

Lessons Gleaned from Life

As we go along this journey called life, what do we learn? What nuggets of knowledge do we discover through education or, even more likely, in personal experiences?

Circulating on the internet is an opinion piece credited to the late Andy Rooney, veteran *60 Minutes* commentator on television. Research shows, however, that the quotes falsely attributed to him are actually statements gathered from dozens of different people (ages 5 to 95), many of which were collected in the 1995 book *Live and Learn and Pass it On, Volume II*, by H. Jackson Brown Jr.

Brown's first volume, *Live and Learn and Pass It On*, was on the *New York Times* bestseller list for more than 28 weeks. In that book, kindergarten kids, seventh and eighth graders, high school students, young married couples and senior citizens all told what life's experiences had taught them. Here is a list of some of them:

I've learned ...

- That the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.
- That when you're in love, it shows.
- That just one person saying to me, "You've made my day!" makes my day.
- That having a child fall asleep in your arms is one of the most peaceful feelings in the world.
- That being kind is more important than being right.
- That you should never say no to a gift from a child.
- That I can always pray for someone when I don't have the strength to help him in some other way.
- That no matter how serious your life requires you to be, everyone needs a friend to act goofy with.
- That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.
- That simple walks with my father around the block on summer nights when I was a child did wonders for me as an adult.
- That life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.
- That we should be glad God doesn't give us everything we ask for.
- That money doesn't buy class.
- That it's those small daily happenings that make life so spectacular.
- That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.
- That to ignore the facts does not change the facts.
- That when you plan to get even with someone, you are only letting that person continue to hurt you.

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- That love, not time, heals all wounds.
- That the easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am.
- That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.
- That no one is perfect until you fall in love with them.
- That life is tough, but I'm tougher.
- That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.
- That when you harbor bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.
- That I wish I could have told my Mom that I love her one more time before she passed away.
- That one should keep his words both soft and tender, because tomorrow he may have to eat them.
- That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.
- That when your newly born grandchild holds your little finger in his little fist, you're hooked for life.
- That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs when you're climbing it.
- That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

No doubt we can identify with most, if not all, of these jewels of wisdom. Understanding them and applying them leads to a more fulfilling – and joyous – life.

– Beecher Hunter