

BBT Online's Bucket List Tamara Weide (44) – Meeting Consultant

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Pursuing happiness is somehow my daily routine. I don't have a list of things I want to have, do, visit or reach. I just do it. I am not a sort of 'happiness' guru, but nothing stops me from experiencing great things in life. I am down to earth, open-minded and 'doing is my best way of thinking'. I see so many people who have dreams, but also have a lot of objections (I don't have the money, time. What if..?). So, here are five things that changed my view on life and which I would recommend to all of you:



1. Traveling with kid(s). I have the luck of having a kid. He is now six years old and the love of our lives. He sees the world differently and forces us to adapt and re-think every day. Since he is ten weeks old, we travel with him. We have been to America, New Zealand, Abu Dhabi and next month we are going to Japan. A lot of people think that he is too young, he wouldn't memorize it, that it is heavy to travel with a kid, etc. All nonsense. All experiences in life form you. We, parents, also have the right to stay curious and discover the world. We don't have to wait till they are old enough. The fact that he has his parents 24/7 around him for some vacation weeks, binds us together. During our travels we keep a diary. Our son draws his day and I write little stories. It is so funny to see that his best moments of the day differ from mine.
2. Writing a book. A few years ago I published my own cooking book for pregnant women: 'Een broodje in de oven'. I invested all my savings in the book to make sure that I could print 5,000 hardcover copies. I wrote the stories and recipes, I asked friends for photography, graphic design, modelling and cooking, and in the end I did my own PR. The book was a huge success and the 5,000 copies were sold out within one year. After that I sold the copyrights to a Dutch publisher. Every life is worth a book and I know that a lot of people have ideas to share, but are afraid to start writing. I was not a publisher, a cook or a PR-specialist, and still I was able to do it. The secret is to share your wish and you will see that a lot of people around you are willing to help. Be open in what you want.
3. Challenging yourself physically. I am not a sportswoman and I have a culinary lifestyle full with eating, drinking and cooking. But I once walked/climbed the Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. I was negative all day: 'Why am I doing this, as I also can lie on the beach of Zanzibar? I could be at home with my family at the Christmas dinner table. Why do I have these headaches?'

They promised me that you would have the best view of Africa when you are on the top. I didn't have that. It was cloudy, bad weather and cold. I was disappointed. But the trip did something with me. I was walking 'alone' all day and I had all the time to think. And when you have no one to talk to and no other distractions, you have only you. You and the mountain. And while coming down I realized that I pushed my boundaries, I was able to fight against my negative thoughts and delivered a great achievement. After that trip I decided to change jobs, to break up my relationship (after 8 years) and to move. The Kilimanjaro made me realize that I was able to do more than I thought I could. Last year I started running. I never thought I was able to run much more than one meter. Now I run easily 10 km. It's all about forcing yourself, your mind & body.

4. Being a volunteer. There are a lot of organizations and associations that are exclusively ran by volunteers. Volunteers are not getting paid. Not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless. I volunteered for several organizations like TEDx, SITE Netherlands, MPI Belgium and charity foundations. As a person within a professional industry or as a person in society, I think you definitely enrich your life by sharing your knowledge, rolling up your sleeves and helping others. Recruiters and HR managers are more and more looking at what you are doing besides your daily work, because that says something of who you are and where you stand in life.

5. Starting your own business. Four years ago, I quit my job at Maastricht Convention Bureau and started as a freelancer. I have always experienced freedom in my past jobs, but as an externally hired professional you decide which assignments you want to do, how many hours you want to work and when and where you want to work. Of course there are risks to being self-employed, but the freedom you get cannot be translated in any value. The fact that you are asked for your expertise, makes you feel appreciated every time. And if one day there is no work for me anymore, I'll just apply for a job. There is nothing to lose in this world of opportunities.