

My Philosophy of Life.

By Dawna Daigneault Ed.S.

I was delighted by life on a daily basis in childhood. I loved the sun, the flowers, the clouds, and dancing in the warm summer rain on my grandmother's driveway. I had dreams of what my life would be like as I continued to grow. Dreams are just multiple wishes that work together to motivate us towards something beautifully significant.

As I grew up, I traded my wishes for work. That was the wrong trade to make. I can work and still wish. My wishes can change to lift my heart and delight my mind no matter how challenging the work of adulthood becomes for me. When I stopped wishing for what makes my life beautiful (in moments or other matters of importance), I lost my *joie de vivre* (joy of living).

That joy was still available to me no matter how hard I focused on the work my life required. I had slowly traded wishes for working - the work of school, relationships, career, housework, and upkeep of self.

That trade doesn't have to be made - I can have both. I can be dedicated to living responsibly and feel proud of the work it takes to be *me* in the world. I can also make wishes about my life that may not be as big as the dreams I had in childhood but that bring beauty and joy into my moments, my days, or more.

Maybe, we dream so much in childhood to inspire the work to be done as adults. Let's keep the inspiration alive, at whatever level we can, no matter the age.

Creating a life-sustaining life philosophy is needed to keep us living the life we want. When we stop wanting the life we live – we can also stop knowing how to live a fulfilling life. There are a few basic requirements for writing your own life-sustaining philosophy of life, and they include:

1. Naming the important themes in your life.
 - a. Mine includes loving myself and others, learning more, laughing often, creating space for myself, and leaving a legacy of kindness.
2. Knowing what you value about the themes that are meaningful to you.
 - b. I value authenticity, mutual respect, wisdom, compassion, and more.
3. Putting your life-affirming themes into action daily.
 - c. I have chosen one theme at a time and worked it into my daily routine by doing at least one thing that puts my value into action.
4. Becoming more aligned with your life themes by practicing what you value.
 - d. When I think about the themes that make my life worth living, I want to practice them, but I also need to pause, rest, and recover when my energy gets low.