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"Stand on Your Head and Laugh" – Kids These Days

By Lady Camelot

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Over the course of spring and summer breaks, my teenage kids find multiple ways to antagonize me. One of my daughter's favorite complaints is, "...I'm bored. There is nothing to do." Of course, my response is always, "...there's plenty of things to do," with a continuation of the myriad listing of ideas, tasks and other events in which she can partake. Ideally, she would have me take her mall shopping, cruising the beach strip, and ultimately become her sole entertainment planner and provider during her "vacation" period.

Suddenly, it dawns on me that I was once the tyrannical 10-year old who "had nothing to do..." My dad's sharp but justifiable reply to me then was, "...stand on your head and laugh." That was, of course, at a time when television wasn't quite as controversial and diverse as it is today. I can't even begin to imagine the many channels my kids have at their disposal. I think I stopped count after 300-something. If movies aren't on their menu, then they've got the ultimate in gaming audio – not only the Sony Playstation, but also the Sony II, Sega Genesis, and many handheld computer games as well.

Not being a house-recluse myself, I always preferred enjoyment of the great outdoors. Okay, we didn't live on a mountainside, but our backyard was equally just as fun. Whether it was catching frogs, playing in tadpole-infested puddles, playing Frisbee or ball with the family dog, playing Marco-Polo, Redlight-Greenlight, Simon Says, softball, jump rope, hopscotch, bicycling, soccer, tether ball, roller-skating, volley ball, tennis, sprint-racing, or simply sitting on green, dewy grass – there were ample things to do.

Kids growing up in the 1970s despised rainy days. We didn't have the cool conveyances that children have in modern society. Back then, if it rained – you're "vacation" or "school in-service day" was shot. We actually had to find things to do with our time – like reading, drawing, and listening to music. If we were fortunate, we had some type of talent that we could indulge in – resorting to playing guitar,

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singing, painting or cooking. And yes, kids actually had to turn on a stove to cook the infamous Ramen Noodles. Today, microwave has made cooking a breeze. Specially marked packages of mac-n-cheese, and many other easy-to-cook foods are now microwavable. No longer do we have to wait forever for a quick snack. Mealtime is mere seconds away.

Television. Saturdays were the ultimate in animated television programming. I still recall wasting my morning sleep on 7am Saturday mornings just so I could go and watch Scooby-Doo. Because then, Saturday morning was the ONLY time kids could watch cartoons. During the remainder of the week, there were three channels – not including public television. And worst of all, if the President was holding a press conference, he was on ALL three channels. Needless to say, kids didn't have the infinite viewing options then as they do today.

Phone. Years ago, we would have marveled at the now common "touch-tone" and "cordless" phone. Our minds would've been blown by global "walkie-talkies," (now called cellular phones) – not to mention Internet access. Of course that was a different time though.

Extracurricular Activities. Swimming would've been one of my favorite pastimes. I said, "... would have been," because back then, families had to travel miles to get to the nearest public pool or swimming hole. At that time, commercial pool clubs were far and few between, and if you couldn't afford a membership – well, then you had the rare pleasure of "running through a sprinkler" on hot, humid days. Even with our own private in-ground pool, my teenagers are sometimes "too tired" or "just don't feel like swimming." Modern generations of kids never cease to amaze me. Even with so many choices available to them, they still cannot seem to get "un bored."

In conclusion, after all efforts have been depleted, I simply tell them to "Stand on your head and laugh."

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Lady Camelot currently serves as the Public Relations' Director for www.holisticjunction.com

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When I Grow up...

By Myrtis Smith

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One of my favorite commercials was an ad for Monster.com.

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It showed fresh-faced kids looking into the camera and sharing their dreams for the future. We're accustomed to kids saying they want to be a doctor, or an astronaut, or a ballerina, but instead these kids said, "When I grow up, I want to be a brown nose," and "When I grow up, I want to be in middle management" and "When I grow up, I want to be a yes-man."

The kids are so cute and their answers are so absurd you can't help but laugh. But looking at your own life, can you still laugh? Or are you on the verge of crying, because you are stuck in middle management, you have a brown nose, and you are definitely a yes-man (or woman).

Kids have a distinct advantage over most adults: they are free to dream. If a 10 year old says "I want to be a doctor," everyone smiles and says "You can do it. You can be anything you want to be." If a 40 year old mother of three says "I want to be a doctor," most of the people around her will likely say "Go back to school at your age? Where will you find the money? Do you have any idea how long that will take?" What's wrong with that picture?

Who put an age limit on dreams? When are you suppose to stop pursuing your dreams and start "acting like an adult?" Its sad that society's definition of acting like an adult often means jumping into the mainstream, doing what everyone else does and not rocking the boat. You get a "good job," you bring in a steady pay check and you never ever EVER do anything risky like start your own business or quit the "good job" you hate, or go back to school to start a new career.

I am particularly fond of a quote by Mark Twain. He says, "Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. Sail away from safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in our sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

Ask you inner child what he or she wants to be when they

grow up. I dare you.

Myrtis Smith is the founder of Premeditated Life. At Premeditated Life we have one focus – Your Career. As a career coach I offer a variety of services designed to improve your professional skills,

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support you in your career transitions, and empower your job search. For a FREE Career Assessment contact us at coaching@premeditatedlife.com



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