**[Really Dad? Planning for spontaneity](https://www.ctworkerscomplaw.com/really-dad-planning-for-spontaneity/)**

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**Michaela**

In my 17 years I have noted that people tend to believe that spontaneity is a favorable attribute, something to seek in a friend or spouse. In reality, it is an atrocious character flaw. I simply cannot wrap my head around why this trait would be alluring to anyone.

My family is one of the most “spontaneous” groups of people you could find. From deciding on a whim one Thursday afternoon to grab the grandparents and drive 1,200 miles to Florida, to missing the class party on my 100th day of kindergarten because six inches of fresh powder were sitting atop Magic Mountain waiting to be carved by my family’s skis, little room is left for solid plans in the Kerin household. This is laughable considering 50% of the family is comprised of control freaks whose lives revolve around devising and executing meticulous plans.

A prime example of this “spontaneity” can be seen in the literal last-minute cancellation of a trip to one of my top schools. Ironically, my mother and I had planned the trip on Columbus Day weekend, months in advance. I say “ironically” because as already noted we rarely make actual plans in my family; so predictably, the one time we bought plane tickets weeks, rather than hours, before our flight, we ended up deferring the trip.

I was awakened the morning of our departure by my parents’ *loud* chattering in the hallway. They must have heard my covers ruffle because seconds later my dad whipped my door open, flicked on my light, and started talking to me at a normal volume and speed as if I’d been awake for hours.

Really Dad?

He proceeded to explain that due to “dangerous weather” my mom and I were not going to fly and we were instead going to visit schools in Connecticut.

Somehow our college weekend turned into a quick swing through Storrs (the location of the University of Connecticut) followed by an overnight at a lake house in the middle of nowhere. The A frame is owned by the second craziest man I know, my dad earning the distinction of first place in that category, namely Tom, one of my dad’s best friends.

Although I was not overly excited about the change of plans, that weekend was amazing. We sat on the porch for hours singing along to Taylor Swift songs (yes, the “we” includes my dad and Tom who were jamming out to T-Swizzle, and I have video-proof of it). We ate delicious Polish food that people who live across the lake brought over in their boat. We danced on the porch until we nearly lit our hair on fire in the tiki torches lighting the deck. We even saw a mythical sea creature emerge from the eerie lake waters which, as it turns out, was really just one of Tom and Sarah’s neighbors sneaking up to the dock on his paddle board. We ended the night by diving into the dark freezing water.

Sometimes I guess the best things in life really are those that we could never plan for.

**Michael**

Plans change fast for the Kerins.  When you spend your summers living on a boat and your winters skiing you are always subject to the vagaries of Mother Nature. You have to develop a little fluidity in your plans. Sometimes going with the flow means you have to suddenly unpack a truck full of sweaters and ski gear, and repack it with bathing suits and sunscreen, when there’s a forecast for a week of rain up north. These minor deviations, okay 1,200 mile detours, are occasionally a necessary evil.

So Michaela was not pleased when we were obliged to nix her trip down to New Orleans because Hurricane Nate was barreling through the Caribbean with its sights set on the Big Easy. As a consolation prize, I thought we could look at some schools in New England, even though Michaela had vowed not to go to a school her parents could drive to in one day. My buddy, Tom, had, coincidentally, invited us to stay with him on an island at Lake Williams, about 12 miles from U Conn.

She was unimpressed as we drove through the rolling farmland of Northeastern Connecticut that morphed into a bustling campus of 32,000 students. But incredibly, she ran into two friends who were originally, like Michaela, reluctant applicants, but whose unbridled enthusiasm for their new home was apparently contagious as Michaela was beaming by the time we drove away from the campus.

Tom and his 16-year-old daughter, Sarah, met us at the dock on the mainland in their motorboat so they could ferry us out to the island as the sun slid behind the trees across the lake, lighting up the sky in a raspberry sherbet swirl that seemed to brighten defiantly before surrendering to nightfall. Four neighbors arrived in a pontoon boat, joining our impromptu party on Tom’s porch, as Taylor Swift blared from a speaker and the five girls started to shake, shake, shake to her sick beat. At one point someone ghosted across the lake, his paddle board all but invisible, just another neighbor approaching.

The next morning, the four of us, plus Tom’s Lab, piled into a canoe whose bottom sloshed with an alarming amount of water. We all tried to squeeze our bottoms onto the aluminum braces that clamped the sides of the boat together, but whenever Tom turned the little electric motor one way or the other the canoe tipped precariously. We had to lower our center of gravity and quickly. Michaela must have sensed that I was going to enlist her as a volunteer because she threw a beach towel onto the floorboards, then more or less nudged me off of the aluminum strut onto towel. “Thanks, dad,” she giggled. My jeans stayed dry but only for the few seconds that it took before the towel was fully soaked.

We said goodbye and headed south on 395 toward New London until Mickey announced there was a better likelihood of her going to school on Mars, so we spun around and pointed north toward Boston.

I wish that kid would stick to a plan, just once.