

Live Like a 2 Year Old

Most of you know I spend my days with two-year-olds. They are now my point of reference for everything. Thinking about today's email, I was observing my toddler companions and wondered what it was they knew that I didn't. We've been told over and over that babies are born with everything inside of them and it's us adults who pull the plug, release all of the power bestowed by our infinite intelligence and replace it with fear, guilt, shame, and limits. We are trying to do our best and doing it all out of love, but if we stopped ourselves for a moment to ask, "What could I learn from children?" I bet we'd be surprised by our answers.

1. Find wonder and happiness in every moment. My little companions can experience a level of excitement I haven't felt in years, and it takes only a big box to get them there.
2. Let it go. Toddlers are certainly known for their over-the-top tantrums, but do they ever hold a grudge? Not that I've seen. How many of you have cut someone out of your life because they wronged you in some way? A toddler has the most loving heart. They know the best way to grow from an experience is simply to move on from it. Answer perceived mistreatments with love and you'll be amazed how much more you can get from any situation.
3. Live uninhibited. This is my favorite. Have you ever watched a two-year-old dance? They don't care how they look or if they are "doing it right." They let the music move them in any way that feels good. How many times today did you check yourself to make sure you looked right? Or maybe that inner chatter beat you up for saying the "wrong thing." Get over it and move on. None of this type of thinking will increase your happiness, success, or growth. In fact, it will do just the opposite.
4. Happiness is the number one priority. Everything a toddler does is to create their own happiness. "Will that cupcake bring me happiness right now? Yes. So I will eat it." That was my nephew's inner dialogue today. Being happy leads you to deal with stress in a much healthier way, so choose joy over guilt.
5. Love yourself unconditionally. Have you ever seen a toddler look at themselves in the mirror? When do we lose that sense of self-love? My little guy will pose and make faces and be completely silly anytime he finds a mirror to play with. I found that I often avoid looking up if I know a mirror is staring back at me. Why is that? I have made it a point to use affirmations with my son in the mirror so this becomes the norm for him. He loves himself unconditionally right now and I will do my best to allow this practice to continue for as long as possible, hopefully the rest of his life.