

Your Bucket List

A couple weeks ago, shortly after my cat Bennie was diagnosed with cancer, an acquaintance asked me a question that gave me some direction. What would be on his bucket list? Thinking big, I thought about all the things he would've loved just a few weeks before: rolling around in a field of catnip, eating all of the dogs' food, lying on top of my legs, drinking all his water out of the bathtub...Unfortunately, he wasn't feeling well enough to do any of these things. But his favorite activity, being outside, seemed manageable. Last Friday, the temperature was in the 40s, so I set a pillow and blanket out on the wet ground so he'd have a place to sit.

As sick as he was, he perked up when we went in our backyard. He lifted his head to feel the breeze, walked all over the yard and rubbed his head against the plants, all parts of his outdoor ritual. He even tried to jump up onto his favorite spot for sunbathing. This was the most energy I'd seen him have in days, and I was so grateful we had that experience together. Just 3 short days later, he was gone.

So what was my take-away? I thought about all the things I used to have on my bucket list. Skydiving, parasailing, going to a performance at Paisley Park...I can't do any of these things anymore. The pain is just too great. Why did I wait so long to do these activities? I kept putting them off, thinking I'd get to do them one day. One day. Now that one day is gone.

What can you learn from me? Do all the things you want to do NOW. Don't wait until a day in the future that may never come. When you retire, there may be a multitude of reasons why you can't check items off your list.

If you haven't created your bucket list yet, take the time to do it. What will make you truly happy? It doesn't have to be something big. It could be as simple as spending a day with all the people you love.

If you, like me, can't physically do the activities you once longed to do, then come up with a new list. Just like with Bennie, I was able to turn a simple pleasure into a wonderful afternoon with my kitty. It's frustrating to think that our health has impacted our desires. But there's still so much out there that we can do! Don't wait until it's too late.

MY HOPES: If you haven't created your bucket list yet, take the time to do it. What will make you truly happy? It doesn't have to be something big. It could be as simple as spending a day with all the people you love. Or maybe you want to go on a trip that seems impossible. Think about how you can turn the impossible into a possibility.

I need to do this too. I guess I thought that I'd never be able to do the items on my bucket list, not even considering the fact that I could make a new one. One that still filled me with hope, excitement and exhilaration.