

What Makes A Satisfying Life?

By Liz Gibbons

I pared down my possessions when I moved to Windsor Gardens so that I could live in a much smaller space and be able to live a simpler life. And in many ways I do. Yet, I am busier than I was before. Each week is filled with activities: clubs, many classes (some of which meet twice a week), discussion group, and some webinars on the internet.

I thought living a somewhat simpler life would give me a sense of freedom. But I don't feel entirely free. Part of it is my age. I do not have the energy to do the things I used to do. I would love to be sort of a vagabond, driving along interesting routes to various parts of the country, exploring new places and having new experiences. I would really love to live in a tropical climate such as Costa Rica for a year or two and pick fresh fruit off the trees for many of my meals, meditate in a hammock, and watch sunsets over a body of water. Such a leisurely life appears to be a simpler life than I have now. But knowing my curious side and I would soon be looking for something creative to do or a skill or subject to delve into.

However, with age I am learning that perhaps the main key to a satisfying life is to be able to go with the flow. This is a lesson that I am still learning. I would love to have the enthusiasm and excitement of discovery that I had as a child when I had no expectations. But I am in a different stage of life now. Life is not always a smooth ride. Unexpected events show up. Being flexible is necessary. I am learning to let go in those situations I still want to control.

However, there is a great benefit of going with the flow. It often leads to pleasant surprises. When one plan gets waylaid it often leads to an unexpected benefit. I resisted moving to Colorado because of the cold winters. I wanted to live in a warm climate. But places that I checked out did not make a good fit. So I reluctantly made the move, and it has given me surprises and experiences that I never dreamed of having.