

Dear Friends:

When my SUI (State University of Iowa, then) undergraduate days started in the fall of 1956, I was among the hundreds who lived in the "new" wing of Hillcrest Dorm and, later that school year, was one of the 120 guys who were in the Hawkeye Marching Band at the 1957 Rose Bowl. Yes, the band was that small and there were no gals allowed in the band at that time. As I think back over the 50+ years since and briefly consider the "what-ifs" in my life, two things stand out.

First is the importance of basing decisions on what we perceive at that moment is best for us. Over the years I made several decisions about romance and jobs more on the basis of others' opinions and wishes than on what I actually thought was best for me. The results of those decisions are three divorces and, until recent years, the feeling that I had betrayed myself and my career ambitions.

Second, is that I finally evaluated my life up to this time and realized that there are many good circumstances that currently exist, which would not exist if any part of my life had been different. So, instead of dwelling on the "what-ifs", at the age of 68, I am thankful for the successes of my four children; I am pleased to have four grandchildren; I am pleased to have a domestic partner whom I love and who loves me; I am pleased that I am able to handle the physical challenges of aging and am able to continue to work as a music professional, the career for which my 1960 Bachelors of Music degree began preparing me

Summary: 1) when you must make a decision, be true to what you perceive is best for you; 2) if the decision turns out not to have been the best one, for whatever reason, focus on the good things and build on them.

Much happiness and success to you all!

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