

Kicking the bucket list

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Bucket List

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Like birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas, Father's Day comes but once a year - which means it can also be a time to take stock of what's been doing for the last 365 days. For some dads, that can mean taking a look at the bucket list.

You know - a list of things you want to do before you kick the bucket.

Life consists of a series of decisions - some based on choice, some based on chance, many based on too little information. When it comes down to it, people tend to decide based on one or more of the following: desire, instinct, pressure, experience, or fear.

You want to become a doctor. You feel you are an artist. You need to please somebody. You've done this before and should keep doing it. Or you are afraid what will happen if you don't choose this.

So what happens when you reach a certain milestone, and discover that you haven't done what you set out to do?

Dr. Stephen Fleming is a professor of psychology at York University in Toronto. He explains that for some people, a traumatic event helps them to live bigger.

"If your life is threatened by a disease or a traumatic event, that has the power to inform your life and transform your life."

This can lead to setting new goals, or changing paths. And while Dr. Fleming hasn't come across research on the meaning of bucket lists, he says the whole idea of these lists - or life goals - morph as you age.

"The kinds of things you want to do when you're 20 are not the kinds of things you want to do when you're 40 and 60."

He sees life goals or bucket lists as part of a continuum that start as for-me items. The next level usually involves more than one person, such as fulfilling relationships and creating legacies.

"The bucket list can be positioned in the timeline of that continuum. Some things relate to what you want to do in the world, and other life goals have to do with how you want to be in the world."

Instead of waiting around for something something negative to give you a positive push, why not use this Father's Day as an opportunity to venture out of the comfort zone?

Alex Barseghian, founder of Samba Days, once held a dream job in marketing that turned out not to be so dreamy for him. So he quit to try something new.

Now, he's helping other people try something new with exciting experiences in the form of memorable gifts that enlighten, endure, and expand what very well might be your bucket list.

"The list should be a combination of very aspirational things combined with things that are attainable in the near future," Barseghian notes.

The options his company provides are varied and unique: be a barista, sip like a sommelier, or open your mind to endless possibilities, such as magic, beekeeping, hang gliding, becoming a rock star and running away with the circus.

Dad may not want to be a barista; nonetheless, he may enjoy learning some barista tricks, and knowing when the one who works at Starbucks is doing it wrong.

Remembering that these experiences are possible can be half the battle. Because bucket lists shouldn't be things to cross off before we die. They should be things we experience to actually live our lives.

Men's bucket lists by age

According to Samba Days' research, the following are the most common adventures by decade:

Age 25: Learn to be a bartender. Whether it's for job experience or to impress the ladies, he wants to spin the bottle.

Age 35: Drive a Ferrari, or some crazy fast, expensive car. A higher income combined with a need for speed has men emulating Mario Andretti.

Age 45: Whale watch. This age group has a newer family, so it is a bit more risk averse.

Age 55: Skydive out of plane. Perhaps they're trying to keep up with their teenage kids?

Age 65: Fly a plane. He's used to being in control, and cars are old hat by now. Next stop - the sky.

According to psychological research, by age 75 and up, the focus shifts to the self. Men tend to prioritize developing closer relationships with children and grandchildren, and creating some sort of legacy.

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