



A Bucket List = Family Happiness

By Carol McCloud

Last week, on a flight from Detroit to Chicago, I sat next to a DePaul University professor. Our conversation covered many subjects, including happiness, a subject near and dear to my heart.

He said that he and his students had recently discussed what really makes people happy and had concluded that “the happiest people are those who have something to look forward to.” I agreed. “A Bucket List,” I said and then added, “Even better, what if every family came up with a Family Bucket List, a list of fun things they could look forward to doing together as a family? Would that create happier families? I think so.

A Family Bucket List doesn't happen on its own. It's planned fun. Without planning, your Family Bucket List won't happen. Begin by having each family member put some thought into what they would really enjoy doing together. Where would they like to go? What do they want to accomplish?

With no plan, where do we spend most of our free time? Looking at flat screens; TVs, movies, DSi, iPhones, and iPads. In fact, teenagers spend so many hours looking at screens, they are called “Screenagers.” Screens are easy, addictive, and everywhere. Unless you purposely turn them off, they own your time.



BIG STOCK PHOTOS

Meanwhile, parents juggle jobs, housework, meals, homework, yard work, school and numerous other activities, obligations, and projects.

With all our modern conveniences, have we no time for family?

Your family can create a Family Bucket List any time of the year or for any season. Why not make a Family Bucket List this upcoming

summer? Have everyone participate by thinking about and writing down a list of three or four things they would like to do as a group over the next few months. These ideas don't have to include expensive vacations. They can be ideas that broaden your family's horizons, add a new experience, or something you haven't done for a while as a group.

When you have a collection of big ideas, add a few simple, easy, things that can be done close to home — bike rides, a picnic lunch or dinner, enjoying local downtown concerts or events.

Planting and maintaining a vegetable or flower garden or team volunteering are just two great family projects that will get everyone together for some valuable “family time.”

Be sure that everyone is encouraged to offer suggestions, but also be prepared to reject, in a bucketfilling way, the few ideas that may have to be eliminated for various reasons.

When the list is compiled and everyone is happy with it, display it in a prominent place for maximum bucketfilling anticipation, crossing off each activity when it becomes a happy memory.

Sound like fun? This weekend isn't too soon to begin your 2012 list. Let the (family) happiness and “togetherness” begin!

Making a Difference

Congratulations Sue!

Total appearances by the
Bucket Fillers Team
September 2006 to May 2012
Sessions: 2,234
Attendance: 339,350

Sue Delazaro of San Diego, California is our bucket filler of the week. You have a book coming your way. Every bucket filler is a winner. Encourage your friends to get their buckets filled by subscribing to our free e-newsletter at www.bucketfillers101.com

Words of Wisdom

“Life is a special occasion. Just remember you have the power to turn any day into a special occasion.” — Hallmark.com

* Visit our website for a complete list of bucketfilling schools and organizations.

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