

# The Things I Wish I Could Have Told The Younger Me

*Dear younger me...*

You need to take a step back and celebrate your life. You've travelled to unimaginably beautiful places, sharing experiences with people who have supported you, believed in you and inspired you. Enjoy the journey as much as the destination. You'll never forget the first time you caught a fish, nor that night watch with the full moon rising, nor the humpback whale breaching off the starboard bow. You'll be forever grateful.



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## **Pace Yourself**

Right now, you're worn out. Take more preventative measures to ensure you don't make yourself ill or get injured while you're onboard. Sadly, you'll learn that the hard way (but, admittedly, you'll have fun while you're learning it). If only you knew how much more your crewmates would respect you and admire you for not giving into peer pressure and staying out late. You would thank yourself for not having that last drink too. Listen to your body and know when you need to rest. Diet is important, but don't obsess over it. Eat clean, and eat well. Keep fit. Hang out with those happy-go-lucky people who enjoy doing active things. Get up early and be on time. It's noted.

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## **Be You**

Don't give up on your hobbies and talents – these are part of your identity. Educate others, encourage them, and your support will be reciprocated. Why do you care what other people think? Don't concern yourself with your reputation in the industry. Stay on track, and it will take care of itself.

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## **Don't Lose Focus**

You're getting complacent. Stay motivated. If your job's becoming too easy – make a change. Put yourself forward, take ownership and you'll feel empowered by your new responsibilities. Your position onboard is constantly evolving. You have so many skills which are valued. Just don't spread yourself too thin. If you're going to do it, do it well. Make sure you acknowledge your crewmates' efforts as

well as your own.

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## **Be Inquisitive**

You'll regret not asking more questions, so make more of an effort. Be inquisitive, be curious and remember; you never stop learning. Whenever it's relevant, share your own stories, knowledge, and wisdom.

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## **Don't Panic**

When you're put in a situation you're not prepared for – breathe, keep calm, and get on with it. Most importantly, learn from your mistakes. Remember: your seniors, including your Captain, have undoubtedly made these mistakes before. Don't take yourself so seriously, make light of it and unless it's inappropriate to do so, laugh.

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## **You're Going To Have Bad Days**

You'll get knocked down, but don't beat yourself up. Rumination won't help you and neither with self-pity. Respect your crewmates and take (most of) their advice onboard. Acknowledge that there's more than one way of doing things, but this is how they do it. Navigate your position in the pecking order, but don't ever lose your assertiveness. Know yourself, have the confidence to be direct and stand up for yourself if someone speaks out of turn, otherwise, you'll end up losing yourself.

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## Speak To Your Friends

You've got an incredible support network. As time goes on, you'll find it easier to distinguish between true and superficial friendships. Keep in touch with your friends, family, and crewmates – they will always be there for you. Don't forget their birthdays! Don't suffer through things by yourself. Voice your concerns, don't be afraid to show your emotions and take others' advice. Make sure you're there for others when they need you too.

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## Be Patient

There will be highs and lows. Charters don't last forever, nor does that turbulent upwind delivery, and the vexatious mate who never cuts you any slack will surrender some eventually.

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## Say Yes

Take people up on their offers and make the most of the opportunities presented to you. Conquer your fears and release your inhibitions. Go off-piste; don't follow the others. I promise you will not regret it. Explore, connect with new people, learn the local language, try different cuisines and have an open mind throughout, meanwhile encouraging those around you to do the same.

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# Stay Strong

You'll sometimes feel like you want to quit. Don't. Stay motivated and take pride in your career. Don't let anyone or anything lead you to believe that this is not a real job. It is. Maybe you didn't plan on doing it for this long, or perhaps you wish you had climbed further up the ladder, but remember where it's taken you and the experiences you've had. Trust your intuition and know when it's time to move on. Stop comparing yourself to others, appreciate that everyone takes different paths, and you will feel liberated. You would be in a strong financial position – if only you would stop spending your savings!

Don't sweat the small stuff and focus on the bigger picture. Have an end goal in mind, but prepare to make other plans along the way.

You're living the best days of your life – you just don't know it yet.

Fair winds and safe travels,

***Your older self...***

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