

## What would you tell your 18-year-old self?

DAHLIA KURTZ, SPECIAL TO QMI AGENCY

FIRST POSTED: THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2011 12:00 AM EDT | UPDATED: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2011 09:56 AM EDT

---



What would you tell your 18-year-old self if you had the chance today?  
(Shutterstock.com)

Remember when you were going to be a doctor, or a princess, or an astronaut, or a superhero when y

And then you finished high school to face your "last" summer.

A pig filled with pennies was no longer a pot of gold. Money and responsibility reared their dream-st

At 18, you felt you had to decide how the following several decades of your life would play out, which ludicrous an idea than becoming a superhero.

The truth is, even when most of us decided on our life's path, we still never really knew what we wan doesn't come with an automatic gestalt of self-discovery; neither does turning 30, 40, 50 or any age.

So if you could go back in time and give your 18-year-old self some advice, what would you proffer?

After a couple of mind changes, Tanya Borsuk, 32, is now a senior pharmaceutical consultant. She sa figure everything out so soon. If it were that easy, then what would be the fun in life?

"You can change your goals and career at any time, and the more education, experience and motivati is to hit the ground running."

Hershel Guttman made sure to travel before settling down as an environmental engineer. "Borrow r before a job and kids. You will grow as a person in wonderful ways you could never imagine. You can when you return to a permanent job."

And while the 66-year-old recognizes there may be differences between generations, he believes that or Bachelor's degree is your Get Out Of Jail Free card for life.

"You cannot lose the accomplishment that represents to employers. You can change careers, but you always be there."

On the other side of that generation gap, Jarrett Moffatt, a 25-year-old advertising copywriter, agree get some kind of post-secondary education out of the way, then travel.

"People think BAs are a waste of paper, but even if it's not what you end up doing, nothing can take you."

Ron Fine thinks he'd tell his younger self to figure out what he really loves to do, since he'll spend the doing it.

In Fine's 42 years, the communications strategist has found education is key, but adds, "It's important vocation, like plumbing or brain surgery, because let's face it - a BA with a major in anthropology will

Growing up in a working-class environment, Kathy Shields, 63, was not encouraged to get a degree c don't know your path, put one step in front of the other and eventually you will stumble upon sometl

"Be passionate, but be practical."

The cookbook author advises to set some goals and go for it. Also, try to go to university. If you are n do, travel - it is an education and perhaps you will discover what you want to do (or even what you d

"Oh, and buy books, you can learn a lot and do whatever with them."

Whatever you do, don't waste your time trying to be someone else, enjoy your time trying to find you

And ask yourself, "If I died tomorrow, what would I regret?" Then do it.

Know that life changes. Adapt. Be honest with yourself. Follow through. Enjoy it. Repeat.

Life doesn't end at 18. Life doesn't start at 18. Life just starts.

### **Find yourself a mentor**

Growing up isn't something that comes naturally - guidance can be one of the most important comp your path. That's where mentors come in. In a recent survey conducted by American Express Canada who had a mentor said they felt it had been integral to their success; however, the survey also showe don't have such a person in their lives.

To amend that, American Express Canada has created Room For Thought, a contest that will pair up Children co-founders Craig and Marc Kielburger, Metric lead singer Emily Haines and TV's Survivor Entrants are being asked to submit an idea that the panel will help bring to fruition, alongside gener information and rules at [facebook.com/AmericanExpressCanada](http://facebook.com/AmericanExpressCanada).

## READER'S COMMENTS »

---

By adding a comment on the site, you accept our terms and conditions and our netiquette rules.

## SPONSORED LINKS

---

### **Spring SALE on NOW!**

Pools, hot tubs, Patio furniture & Billiards  
Factory Direct Prices!  
Click here for specials!

### **Dr. Flea's Flea Market**

Toronto's Largest Indoor  
Flea Market  
[www.drflreas.com](http://www.drflreas.com)

Click now for free Flea \$

**LET'S GO TO THE  
EX!**

Tons to do and see for 1  
low price! Canadian  
National Exhibition  
Visit [TheEX.com](http://TheEX.com)