



**A SHORT GUIDE
TO A
BIG LIFE**

Why not have a big life?

BigGirlLife.com

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What is a Big life?

Your Big Life is of course unique to you. We come into this world hard-wired with different talents, tastes, and preferences and I believe that we are all put here on Earth to do something unique with them.

When who you are aligns with what you do with your life, fulfillment and happiness explode and life gets really BIG.

HOW YOU KNOW YOUR LIFE COULD BE BIGGER?

- Do you have the nagging feeling that you're not living the life that you could be living, or that the hopes and dreams you have for yourself are slipping by?
- Do you feel stuck and frustrated about how to best proceed with your life?
- Do you sometimes feel that your life is passing you by and that you need to make changes but have no idea how to begin or try and never seem to get anywhere?

My Story

Living Small

I had always wanted to be a writer, or a dancer, but only crazy people did those things, so when I went to college, I thought that I should get a business degree instead. After graduation I went into mortgage banking. As someone who is creative and doesn't enjoy numbers, it's almost like I deliberately pursued the exact career that would make me miserable. It did.

I left banking and went back to school with the brilliant idea of getting my teaching degree so that I could have my summers off to spend with my husband who is a Captain, and spends all told, six months traveling a year. I needed to make my marriage work, so that's what I did. The marriage endured and even thrived, but I still woke up dreading work every morning.

A few years later, our son was born with health complications that resulted in his having to undergo over ten surgeries in his first five years. Three months after he was born my father died of a massive and unexpected heart attack.

In the midst of shocking grief, and the heavy stress of having to single parent half the time, and the surgeries, I left teaching to dedicate myself to caring for our baby. Three years later, we had another son. Our family was complete, but found myself fighting my way out of a depression. I became aware that because I wasn't pursuing the dreams that I had for myself and my life outside of my family and marriage, I was becoming deeply unhappy.

"Unused creativity
is not benign.
It metastasizes.
It turns into grief,
rage, judgement,
sorrow, shame."

- Brené Brown

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On the outside I seemed okay, but I became aware of a feeling of heavy unsettledness - a nagging discontent that colored my relationships and my stressful world. Being inside my head was often not a great place to be. I often felt angry. I began looking for answers.

Discontent & Search

I resolved that I couldn't continue to live this way. I went on a quest for answers. I read spirituality & philosophy books, I went to church, I tried temple, I took a tantric philosophy course, I went to Kabbalah classes, I took a Judaism for Christians class, I got my horoscope charts done, and I read Buddhist texts. I dedicated myself to regular yoga practice and I tried earnestly to open my mind for answers.

I was making headway, yet I would fail to implement those desires into my life over and over again, though. I knew it was because I was holding myself back and I didn't fully understand why.



I began to recognize how I was sabotaging my efforts at a Big Life every time I'd allow myself to stop exercising, or cook unhealthy food, or do anything with my free time that wasn't really what I wanted to do.

Why?

When I really dug deep for honest answers, I was surprised to discover that deep down I didn't think that I deserved to live a life that reflected my own dreams and desires. I had willingly subverted my own dreams for so long that I was lost to myself, and on top of that I was being mean to myself about it.

Perhaps it is because I spent much of young adult life feeling like I had to fight for what I wanted from life; that things never worked out easy for me. Maybe that became my guiding principle, the little voice whispering to me on auto-pilot, crushing my heart's desires, and brainwashing me to sabotage myself just enough to keep me from my Big Life. That may be right or it may be wrong, but honestly it doesn't really matter. What matters is that I recognized the self-sabotage. It was hard to not feel embarrassed about this, but I had to take ownership. No one else was to blame for the life I had created but me.

YOUR PATH IS
BEAUTIFUL AND
CROOKED AND
JUST AS IT
SHOULD BE.

RightLife.com

Finding a Life Philosophy



Through several years of self-study I adopted a [tantric/buddhist philosophy](#) that deeply resonated in my heart and made everything around me clear - about how God works, and how the world operates in a way that felt true to me. I dropped the religion of my childhood in favor of a spirituality that felt kinder and less scary and dogmatic.

Once I had a philosophy to guide my actions, the world became simpler, more colorful and inspiring. I had an incredible [out of body experience](#), and then a [second](#) that proved to me that spirit is within me, always guiding me.

And if you believe that, you certainly stop being mean to yourself and start to feel a little more brave and empowered.

Disassembling

I began to take small actions over time to begin to remove the obstacles I had built that prevent my desires from manifesting. I stopped filling my free time with commitments & volunteering which did nothing but stress me out because all I really wanted to be doing was writing.

We sold our house that we had outgrown in a town that I no longer liked, and moved into a home and town that I loved. I try seeing people for who they really are based on their actions instead of trying to fit them into some preconceived idea of who I want them to be - which proved to be both devastating and incredibly liberating. I lost some friends because of it. Living a Big Life means seeing things clearly-discovering my boundaries, and what I am willing to put up with, and then honoring those despite uncertain outcomes or the opinions of others.



Living a Big Life is like putting on glasses for the first time. You get to finally see the finer points of beauty in your life while and at the same time noticing the cobwebs that have accumulated.

In my personal life that's meant insisting on things that sometimes people in my life don't want me to do - like sell the minivan in favor of the car I really want to drive, refusing to cook or bring home unhealthy food (for the most part), going to concerts (I just hate them), or taking off from my family some evenings to go to blogger meetings or book club to be with my friends.

Disassembling and decluttering my old unhappy life has also meant not just agreeing for the sake of peace, but having the courage to speak my truth. I no longer cling to what doesn't serve me, and sometimes that has been painful and scary.

