



A Recipe for a Good Life

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I am a scraggle-haired, barefoot girl,
Who craves the simple kiss of fresh country air on her skin.
Mountains, caves, lakes, and waterfalls
are interwoven into the fabric of who I am.
I was born and raised in the East Kootenay of British Columbia,
I had the most beautiful childhood.

I was raised by wolves, or rather, I was raised by men.
My dad brought me up as an equal,
and I ran barefoot alongside four busy, muscle-bound brothers.
I wasn't a lady: I was only a sister.

I grew up building fires, playing in the dirty creek,
catching frogs in the pond behind our house,
and riding up to the lake barefoot on my bicycle
as soon as the sun came up.

Some say that I was spawned in the water.
I lived in it all summer long.
I grew up swimming, canoeing, and building rock-piles underwater,
Always picking saskatoon berries by the mouthful.

In winter, I remember... snow that fell up to my waist,
Hugging the windows and roof, shovelling a path to the front door of our cabin abode,

Snowmobiling from my backyard into the mountains.

I've had a good life.

My father didn't know how to raise a girl,

But he taught me about the good things in life:

Be grateful for all that you have and give when you can.

Live life in the moment. Tell people what you really think about them, because life is short.

Forgive, but don't forget: life lessons are the best kind of learning.

Love people, not things. Use things, not people.

Remember that not everyone is going to love you,

But don't let that stop you from being your whole self.

The ones that stay will love you fiercely,

and the ones who don't aren't worth your peace of mind.

Your word is your bond, so don't say things that you don't mean.

Always say please and thank you.

Don't judge a book by its cover,

Pay it forward, and good will come back to you again.

Every person has value,

But sometimes you have to look for it.

Our purpose in life is to leave the world better

than when we came into it, and every person can make a difference.

I was taught that this was the recipe for a good life.

Now, I'm a single mom of five beautiful children, ages 8 to 17.

Life has never been an easy one, but it's always been worthwhile.

My children are my life's best work, and the world is better with them in it.

I've never been so proud of people

As the homemade people, I have made.

Every day I come to school wearing my five babies on my back.

They are my heart; they are my life.

I don't always look perfect, but I'm here.

I show up every-single-day.

If I'm not here, I'm with them

because they are my favourite people.

Failure is not an option for me: I'm doing everything for them.

I WILL do great things, because no matter what I do,

They will always be watching. My journey may take longer than others,

and it may be more strenuous and challenging,

but I am determined to make it to the end.

I know that no matter what, I will succeed.