

1.

Two of the saddest words in the English language are “if only”. I live my life with the goal of never having to say those words, because they convey regret, lost opportunities, mistakes, and disappointment.

My father is famous in our family for saying, “Take the extra minute to do it right.” I always try to live by the “extra minute” rule. When my children were young and likely to cause accidents, I always thought about what I could do to avoid an “if only” moment, whether it was something minor like moving a cup full of hot coffee away from the edge of a counter, or something that required a little more work such as taping padding (衬垫) onto the sharp corners of a glass coffee table.

I don’t only avoid those “if only” moments when it comes to safety. It’s equally important to avoid “if only” in our personal relationships. We all know people who lost a loved one and regretted that they had foregone an opportunity to say “I love you” or “I forgive you.” When my father announced he was going to the eye doctor across from my office on Good Friday, I told him that it was a holiday for my company and I wouldn’t be here. But then I thought about the fact that he’s 84 years old and I realized that I shouldn’t give up an opportunity to see him. I called him and told him I had decided to go to work on my day off after all.

I know there will still be occasions when I have to say “if only” about something, but my life is definitely better because of my policy of doing everything possible to avoid that eventuality. And even though it takes an extra minute to do something right, or it occasionally takes an hour or two in my busy schedule to make a personal connection, I know that I’m doing the right thing. I’m buying myself peace of mind and that’s the best kind of insurance for my emotional well-being.

21. Which of the following is an example of the “extra minute” rule?

- A. Start the car the moment everyone is seated.
- B. Leave the room for a minute with the iron working.
- C. Wait for an extra minute so that the steak tastes better.
- D. Move an object out of the way before it trips someone.

22. The author decided to go to her office on Good Friday to _____.

- A. keep her appointment with the eye doctor
- B. meet her father who was already an old man
- C. join in the holiday celebration of the company
- D. finish her work before the deadline approached

23. The underlined word “foregone” in Paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. avoided
- B. lacked
- C. abandoned
- D. took

24. What is the best title for the passage?

- A. The Emotional Well-being
- B. The Two Saddest Words
- C. The Most Useful Rule
- D. The Peace of Mind

2.

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