

If I Had My Life to Live Over

by Erma Bombeck

(Written after she found out she was dying from cancer*)

From email — April 21, 2000

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*As it turned out, her death was not from cancer; see the note at the bottom of this page.

I would have gone to bed when I was sick instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for the day.

I would have burned the pink candle sculpted like a rose before it melted in storage.

I would have talked less and listened more.

I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained, or the sofa faded.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the "good" living room and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth.

I would never have insisted the car windows be rolled up on a summer day because my hair had just been teased and sprayed.

I would have sat on the lawn with my children and not worried about grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while watching television, and more while watching life.

I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realized that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle.

When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, "Later. Now go get washed up for dinner."

There would have been more "I love you's." More "I'm sorry's."

But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute... look at it and really see it... live it... and never give it back.

Stop sweating the small stuff. Don't worry about who doesn't like you, who has more, or who's doing what.

Instead, let's cherish the relationships we have with those who DO love us.

Let's think about what God HAS blessed us with.

And what we are doing each day to promote ourselves mentally, physically, emotionally, as well as spiritually.

Life is too short to let it pass you by.

We only have one shot at this and then it's gone.

I hope you all have a blessed day.

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In memory of Erma Bombeck who lost her fight with cancer. Here is an angel sent to watch over you...

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Visitor Al from New Jersey (USA) sent me this note on February 27, 2005:

Just a small note about Erma Bombeck. Erma did not die of cancer. Her death occurred a few days after she had a kidney transplant, which failed. Since she was in her 20s, Erma knew she had polycystic kidney disease, a genetic disease passed on to her by her father (who had left Erma and her mother). She said, jokingly, as always, "It's the only thing my father ever gave me." She did have breast cancer. It was treated with chemo and radiation, but she got past that problem. Her death was caused by an unsuccessful transplant. No matter the cause, she's been sorely missed ever since.