

30 LIFE LESSONS

TRAVISHELLSTROM.COM/**30**

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LIVE YOUR LIFE LIKE A
ROCKETSHIP



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When I was growing up I lived close to Cape Canaveral and it was magical. My elementary school would shake, the windows of my house would rattle and I could run outside and watch the space shuttle arch into the clouds.

Remember, not too long ago, space travel was science fiction.

How awesome is it that it's now science fact?

I love watching things make that transition. First it's crazy, then it's awesome.

The fun part is those crazy people who believe in things like that are visionaries. I've always loved surrounding myself with those people.

People who dream. People who ask "why not." People who say "Yes and..."

Those are the dreamers who make our world more awesome everyday. I've never regretted hanging out those people, reading their books, watching their videos and joining their team. I want my life to be like that rocket ship.

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BE A NERD

ABOUT WHAT YOU LOVE



BE A NERD

ABOUT WHAT YOU LOVE

Growing up I was definitely a nerdy kid. I was good at school, definitely not the first one picked for teams, never quick at comebacks, super geeky about being on the safety patrol, the list goes on and on.

Now, looking back, I think nerddom was a great training ground. It taught me what being authentic meant. I was just being me. Never apologize for being who you really are.



SIMPLIFY, SIMPLIFY
SIMPLIFY



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SIMPLIFY

This is one of my favorite quotes from Ralph Waldo Emerson,

"Our life is frittered away by detail. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumbnail. He must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify."

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CRAFT YOUR OWN
PURPOSE



CRAFT YOUR OWN **PURPOSE**

Purpose trumps passion. Real happiness and success comes from doing things you believe in, even if it isn't so exciting sometimes.

Purpose is also something you can craft and build. In fact, I built a course to help people do that. We do it by clarifying our values, determining the most important roles in our lives, building a team of remarkable people around us and creating projects we love.

Find more at travishellstrom.com/purpose

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DON'T ASK PERMISSION
PICK YOURSELF



DON'T ASK PERMISSION
PICK YOURSELF

We are taught at an early age to do what we are told.
We walk in straight lines, color just so, and we wait our turn.

When we get older we trick ourselves into thinking that other people make and do amazing things, not us. That's not true.
You don't need permission. Give yourself permission.

"No one is going to pick you. Pick yourself." - **Seth Godin**

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CREATE A LIFE & WORK
YOU LOVE



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YOU LOVE

Be an angel's advocate, the devil doesn't need an advocate.
What would your life look like if everything went incredibly?
What would be a dream life made just for you?

They say that you are the average of the five people you spend the most time around. Are your five people helping you create that life above? Remember you can always find new friends, read amazing books, watch lessons and more. Bring up your average.



BUILD YOUR OWN
PERSONAL BRAND



BUILD YOUR OWN
PERSONAL BRAND

No matter where you go, you carry your personal brand with you.
It's the way people describe you when you're not around.
How could you ensure they say amazing things?

Think about what you want your brand to be. What are your favorite attributes and the characteristics of your favorite people you admire? How could you make those qualities part of your personal brand?



THINK
WIN WIN



THINK
WIN WIN

There was a father who left to his three sons 17 camels. To the first son, he left half the camels. To the second son, he left a third, and to the youngest son, he left a ninth. Unfortunately seventeen doesn't divide by two, or three, or nine. Desperate, the brothers consulted a wise old woman. She considered their problem a long time and said, "Well, I don't know if I can help you, but at least, if you want, you can have my camel." So then they had 18 camels.

The first son took his half (9), the second took a third (6) and the youngest took a ninth (2). They had one camel left over.
They gave it back to the wise old woman.

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DO WHAT YOU
LOVE
WHAT YOU DO



DO WHAT YOU **LOVE** WHAT YOU DO

Sometimes we are able to do things we love: work on projects that are exciting, connect with people who are a ton of fun, learn about things that inspire us.

Other times we are able to step back and look around, remembering how lucky we are to be where we are. When we stop to savor the moments of our lives as we are living them, we deepen our love and appreciation of them.

I love to bounce back and forth between the two.



WRITE YOUR OWN **BOOK**



WRITE YOUR OWN **BOOK**

I wrote my first book while I was in Peace Corps, the Unofficial Peace Corps Volunteer Handbook, and had a flurry of creativity that turned into a second, third and many more.

