

What If?

By Sheila Johnson

In one's lifetime, we are presented with so many choices, and they increase exponentially with science, technology, and education overall. When I was growing up, having a degree in math seemed fairly simple, even if one had to advance to physics, engineering, and/or calculus. Once a person entered a desired field, let's say space exploration, the leaders of the field took you in and you received on-the-job training and learned everything one ever needed to know about space, shuttles, rocket ships, etc.

In today's world, my four-year-old grandson has the opportunity to learn yoga, martial arts, swimming, Kumon (a Japanese style of learning to read), and a host of other things that I have yet to explore. My thirteen-year-old granddaughter has had the opportunity to experience Improv, sewing, and lots of travel opportunities with her parents.

With all of these choices, it's hard to know which field, if any of the above, they will choose. The roads they choose may not have even been discovered yet. I may not even get to see them in their chosen professions.

October of 2019 refreshed my memory of what it was that I had dreamed of becoming. So many of my former classmates had made very nice choices in the military, secret service, oil, education, the medical field, airline service, real estate, and the list goes on. We were all together at our 50th class reunion, and shared so many stories of success, disappointments, heartaches, and beautiful love stories. I couldn't help wonder "What if?" What if I had followed my dream of becoming a doctor? Would I have had time to raise the three wonderful children that I have now? What if I had realized my secret dream of becoming a pilot? Would I have become a military pilot and survived Viet Nam? What if I had gone to work with NASA as an astronaut? Would I have been lost in space? So many 'What if's'; so many choices; so many roads not taken.

Although I love it to death, it was never a dream, choice, or desire to become a pastor or chaplain. God tapped me on my shoulder and I said yes. It was never a dream of mine to work with the homeless or displaced. They just show up in my life.

The best roads, I believe, are the non-glamorous roads; the roads that have some poverty on them; the roads that don't have promises of fame and fortune; the roads that lead to the unknown. And, there are still roads not taken that we can choose to walk.

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