10 Life Lessons Kids Can Teach Us
by Jocelyn Kelley

What do children know that adults seem to have forgotten? Children are more confident, more courageous and enjoy life far more intensely than adults. Sometimes it feels that we spend our entire lives trying to return to who we were as children. Here’s what we can learn from our younger selves to bring more clarity and joy into adulthood.

1. Every day is a fresh start.

"Isn't it nice to think that tomorrow is a new day with no mistakes in it yet?" - L.M. Montgomery.

Wasn’t it always amazing how the end of a school day always felt so final, so finished? The break between June and September seemed like a lifetime. Because when you are young, every day feels like an eternity and a new day means new opportunities to make new friends, explore new adventures, learn new things. Children don’t carry baggage from one day to the next. They start fresh, always.

2. Creative pursuits are fun and good for you.

"Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort." - Franklin D. Roosevelt

How often do you see children losing themselves in a creative project for hours at a time? Drawing, playing with clay, building a sandcastle with meticulous attention to detail. For some reason, as we get older, we stop seeing creative activities as worthwhile. How many adults, aside from artists, draw on a regular basis? How many play with clay or finger paint just for the fun of it?

3. Be courageous.

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one’s courage." - Anais Nin.

Sing out loud. Dance when you feel like it. A child’s life feels limitless because they are not confined by fears of failure or humiliation. They march forward with hope and determination because they don’t know any better. They haven’t been beaten down, they haven’t experienced failure. They embrace life and all it has to offer with open arms.
4. Laugh every day.

"A day without laughter is a day wasted." - Charlie Chaplin

Children have the beautiful ability to find joy all around them. Just watch the humor a child can find in a shopping mall or at the park. They see silliness everywhere.

5. Be active.

"Play energizes and enlivens us. It eases our burdens. It renews our natural sense of optimism and opens us up to new possibilities." - Stuart Brown

When you were young, playing outside was the highlight of your day. You would run and chase your friends until you were out of breath and your cheeks were rosy. You would jump and do cartwheels at the drop of a hat and you never thought of it as "exercise" or "daily fitness." It was just playing. And it was fun. "It is a happy talent to know how to play." Ralph Waldo Emerson


"In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing pleasures. For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed." - Khalil Gibran

Children find true joy while playing with friends and they love making new ones. They join soccer teams, go to a birthday parties, start new schools. These are all ways that kids make new friends. Children adhere to the motto, "the more the merrier," and adults should, as well.

7. Be the hero.

"Above all, be the heroine of your life, not the victim." - Nora Ephron

When a child tells you a story about school or the soccer field, they are usually the hero of their story. The world revolves around them. As we age, we don't want to be conceited or egotistic, so we downplay our accomplishments and achievements. We don't want to brag. But in doing so, we often slip to the side of self-deprecation. We put ourselves down to make others feel better or to be more relatable. Modesty becomes an admirable quality and we start to convince ourselves of our own mediocrity.

8. Scars are badges of honor.

"Every day you either see a scar or courage. Where you dwell will define your struggle." - Dodinsky

When a child breaks a bone, everyone they know will sign the cast. They become the superstar of the class, the survivor. If they fall down and cut themselves, everyone wants to see the scar, they wear it proudly. As we get older, we hide our scars, our wounds become our secrets. We don't want to be seen as weak or pitied, so we tell no one where it hurts. But what children recognize is that scars aren't signs of weakness, a scar is a sign of strength and survival. A story to tell. An accomplishment.

"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore." - Andre Gide

Children are not afraid to play a sport they have never tried before. They will jump on a trampoline, dive into a pool or ski down a mountain even if it is foreign to them. As adults, we fear the unknown. We stay safely ensconced in our comfort zone and rarely venture out. Adventure exhilarates us and awakens the spirit.

10. Notice the little things.

"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things." - Robert Brault

My niece loves watching the sandpipers run back and forth at the water’s edge. She notices their little legs and how fast they move along the sand. Something simple that we take for granted brings her immense joy and profound inspiration. When did we stop noticing the tiny miracles that surround us daily? How much more beautiful would life be if we could see these miracles again?