

Jillian Hartman
Creative Coding
Module 2 Homework

The Last Lecture was a wonderfully engaging and inspiring look into the joyful life and perspective of Randy Pausch. It stirred a lot of emotions in me because I used to be a teacher, and I believe so much in education and everyone's right to access a full, enriching, and creative education, and I am constantly disheartened these days by all of the cuts to education and how many children do not get access to the subjects that I think matter most: art and music. His reminder to seek joy and have fun made me reflect on ways that I am trying to do that more in my life after struggling with my physical and mental health over the last several years. Being a mama has been my greatest joy, and I have joined two local communities which embrace PLAY! The Play Network, and the UCCC preschool, which my son will be starting in the fall. Although I often feel too busy to do my favorite activities (reading, journaling, and creative art projects) I am realigning my compass to make more time for them, hence going back to college for art!

Pausch seems to have had a wonderful, happy childhood, which every child deserves, but in the light of the new bill that just got passed which is going to further cut access to healthcare, I just can't help but for my mind to go to the ways we as a country and world are not providing enough opportunity for people in general, let alone children, to experience freedom and joy the way humans are supposed to. It's amazing that he created these courses to inspire creativity in students, and I wish we had national leadership that prioritized these concepts and made a point to expand their reach over the last 8 years since he gave this lecture, that became quite a viral sensation, it seems. I don't want to be an Eeyore, but I just feel like I am too plugged into the state of affairs to be the positive optimist I used to be.

And yet, I also strive to do my best to tune out that stuff when I can so I can be a positive role model for my toddler, and to be present with the joy and wonder and excitement he sees the world through, like taking leisurely strolls, splashing in puddles, and playing keepy-uppy on repeat. Right now, his big life goals are to have rainbow-colored hair one day and to have a remote controlled robot t-rex. I really enjoyed the part in The Last Lecture where Pausch reflected on his childhood goals, especially the part about how the ones he did not accomplish were his biggest learning opportunities, and I have tried to see my own setbacks in that light as well, but, unfortunately, not nearly with the same enthusiasm and joy as he did. In fact, leaving my teaching career was one of the hardest things I ever did, and I think I still have a lot of unresolved grief about it, given that it was literally days before the covid shut down, and one year before my father died unexpectedly. I'm really tired of this being my story though, and I am ready to open myself up again, change my mindset, and move forward. Honestly, I was frustrated and really emotional about the class, because I am just feeling really overwhelmed with everything I have going on in my personal life and taking 3 classes so I could get full time status this summer to take out loans, and I was feeling pretty sorry for myself, and it was like you knew that I (all of us) needed to listen to this lecture and his life lessons, so thank you.