

Your Future

- Linda Fitzpatrick

It was a humbling experience for me to inspire kid's creativity this summer. I was a counselor at an all girls camp for seven weeks in Maine and had the opportunity to write and direct a play. Upon the camper's arrival, I had no idea what ages would sign up for my activity hour. So, when I walked into the theater, I was a little overwhelmed to see I would be working with eight girls, all drawn from the youngest age group. They struggled reading and had hardly acted on a stage before. But they were determined, energetic, and ready to begin. That was infectious. Especially since I had to rewrite a sixty page play, which I had crafted over the months leading up to camp, and prepare a nine page, simpler, version for the girls to perform. Had I had all day for several days straight to work on the play, this wouldn't have been a big deal. I was, however, a full time counselor and had very limited hours to sneak off to my computer and type something up before my next activity. Throughout the summer, there were many difficulties, so I was always left on my toes trying to think quickly and act accordingly.

The half hour before the curtains went up were filled with a rollercoaster of emotions. One girl didn't want to show up, which was a form of stage fright I had not handled before. Two girls were arguing and that sent one into panicked tears. Due to a couple last minute issues, there was no one to handle the lights and I needed to be on stage, as did most of the other actors, for the entire show. Much of the play hadn't been run through with everyone at once due to camp schedules, so the main event was pretty much our one full dress rehearsal. While I was trying to handle things, I needed to keep in mind that I had to open the show and be presentable. Though it was crazy, when those curtains opened and the girls got on stage I was blown away by their courage, persistence, and showmanship. Campers who had long and challenging lines recited them perfectly in front of the audience. And, to my humble surprise, the crowd responded to the show with joy and excitement.

All of the emotions and effort that went into this show taught me a very valuable lesson about life and what I am embarking as I enter senior year and college is on the horizon. That it will be emotional, and sometimes it might feel like getting up on a stage with not a clue of what to do, but the show must go on — and it will. For six weeks, these eight year olds put so much love and energy into something because it was what they wanted, not what they needed to do. Sometimes it is so easy to get focused on all of the things that make up a traditional life, when in reality, we should all take a step back and ask ourselves what in life would make us truly happy and why aren't we striving towards it? I strongly believe we should live our one life the way that will make us most satisfied, because only then can we do best for our society. For seniors, whether it's the college you choose, the major you embark on, the city you enter, or the alternative path you journey down — do it with pride and regret nothing. This is your year and your future. Love passionately and widely and never be ashamed of who you are and what you do.

For the rest of the community, maybe you can't reroute your whole life right now, but you can adjust things. Carve out a few hours of your day to take part in something that makes you happy. Cross off an item on your bucket list. Be spontaneous, or be incredibly organized — whichever

suits your personality better. The trajectory of your life lies in the moments you act upon now. These are the decisions that will live with you forever. Do yourself proud and don't be afraid to get on that stage and improvise.

I am delighted to be back as co-Editor-in-Chief for the 2015-16 year of Headlight and look forward to capturing Marblehead's future for you.

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