GOOD FOOD JOBS

satisfying the hunger for meaningful work

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Dear Seekers,

Seekers of Jobs, of Teammates, of Equality, of Justice, Seekers of Change, and of Balance, and of Meaning. Here is our advice to you.

Food is the way we connect with the world, but we are at a cultural crossroads where 'the dream' that has been instilled in all of us - getting good grades, going to college, working your way up the ladder in order to have a family and buy nice things - has run its course. Generations before us have tried it, and it wasn't consistently fulfilling. It didn't always make the world a better place. We're left with skewed cultural expectations and a whole lot of pressure against going against the grain, as a starting point.

The world is full of opportunity and ambiguity. If you're a recent graduate, you definitely know what we're talking about. We recommend that, no matter where you are in life, you take some time to experiment. Attend every event that interests you. Volunteer. Join a CSA. Find like-minded people to socialize with. Read read read. Talk talk talk. Ask questions. Move to a new place you've always wanted to live, near or far. Spend a summer working on a farm. Eat. Taste. Barter. Don't spend money on anything you don't really need. Plant a garden, micro or macro. Make friends with people you meet at the Farmers' Market. Pick up a shift at the farm stand. Help small businesses who need help. Propose a project. Do a favor. Talk to business owners. Observe. Ask more questions. Be a witness to what works, and what doesn't.

Don't worry about the path. Take every opportunity. Love it. Build upon it. The worst mistake you can make is worrying so much about 'where you are going' that you never get on the train. There is so much work that needs to be done in shifting the way we eat, the way we interact with food, and with our environment. We can't get there if even one of us is standing still.

Go forth unafraid, because you are in good company, and it's called The GFJ Community.

Tay + Doe

COLLECTIVE WISDOM FOR ENDLESS LEARNING

Maddie / Class of 2016 College Graduate / *How do I gain experience for a job I am applying for when I have no experience? Why must I figure out what to do with my life this early? What the hell is an IRA? How do I do my own taxes? Do I wear heels or flats to an interview? What achievable goals should I set for myself? Why are all my friends already getting married at 23? When should I start saving money for the future? How do I put money in savings when I barely have any to live off at the time? Where are all these open doors everyone said a college degree would provide?*

Becca / Graduate Student / *I feel like a pendulum, swinging between a place of hopeful excitement and hopelessness when I attend certain events, read certain news, or look at the status of my student loans. I could really use some wisdom right now to help me get through this confusing period. The biggest question is: How can I help people care?*

Tim / Master's Degree in Journalism, currently thriving in an Operations role at a sustainable seafood business / *Don't pigeon-hole yourself. Apply for many different roles at companies that share the same values you do. You might just find one that's a better fit for you than you ever could imagine.*

Tracy / Newsletter reader / *I wish I'd been told 'fall down seven times, stand up eight', particularly after graduating with my Bachelor's degree and going into the 'real world' of work. I would have felt better if I had known that failure is programmed into the game, rather than feeling so humiliated by it in the process.*

Matthew / Newsletter reader / *WORK. HARD. NOW. Build relationships. Learn a trade. Expose your work ethic. It pays dividends later on. Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Set the wheels in motion. You'll be surprised how much things can change once you build some momentum. If you could go back to a crossroads and choose between financial security or pursuing your passion, what would you pick? I still struggle with this every day. I'm finally forcing myself to move toward the latter.*
I'm working harder than ever, but it's never felt so rewarding and freeing.

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COLLECTIVE WISDOM FOR ENDLESS LEARNING

Laura / Newsletter reader / *I feel like I'm constantly worrying about how what I'm doing now will impact my life later (career, relationships, location, etc). While I'm glad that I'm a natural 'planner', I often feel like I'm not able to be present with my current moment. I convince myself that by planning and worrying, I'll set myself up to be better off in the future, but I'm not sure that's really true.*

Georgia / Class of 2014 College Graduate / *I'm finally getting the hang of the adulthood thing. If you are struggling with your first step out of college, let your first year out be the Incubation Year. You are essentially back to being an Egg compared to the other 'adults' out there. Expect yourself to stumble a bit. Let others guide you and keep you warm. Do not think you are going to reach every goal you have in a mere few months. Following your dreams is a slow and windy path. Incubate yourself long enough to come out strong and ready.*

John / Master's Degree in Education, currently farming / *It's just as easy to fail doing something that you don't really want to do. Follow your dreams and don't give space to anyone who tries to convince you otherwise. The concept of jobs needs to be revisited. My 'job' doesn't earn much money yet, but is extremely fulfilling. The future is in sustainability and collaboration.*

Becky / Bachelor's Degree in Journalism, taking her varied and wide-ranging experience, in food and elsewhere, back to school for a graduate degree / *Happiness is fleeting, temporary and impossible to sustain. So is sadness. / Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away because we went back for seconds and thirds, and now our pants are too tight again. But, yes, I WILL take a to-go box, thanks. / Coming back to where you started is not the same as never leaving. / When God closes a door, bolts all the windows shut, gives you bed bugs and co-signs rejection letters from UCLA and Berkeley grad schools, move to California anyway and start an Ethiopian supper club with your sister, for example.*

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COLLECTIVE WISDOM FOR ENDLESS LEARNING

Wendy / Newsletter reader / *It's unreasonable to expect 20-somethings to know what it is they want to do for the rest of their lives - many people much older than this are still trying to figure it out. Nothing has to be written in stone... majors, jobs, geographic locations... so allow yourself the space to learn what lights the fire in your soul as this is where you get the real goods and begin to define what success means to you.*

Christy / Newsletter reader / *I remember when I graduated, and I can't imagine that person would ever believe I ended up where I am today. I wish I had been told that no one has it figured out. That the sooner you trust yourself and your knowledge, ability to learn and conquer the world, the sooner life will be less full of struggle. I wish I had been told that life is never settled and won, that it constantly changes and you constantly evolve. You'll never 'get there' - rather, you become and you be along the road you make for yourself. Jumping into the scary thing turns out to be worth it - even if it means moving to a totally different state where you know nobody for a job. The advice that was most useful for me is to lessen my expectations and be okay with being - it's okay to be sad and lonely, it's okay to stress while settling. It's okay to feel. If I could soak up wisdom on my next stage of life, it would be how to listen. To shift more towards hearing and less towards saying.*