Each of us has something wonderful in us that we should share with the world, fiction or nonfiction, instructional or inspirational, artistic or biographic.

It's easier than ever to write a book, you don't need permission. Just get started with the first page.



LEARN TO **MEDITATE**



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One of the single greatest things I ever did was go on a free 10-day silent meditation retreat recommended by Brian Johnson.

It changed my life in ways I have a hard time explaining. It was like a mental reset button and powered years of the most happy, calm, productive and focused I have ever been.

Whether you read a book like *Untethered Soul*, go on a retreat, or simply sit and meditate for 5 minutes, it can change everything.



REWRITE

YOUR LIFE'S MOVIE SCRIPT



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We watch lots of movies, read books and hear stories all our lives.

In a very real way our lives are like those stories.

We pick our cast of characters, the plot and we can react to twists in the story however we want.

The fun part is that we are not only in the story, we are also writing it. At any moment we can rewrite the script, recast the characters, yell "plot twist!" and write a new chapter.



BEGIN WITH THE
END IN MIND



BEGIN WITH THE **END IN MIND**

This is one of my favorite 7 Habits for things both big and small.

At the high level, what do you want your life to be about?
At your funeral what do you want people to say about you?
That puts things in perspective.

At the small level, what are you working on today?
What does the final version look like?
Can you skip the middle work and jump to the final product?



FIND YOUR **PEOPLE**



FIND YOUR **PEOPLE**

Who do you love being around?

Have you ever been somewhere and looked around and thought,
"Wow, these are my people."

I felt that way when I met Peace Corps Volunteers and I followed that feeling. It led me to Mongolia, to the love of my life and to a surprising lifetime of work and relationships I could have never predicted. Find your people and love them.

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YOUR LIFE

IS YOUR MESSAGE



YOUR LIFE

IS YOUR MESSAGE

This is one of my favorite quotes from Gandhi.

"My life is my message."

This is such a wonderful reminder. We often get so caught in being humans doing that we forget to be human beings.

Who you are, how you treat people, what you stand for and what your values are make all the difference.

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MEMORIZE YOUR
TOP 5 VALUES



MEMORIZE YOUR **TOP 5 VALUES**

One of my favorite exercises, and the first one in my Crafting Your Purpose course, is Clarifying Your Values. It comes from my friend and mentor Jenny Blake. You can find it at travishellstrom.com/purpose.

In the exercise you look at a page full of values and pick your top 20 favorites, then narrow down to 10 and finally to your top 5 in order.

It's a hard exercise, but it's been huge for me. It clarifies what I want in my life and I can recite my top 5 from memory. Try it yourself!



KNOW WHAT
ENOUGH
IS FOR YOU



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IS FOR YOU

Lao Tzu said

"He who knows enough is enough will always have enough."

I opened my book with this quote to remind myself that it's up to each of us to decide what enough is.



Once we know that, everything is easier. Then life becomes a joy, not a game of comparisons.

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DON'T TAKE ANYTHING
PERSONALLY



DON'T TAKE ANYTHING **PERSONALLY**

I've had to learn this over and over again.
What people say and do are very rarely a reflection of us,
they are a reflection of those people.

People are telling you about them, not you.

You are completely independent of the good and bad opinion of others.

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PRIORITIZE YOUR
BIG ROCKS
EVERY WEEK



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How do you decide what you do every week?

If you're overwhelmed, the week kind of just happens to you.

By Friday you are exhausted, you wrote a lot of emails, went to meetings, finished some urgent tasks, but what happened?

One thing I love doing is looking at my big rocks for the week, the things I want my week to revolve around. They reflect my most important values and roles, and all the other stuff (the urgent little things) are like gravel compared to these rocks. Don't sort gravel. Prioritize your big rocks.



YOU ARE
NOT YOUR MIND



YOU ARE

NOT YOUR MIND

If you were your mind, there would be little hope. You would be at its mercy at all times and things like meditation would be useless.

Luckily we are not our minds. At all times we can stop and be quiet. We can listen and wonder, is what I'm thinking true, kind and helpful? Is it helping me living the life I want?

Scientists have found we think 60,000 thoughts a day, 95% are the same as yesterday, and 80% are negative. Let's try to increase that other 20%.

