



7 Lessons to Learn from Children



If life today were as effortless for adults as it is for some children, I am sure we would have better health, less stress and improved relationships. Think about it. Adults don't get regular afternoon naps, rarely eat cookies without feeling guilty and get no Spring Break from tests and responsibilities.

Children can teach us some valuable lessons about living more enjoyable lives. Try these today!

Laugh more

Laughter is nature's stress buster; it makes us feel good! It releases a combination of hormones and chemicals that have positive effects on our system. It reduces stress, drops blood pressure, lifts depression, boosts immune systems and more. Laughter and smiles are enjoyed best when shared with others. Spending time with children is one way to increase our playfulness and enjoy our lives.

Live in the moment

Ever notice how kids don't get stressed about their future? They don't worry and fret about what is yet to come. They live in the moment. They enjoy life today and soak in all that it has to offer. Children also do not remain consumed by the past, unlike many adults. Adults carry guilt, sorrow and stressors from yesterday and yesteryear into our present lives. This robs us of the gifts within the present.

Have fun friends

Remember your best buddies from your school days? You would wake up with anticipation of seeing them and being with them. Adults must also have core friendships that encourage, support, and contribute to a healthy and fun life. Maybe it's time to spring clean your friendships! Seek fun friends that add to your life rather than drain it.

Go with the flow

Many adults today need to take a huge chill pill. They need to tone down their super-serious minds, and learn the calming benefits of simply going with the flow. Not everything has to be planned in minute-by-minute detail. There are many surprises to be discovered when we open ourselves up to them by being flexible and less serious. Go with the flow and enjoy the breather!

See the good in people

Children are not critics of others, but rather tend to see the good in people. Sadly many adults have pessimistic views of others and have a keen eye for the faults in others. Try to assume the good in people and don't become distracted by the people and things you can't control. Share with others the good you see!

More at Midday April 2, 2008

Bounce back after setbacks

Children are amazingly resilient and able to bounce back after setbacks. They only stay distraught from mistakes temporarily, whereas some adults remain down and defeated long after many life disappointments. Take time to learn the lesson from the tough times, but keep your eyes on the possibilities within tomorrow.

Write your own story

What do you want this year, or this day, to say about yourself when looking back on it in the future? You can write your own story by the choices you make today. If you were to paint a picture of your ideal life, who and what would be in it? You can start moving that way simply by making decisions about what story you want your life to tell. Paint it with brilliant colors and learn some lessons from children along the way.

Centerstone (615) 460-HELP (4357)

About Centerstone

Centerstone (www.centerstone.org), a not-for-profit organization, is the largest behavioral healthcare provider in Tennessee and the ninth largest in the nation. Serving the community for more than fifty years, Centerstone provides a full range of behavioral health and related educational services to individuals of all ages and their families. Centerstone also conducts research that seeks to identify, treat and eliminate mental illness. Centerstone provides services to more than 50,000 individuals annually. Children, adolescents, adults, seniors, and families all receive help from a multitude of different programs in more than 75 facilities and 150 partnership locations throughout the region. Centerstone is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). For more information about Centerstone, please call toll free at (888) 291-4357.

About Susan Gillpatrick, MEd, LPC, CTS

Susan Gillpatrick, Centerstone Crisis Management Specialist, primarily works in the field with clients in critical incident response situations, and in Centerstone's wellness trainings and presentations. She is also responsible for planning and implementing marketing and growth strategies for Centerstone's Crisis Management Strategies.

In recent years, Ms. Gillpatrick worked for the Shelby County Government Victims Assistance Center in Memphis. There, she co-developed a model program for the state of Tennessee entitled, "Homicide Response." Her work in this area received the 2000 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties.

Ms. Gillpatrick is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Certified Trauma Specialist, Certified Workplace Conflict Mediator, and Mental Health Service Provider in the state of Tennessee and a National Certified Counselor. She is also a member the American Counseling Association, the Association of Traumatic Stress Specialists, the Tennessee Mental Health Counseling Association, and the Middle Tennessee Employee Assistance Professionals Association. She is a frequent presenter at local and national conferences, and has had numerous articles published. She received her Master of Education degree in Human Development Counseling from Peabody College at Vanderbilt University.