingly painful event in your life right now will one day be part of your much larger past and not nearly as significant as it seems.