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ALWAYS DO
WHAT YOU'RE AFRAID TO



ALWAYS DO

WHAT YOU'RE AFRAID TO

That project or special idea you have that scares you and makes you think you might not be able to do it. That's exactly what you should be doing.

You will learn from it, it will help you expand your abilities, and you'll be able to accomplish much more than you ever imagined once you tackle it. The day we stop learning and growing is the day we start... not having fun.

If you're afraid of it, that's probably one of the best indications that that is the thing you should be attempting next.



BE A GREAT
LISTENER



BE A GREAT
LISTENER

Want more friends? Want better conversations?
Want to be really helpful to others? Listen. Really listen.

Empty your mind, let go of your ego, listen beyond the words,
watch nonverbal signals and embrace quiet.

Really listen and aim to speak 20% of the time and listen 80%.

That changes everything.



PRACTICE STORYTELLING **FOR YOUR KIDS**



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I grew up with my dad telling me stories at nighttime and it had a huge impact on me. I was very lucky. I loved the sound of his voice, the way he would scare us with the surprising parts of a story, the way I would usually fall asleep and have to tell him the last thing I heard the next night.

Storytelling has been part of human history for thousands of years. It's one of the special things that brings us together. Whether you read Jack Tales, Aesop's Fables or Harry Potter, practice storytelling for kids in your life. I know they'll love it as much as I did.



GO ON CODE-NAMED
ADVENTURES



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ADVENTURES

My friend Shaw taught me this. Adventures like camping, driving, canoeing, backpacking, going somewhere great or even homemade ice cream and watching LOST for the first time deserves an awesome name.

Whether it was Operation Beneathus (where we camped and spelunked in a cave miles long overnight) or Operation SOB (where everything that could go wrong did go wrong), code-names can make the best and the worst adventures that much better.



MAKE SPACE

FOR WHAT YOU WANT



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FOR WHAT YOU WANT

Do you want more love, relaxation, fun, laughter, adventures, and wisdom in your life? First you have to make space. Literally and metaphorically.

If your schedule is packed, where is the room? If your mind is crowded, how can you be creative? If someone you have a crush on comes to visit and there is no place for them to sit, what signal does that send?

Only an empty cup can be filled. Only a life with space can accept new and wonderful things. Make space and great things can and will come.



ALWAYS BRING YOUR OWN
SUNSHINE



ALWAYS BRING YOUR OWN
SUNSHINE

Become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know.

Bring your own weather with you wherever you go.

Don't blame circumstance or the things around you.

If you control your own mind and your own reactions you will ultimately build a life and thoughtful reactions you will be proud of.



BE GREAT WITH PEOPLE'S **NAMES**



BE GREAT WITH PEOPLE'S **NAMES**

As Dale Carnegie says in his famous book *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, someone's name is the sweetest and most important word in their language.

Take the time to ask someone's name, look at name tags, ask how someone pronounces their name and say it kindly and often.

Become great at remembering people's names.



BE THE HERO OF YOUR **LIFE STORY**



BE THE HERO OF YOUR **LIFE STORY**

Joseph Campbell famously wrote about The Hero's Journey in his book The Hero with a Thousand Faces, which was the inspiration behind Star Wars believe it or not.

Each of us is on our own hero's journey that includes going off into the wilderness of uncertainty, learning something wonderful, slaying our own fears and returning to where we started, wiser and happier than when we began. Each of us goes on many journeys like this throughout our lives.

Where are you in your journey right now?



REMEMBER, APPRECIATION
APPRECIATES



REMEMBER, APPRECIATION **APPRECIATES**

Relationship bank accounts are based on the idea that we can make deposits and withdrawals in our relationships. Deposits include things like keeping promise, writing letters, thanking and spending time with others.

Withdrawals include asking for favors, recommendations, referrals and asking for someone's time. Just like a bank account gains interest, when we make deposits in our relationships, they gain interest too.
Appreciation appreciates in value.

Who can you make a deposit with today?



CREATE YOUR
OWN PATH



CREATE YOUR **OWN PATH**

We live in an amazing time. Technology is exploding. The economy is crazy. Robots are coming. Everything is in flux. This is a great time to take your own path and have fun with it.

You don't have to go all-in, you can play with it at first. Create a side-hustle or a fun hobby that you want to explore more.

Being who you really are is a huge adventure, it isn't all planned out and perfect. Create your path and walk it with people who inspire you.