

Just wait

Business



School's finally out, and summer has begun. I know how much we all need this break; but it's like a surfer paddling their surf board ahead of a wave, faster, faster, faster - though in the end, the wave will always catch you and you have no choice but to be driven forward by it. Soon, I fear we will lose control like that again.

I can't count the number of times in the past year someone has told me about "real life" or getting a "real job" as if my life now is a free trial, as if my job now doesn't count. That's all people seem to think of High School - it was all so important (think of the pressure they put on us), yet there is more importance in what lies after. So college, then? Is that "real life"? Ah, no. That doesn't count either. Just wait. Just wait until you get out of college, too, and face a nine-to-five work week.

But that's nothing, either, so just wait until you're in a serious relationship. Just wait until you're married. Just wait until you have kids. But those are so easy, just wait until they're teenagers. Wait until you have to pay for their schooling.

Wait until they're married, wait until the grandkids... I feel as if I'll be waiting until retirement for "real life" and then have no energy to appreciate it! No matter what I accomplish, no matter what I experience, someone has it worse. Someone is beyond me and can look down at my life as "easy." Someone is always looking back, and as I will never catch up to them, somehow my life is just slightly less real than theirs. I'm younger, less experienced. I can't know what I'm doing.

Well, I'm here to tell you something else. Yes, you. Your life is very real right now. In fact, it is so real that you will never ever get this day back, this hour, this minute, this second. And I refuse to believe it is only a preparation for something any more "real" than today.

So I have a suggestion to make. This summer, be real. Because it is true that later years may bring more work and responsibility, but today has no less life to live. So climb a tree. Go have that ice cream! Stand out in the pouring rain until you're soaking wet, but look at how the water just runs off your skin and understand that this moment is very real indeed.

Most importantly, don't short change yourself. Don't check off these days as a demo for later. Yes, you'll eventually be where some of those people are today, who tell you you're not really living yet. But by then, they'll have moved on, too, and you still won't be able to satisfy them. You'll always be missing something.

Unless you realize, you're really not! You're missing nothing at all, unless you believe you are somehow less of a life than anyone else around you. And you are not. So go live this summer like you want to experience now; don't wait forever. There will always be the future. But you can't live there yet.

You can only live here. You can only live now.