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Regrets by Carl Beyer

I hope I do not regret writing this article. The definition from www.wikipedia.com for “regret” is: “*Regret (emotion), an intelligent or emotional dislike for personal past acts and behaviors*”. I have mixed feelings about regrets. I usually say I have very few regrets in my life. But maybe I should have more regrets based on the definition. Obviously, I have done things in the past that I dislike, so should I regret them?

You see, when I think of regrets I think of those people who lose out on life because they dwell on their regrets. Maybe I am not thinking so much of standard regrets but regrets that damage people’s lives. I am referring to those regrets that so overwhelm people that they find themselves unable to proceed with their lives. So, maybe I should start saying I have no debilitating regrets.

When I hear people speak about their life as if it has very little meaning because of their past decisions, I think of debilitating regrets. A typical example is the multitude of people who believe that if they had gone to college then they would not have any money problems. While I am a big believer in education, it does not determine your life. A degree does not define you but is simply one of your assets.

Another example is “if only I had married Tony instead of Carl”. How many of you have thought that? Not with Tony and I, I hope, but with so and so. Simply put STOP IT! This is destructive to your life and your relationships. Put your efforts into maximizing the good in your relationships and minimizing the not-so-good in relationships.

We could go on and on about people’s regrets. If only I had done this instead of that. Imagine what my life could have been, if only... All of you with perfect hindsight should realize how damaging this hindsight is to your foresight. Your perfect hindsight will ruin the moments you are living now. We cannot live in the past only the present. We only move forward. Imagine how disruptive life would be if we could go back and correct any little mistake we made. We would be so consumed with “getting it right” that we would never enjoy those great moments in life.

We parents can be the worst regretters. If only I had done this, or that, with the kids. If only I had been more attentive; if only I had been a better example; if only I had been more compassionate; if only I had been more strict; if only I had not been so strict, STOP IT! While I have very vivid memory of a bad childhood, because of bad parents, it was a great learning experience. That experience taught me what not to do as a parent, but I know I am making my own mistakes now. Yes, we do try hard not to make the mistakes our parents made, while sometimes failing to do what they did right.

Look around and ask yourself if you are leading a full life as God wishes. Are your regrets debilitating? Are you blind to the blessings you have because of regrets? Ask yourself what good are these regrets to you? If you allow regrets to stop your growth; if you do not allow regrets to teach you empathy; if you allow regrets to rule your life, I hope you will rethink your damaging actions. Think! Why would God allow such actions in his all-knowing love? God knows that these

actions can make you a much better person. God knows we need lessons. God knows that most of us are too hard-headed to simply be instructed; we need to make our own mistakes.

Some actions we regret cannot be undone while others can be corrected. Correct those which you can, such as getting a degree. Do not tell me that you are too old. Those actions which cannot be undone, examine carefully, and see what lessons you can learn. Do not forget that wisdom can be gained from these regrets, wisdom that you can pass onto others (if they are not too hard headed).

God Bless you all. Go forth and live life to the fullest. Go forth and turn those regrets into beautiful lessons. Go forth and know that God has no regrets in your creation. You are one of God's beautiful creations and God Loves You, no regrets.