Connecting With Your Heart

During this time I connected with my what would really make me happy when I was invited to participate in a mastermind workshop. There I discovered that there is science and universal laws of attraction available to engage with to help me along my journey. It was a revelation to me.



I discovered latent wishes, desires, and dreams for my life that I had never allowed myself to acknowledge before. That was quickly followed by a life-changing vision boarding workshop that really began directly connecting me with the Big Life I dreamed about.

I began engaging with the laws of attraction so much that I took huge leap of faith and faced my biggest fears when I started this blog and called it Big Girl Life back in 2012. I began it not because I had it all figured out and I knew exactly what I should do, but I began it because I desperately wanted

to continue on this path. I did it for me -because I wanted a Big Life for myself. I wanted to live a life of my own making and I wanted to keep going.

These days I wake up for the first time and feel excited to get to work. I'm happier with my family, and my role in it, and you can imagine that amplifies my life so much. Finding my spiritual center feels like ballast in my life ship, so that when things get rocky, I don't feel like I'm going to sink.

It took me over 14 years of hard work and searching to say that I have cultivated a life that reflects who I am at my core, one that is not necessarily easily or even finished, but one that is vibrant, healthy, and rewarding.

My Path

My story is my blueprint for how I've managed to transform my life in ways big and small. I am not an expert life coach or a psychologist; but I AM a keen observer of life, I pay attention, and simply offer up my own life experience to anyone who might find value in it.

I write the guide below as an offering of my own struggles and battles in that they might illuminate your own path, wherever it may take you. I want you to know that you are not alone in your self-sabotage, or if you suddenly find yourself lost to yourself as I did. I want to to know that finding your path to your Big Life is the privilege of a lifetime and worth every step along the way. Don't give up on the dreams that you have for yourself, or the small desires in your heart even if they are buried in a heap of disappointments and a life that feels unfixable.



If I can do it, I know that you can too. Are you ready to get started?

A SHORT GUIDE TO A BIG LIFE

After three years blogging, researching, writing, analyzing my own journey, and thinking about what a Big Life is and how to get it, I've identified four key steps to living a more peaceful life that reflects who you really are at your core.



#1 Connect with a desire for more.

A feeling of discontent is always your best indicator that you've somehow started living small. You have to really want more than anything else to become a happier person in order to do the hard work to change yourself and your life to make it bigger.

Recommended Reading

[What your complaining is trying to tell you](#)

#2 Align your thinking and life-philosophy with one that supports your search for your biggest and happiest life.

A connection with a spiritual philosophy that empowers you to believe that you were not only meant to be happy; but it is the reason why we are here on Earth, to discover your life's purpose to cultivate a happy life of your own design.

You'll need to embark on a quest for your own spiritual philosophy that helps you get there if this is a stumbling block for you. Below are some books that inspired and formed my own.

Recommended Reading



[When Bad Things Happen To Good People](#) by Rabbi Harold Kushner

[The Power of You, Kabbalistic Wisdom To Create The Movie of Your Life](#) By Rav S. Berg

[A New Earth, Awakening To Your Life's Purpose](#) by Eckhart Tolle

[Many Lives, Many Masters](#) by Brian L. Weiss

[The Seat of The Soul](#) by Gary Zukov

[The Art of Happiness, A Handbook for Living](#) by His Holiness the Dalai Lama & Howard C. Cutler, M.D.

[Dear Gwyneth, you got Tantra Wrong](#)

#3 Remove and De-clutter your life from everything that keeps you living small.

This is a lot of slow and hard work. It means making lots of little decisions and adjustments to how you operate like saying no where you may have once said yes. It also may mean having to say yes, where you may have once said no. It means disappointing people, but also surprising them, and yourself, too.

In the Life Changing Magic of Tidying up, Marie Kondo advises in her method of decluttering your physical space, to keep objects **ONLY** if they spark joy when you hold them. I'd take that advice further to encourage you to rid yourself as much as is reasonable, of activities, attitudes, habits that don't bring joy into your life or that aren't in service of a joyful life.



When you start purging your life this way people may talk about how you lost your mind. You will risk being misunderstood or judged or ostracized. This work is not for the meek, but there is no way around it. If it was easy everyone would have the life they wanted. This hard work is the only way to create the life of intention and purpose that you seek and the

only path to finding the life that's right for you. Stop doing things that make you miserable. And while you're at it get yourself organized, so you can make room for new things that bring joy.

Recommended Reading

[The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing](#) by Marie Kondo

[The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are](#) by Brene Brown

[I Don't Care if You Like It](#)

[The Secret](#) by Rhonda Byrne

#4 Find and Cultivate Your Bliss



Now that your obstacles are clear, actively engage with activities to connect you with the life you truly desire for yourself. I wrote a how-to article [here](#) to get you started. Consider also workshops, meditating, journaling, therapy, or creating a vision board. Keep an open mind and cultivate a habit of curious exploration. That journey of discovery **IS** living a Big Life. It is fluid and changeable over the years. Engaging with and discovering your true self and living that life of discovery is the bliss of living a Big Life.

Recommended Reading

[How to Find and Cultivate Your Bliss](#)

[How To Create A Vision Board](#)

[How to Manifest Your Dreams](#)

[Manifesting Your Dreams, 7 Habits to Master](#)

[Me, Myself, and Transcendental Meditation](#)

Let's Keep In Touch



Sign up for periodic updates to my Big Life series on the blog [here](#).

Let me know how your Big Life is coming along or shoot me question by [tweeting me](#), say hello over on [Instagram](#), or follow me on snapchat and periscope @hserody.



Hugs
Heather

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