

# MoNdAy FuNnIeS

18 June 2001 >From Cordell & Janice Vail  
Our attempt to help you smile every Monday Morning

## Wisdom For The Week:

This is a little long but well worth reading

(Contributed by Margo Matthews.... Thanks Margo)

This is a commencement speech  
made by Anna Quindlen at Villanova:

"I have no specialized field of interest or expertise, which puts me at a disadvantage talking to you today. I'm a novelist. My work is human nature. Real life is all I know. Don't ever confuse the two, your life and your work. The second is only part of the first.

Don't ever forget what a friend once wrote Senator Paul Tsongas when the senator decided not to run for re-election because he had been diagnosed with cancer: "No man ever said on his deathbed, I wish I had spent more time at the office."

Don't ever forget the words my father sent me on a postcard last year: "If you win the rat race, you're still a rat."

Or what John Lennon wrote before he was gunned down in the driveway of the Dakota: "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans."

You will walk out of here this afternoon with only one thing that no one else has. There will be hundreds of people out there with your same degree; there will be thousands of people doing what you want to do for a living. But you will be the only person alive who has sole custody of your life. Your particular life. Your entire life. Not just your life at a desk, or your life on a bus, or in a car, or at the computer. Not just the life of your mind, but the life of your heart. Not just your bank account but your soul.

People don't talk about the soul very much anymore. It's so much easier to write a resume than to craft a spirit. But a resume is a cold comfort on a winter night, or when you're sad, or broke, or lonely, or when you've gotten back the test results and they're not so good.

Here is my resume:

I am a good mother to three children.

I have tried never to let my profession stand in the way of being a good parent.

I no longer consider myself the center of the universe.

I show up.

I listen.

I try to laugh.

I am a good friend to my husband.

I have tried to make marriage vows mean what they say.

I am a good friend to my friends, and they to me.

Without them, there would be nothing to say to you today, because I would be a cardboard cutout. But I call them on the phone, and I meet them for lunch.

I would be rotten, or at best mediocre at my job, if those other things were not true. You cannot be really first rate at your work if your work is all you are.

So here's what I wanted to tell you today:

Get a life.

A real life, not a manic pursuit of the next promotion, the bigger paycheck, the larger house. Do you think you'd care so very much about those things if you blew an aneurysm one afternoon, or found a lump in your breast?

Get a life in which you notice the smell of salt water pushing itself on a breeze over Seaside Heights, a life in which you stop and watch how a red tailed hawk circles over the water or the way a baby scowls with concentration when she tries to pick up a Cheerio with her thumb and first finger.

Get a life in which you are not alone. Find people you love, and who love you. And remember that love is not leisure, it is work. Pick up the phone. Send an e-mail. Write a letter. Get a life in which you are generous.

And realize that life is the best thing ever, and that you have no business taking it for granted. Care so deeply about its goodness that you want to spread it around.

Work in a soup kitchen. Be a big brother or sister.

All of you want to do well. But if you do not do good, too, then doing well will never be enough. It is so easy to waste our lives, our days, our hours, our minutes. It is so easy to take for granted the color

of our kids' eyes, the way the melody in a symphony rises and falls and disappears and rises again. It is so easy to exist instead of to live.

I learned to live many years ago. Something really, really bad happened to me, something that changed my life in ways that, if I had my druthers, it would never have been changed at all. And what I learned from it is what, today, seems to be the hardest lesson of all.

I learned to love the journey, not the destination.

I learned that it is not a dress rehearsal, and that today is the only guarantee you get.

I learned to look at all the good in the world and try to give some of it back because I believed in it, completely and utterly.

And I tried to do that, in part, by telling others what I had learned. By telling them this:

Consider the lilies of the field.  
Look at the fuzz on a baby's ear.  
Read in the backyard with the sun on your face.  
Learn to be happy.

And think of life as a terminal illness, because if you do, you will live it with joy and passion as it ought to be lived

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(Contributed by Randy Clark.... Thanks Randy)

## Lucky Number 5

A 55 year old man who was born on May 5, has been married 5 years, has 5 children, makes \$55,555.55 a year, who's lucky number is 5 receives a phone call from a friend.

The friend informs the man that a horse named Lucky 5 will be running in the fifth race at the local track that evening. Excitedly, the man withdraws \$5,555.55 cash from his bank account, goes to the races and bets on Lucky 5.

Sure enough the horse comes in fifth.



Make it a wonderful and happy week!!!!

The happy friends in your life,

Cordell & Janice Vail

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