

Chapel

July 28, 2019

Look to this day! For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of your existence:

The bliss of growth, the glory of action, the splendour of beauty.

For yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision,
but today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a
vision of hope.

Look well therefore to this day!

Such is the salutation of the dawn.

Good morning. I would like to express my gratitude to all of you for spending your morning here with me today. This is a very different perspective for me. I've never walked up the path behind me, I've never sat in your seats; since my first year at camp 7 years ago, I've been standing in the back with out-of-cabin staff.

When I tell people that I'm spending 7 weeks at a boy's residential camp, I am often met with a look of confusion. It's hard to explain, so I just tell them that it is a place where I have seen countless individuals feel a sense of belonging that allows them to blossom into the best versions of themselves.

In the spirit of finding somewhere you belong, please join the choir in singing, WILDFLOWERS by Tom Petty, which is found as an insert in your song book.

Last winter, a friend of mine was looking through a small stack of homemade Timanous photo albums and yearbooks that I keep. While flipping through the pages, she exclaimed, "Wow! These kids are LUCKY! They must have such a great summer!" I agreed, and continued the conversation by explaining what Twilight League was. I was

reminded of her comment as I took my dog, Gunner, for his first walk at camp earlier this summer. The campers and counselors here are lucky that Camp Timanous exists, yes, but an enjoyable summer is not guaranteed simply by being here. If you've ever looked in envy at your peer's summer and thought, "Wow, he's so lucky to be having such a great year," I'd like you to think about everything that person is doing to make the most of his summer. That "Lucky" person is likely willing to feel scared, to fail, to be wrong, and to do what others won't. They are okay with being criticized, and having the title of beginner. They know they may contradict themselves, sacrifice comforts, and let go of people or past identities to move forward. To be lucky is to pivot, to invest, feel uncertain, and do whatever it takes to keep moving forward. A 2019 summer won't become a memory you share forty years from now with friends around a fire because you happened to arrive on the first day and spend 3-6 weeks here. It will become a lifelong memory if you make a plan, take chances, and decide that you are going to invest all that you are in your remaining two weeks of camp.

I'd like you to take a second and think of something that you've been hoping to do at camp that you may have been too nervous to do yet. Maybe you've been so busy that you haven't taken a step back to think about it. I like to ask people at breakfast what their goal for the day is. The few seconds where a person racks their brain for an answer is one of my favorite parts of a day. In the spirit of my breakfast question, I'd like you all to take the next twenty seconds to think of a goal to have accomplished by tomorrow at dinner.

If you see me tomorrow, let me know how that goal is going.

Please join the choir in singing UNCLE JOHN'S BAND by The Grateful Dead

As a nurse, I feel like one of the most common things I tell people is to stop scratching. Yes, I know the bug bite is itchy; try not to scratch it. Maybe I've done more than offer

advice and helped cover the itchy area with some ointment and a bandage with hopes that creating a barrier will help decrease itching. Sometimes by giving strategies on how to ignore the itch, that it will go away.

There is another type of itch, however, that I don't get to talk about in the infirmary. It's the itch on your soul that fingernails can't scratch. It's that feeling deep inside when we're just itching to do something new and exciting. Sometimes new and exciting also means terrifying and nerve-wracking. Due to the nature of fear, there are times where we bury these desires and ignore them since scratching the itch would be too uncomfortable to face.

It's easy to think that you can do it next year. A lot can happen in a year, though. Take advantage of today for all that it's worth. Don't come back as an alumni of camp saying "I wish I had..." with a list of soul itches that were never scratched. Take the chances that will shape who you are. There is something so satisfying about scratching a mosquito bite. Imagine how good doing one of the activities you've been itching to do deep down in your soul will feel. A year from now you can look back at yourself, proudly, and not wonder why your friends were so lucky with their summer turn-out.

One of my favorite things about Camp Timanous is that when you want to do something new and exciting, there is always someone around to help. My first summer at camp I wanted to learn how to build a fire from scratch. Stephen "Gugs" Guglielmo overheard me one day and said he would be glad to show me. I assumed that he would show me how to pile sticks correctly and decide where to put the match. He gave me so much more than that - he literally went step by step with me, starting with how to find good birch bark and ending with how to correctly extinguish the fire. The most important thing I learned during that lesson, however, was how impactful friendships are here at Camp Timanous. Gugs helped me fulfill my desire to learn a new skill and took time that he could have spent doing something for himself helping me instead. Moments like that

make a summer. Perhaps you have a friend who can help you reach the goal you thought of earlier. If so, ask them. If not, make a new friend who can! Camp has so many people with different specialties who love to share their knowledge.

In the spirit of friendship, please join the choir in singing
YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND BY CAROLE KING

Don't be someone who relies on luck to have a great summer. Chase the desires in your soul, and if you need to, ask a friend for help. There are less than 2 weeks left of camp, do not let your summer ends with a flop. Go after everything you can while you're here. Crows - your time in the bunkline is coming to a close, and watching you go up the bunkline and grow into young men has been an honor and a privilege. You are in the homestretch, and I hope you leave here in a few weeks knowing that you did everything you wanted to during your camper career, because after this summer, there are no more opportunities.

To close Chapel, please stand and join me in saying The Timanous Prayer.