

Embracing Your Season Before It's Too Late

Recently on vacation, while our family was beautifully unplugged from the world, my son asked me a question I had never considered.

"Did you know the last time that you held me when I was little would be the last time?"

His words blew my mind. Made me want to cry. Inspired me to try to pick him up on the stony path where we stood so that I would without a doubt remember the last time I held him. But he's over 6 feet tall, and I need my back for a few more years. (It's also awkward trying to carry an 18-year-old.)

I just stood there, a lump forming in my throat.

I couldn't remember the last time I held him because I probably didn't realize it would be the final time I'd pull him up off the floor into my arms. He was growing and being and moving along in life. Holding just naturally transitioned to other expressions of care and affection. Time goes by so fast, kids physically grow, mom's arms get smaller and life never stops.

We're always moving from stage to stage.

Living from moment to moment.

His question. It has made me reflect. Not to be over-dramatic, but we never know when lasts are going to happen.

I thought of other moments I never knew were ending.

The last time my mom would be able to pick up the phone and call me.

The final hugs and goodbye at our front door to a precious girl we loved.

The tearful kiss left on my Gramma's cheek in the hospital.

The abrupt end of joy found in a job I adored.

The last visit to a place that deeply mattered to me.

I didn't know those were the lasts.

What would have I done differently if I had known? What would I have said? Would I have ever been able to let go?

Every day, I live moments that are important to me. I don't think about moments ending because I'm too busy living the moment. Moments make up hours, days, months and years. It's impossible to analyze and capture each one. I can't live every second and event of life as if it's the last. That seems like a pretty bleak existence, but at the same time. I can't ignore the significance that each moment has.

Moments make life.

I want to love with all I have, so that however the moments go, I have peace and hope. I want to be able to gather precious minutes into special heart-places where what I felt in those moments will last forever. The good moments, the hard moments, the joy moments, the pain moments. Woven with never-ending grace brought together to create my Maker-written story. I don't want to forget or lose any of those seconds, or regret what I didn't do. I want to look back on every tick of the clock as part of beautiful stories written through faithful life-living.

We can live with purpose and intentionally to make moments count.

We can love our hearts out in both the best moments and the hardest moments.

We can do our best to make moments significant.

We can use what happens in a moment to shape the future.

One day, I had my little boy up in my arms, and then I put him down on the floor and I never picked him up again. It's OK that I never knew or realized that because I likely would have tried to hold on forever. Instead, I just kept living through his moments with him, and that has continued through his whole life.

There's nothing we can hold onto forever.

Every day, our moments change.

Don't wish them away.

Don't hold onto them too tight.

Set them down when you must, and pick up the new.

First and lasts.

Beginnings and ends.

Gather them into precious places, write them down in memory ink and impress them onto your heart. Wrap your arms around them and pull them close.

All your moments matter. {eoa}

Shelly Calcagno *is an author, speaker and co-host of 100 Huntley Street in Toronto, Canada.*