

## My Lucky 100

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I read the line from the play out loud: *“Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.”* I had no idea what this meant. I decided that if I read three more pages and I still didn't understand it, I would use Sparknotes in the morning. If I couldn't understand the language of Shakespeare, I was pretty sure that the internet would. It was getting late and all I wanted to do was finish my homework and go to sleep, but I also knew I would need to understand the material. My teacher would have no sympathy in the morning. In order to avoid the speech on ‘personal responsibility’ I reread the line. Did this mean that life was worthless, or that we just never took the opportunity to make it more than it already was?

I started to think about everything I want to accomplish in my lifetime. I realized how easily I become caught up in an assignment or a task, so wrapped up in where I am going that I often forget to appreciate where I am. This revelation hit me hard. Suddenly I was no longer interested in *Macbeth*, or even sleep for that matter. In the long run, this assignment would be meaningless when compared to other life experiences like getting a great job or having a family. I put aside the play and opened up a new Microsoft Word document. I started typing a list of 100 things that I wanted to accomplish in my life.

The idea for the list started that night, but I guess in some sense, it had always been there, in my head. But until now, nothing had inspired me to actually write it down. If it was tangible, it

was real. If it was real, I could put it away in a drawer, but I would still know that it was there, waiting to be used. Then the line from *Macbeth* came thundering to the front of my consciousness again “*a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.*”

What would make my life significant? As I composed my list I thought to myself why I wanted to do each of these things and what they would all accomplish. *Scuba dive in the Great Barrier Reef, spend New Years in Times Square, experience weightlessness, hike to the ruins of Machu Pichu, visit a third world country, volunteer for a year.* I wanted to see the world, in all of its beauty and chaos. *Go through a toll bridge and pay for myself and the car behind me, donate to a charity anonymously, attend the Olympics.* Why not try to reach out to the other 6.721 billion people in the world? Or let them reach out to me? *Learn not to say yes when I really mean no, quit a bad habit, appreciate silence, break a world record, build my dream house.* I wanted to take every moment as it was. There was a change stirring inside me.

Then I looked back at the list I had made. The cursor was blinking on the screen, waiting for the next item to be written. While looking at this list that I realized how every so often, a moment will shock me as it happens. I had not intended on making a list of things I wanted to accomplish in my life that night, I was just trying to read *Macbeth*. In instances such as this, I realize that my life can be more than just assignments, appointments, meetings, and going through the motions. I remembered that amid the buzz of everyday life, I could still be captivated and taken by surprise. That life has a deeper meaning. Life is composed of more than just a beginning, middle, and end. It is in these rare and extraordinary moments that life reveals itself; I can realize the beautiful potential of life and the infinite wonder of the world. It is also in these moments that I find myself feeling incredibly small.

Somehow, I needed to remind myself that these moments exist. I needed to remind myself of the importance of being able to take a step back and look at the bigger picture. I knew

that this list would be my reminder. I could remember the potential of the list, and the things I consider important in life. In contrast to that, how bad could my day really be?

As I reached the end of my list, lucky number 100, *reflect on my greatest weakness and realize how it is my greatest strength*, I noticed that now I had much more than a list of things I wanted to accomplish in my life. I had the blueprints for a full life, not wasted, but complete. As I started to put my books back in my backpack for another day of high school in the morning, I paused as I looked at *Macbeth*. I finally understood what Shakespeare meant. This list would save me from the everyday life. As I saved the list onto my computer desktop, I realized that I wanted a full life, not an empty shell. What is it that makes a full life? It's too soon to say at this point, but perhaps I will discover the answer along the way. At this, I put the play in my backpack, my list in my desk drawer, and went to sleep with closed eyes and an open mind.