NOW IS THE TIME TO WORK ON YOUR BUCKET LIST

We all regret doing things in both our professional and personal lives. I certainly do. But, apparently, we needn’t waste our time regretting the things we’ve done.

Over the last 6 months I’ve asked countless older patients a big question — ‘Is there anything you regret doing in your life?’ And guess what? Astoundingly, they all reply with ‘No’. None of them regret doing anything! They do, however, regret not doing things.

So there appears to be a difference: although younger people (who hopefully have many years left to live) regret the things they’ve done, older people (who are approaching the end of their lives) regret the things they haven’t done. As a 29-year-old, there are many things that I regret doing in my own life, whereas my older patients regret the countless things they never got around to doing in their younger years.

So why this difference? I think it’s down to how young people approach their future. When we forecast our lives, we see a career spanning over 40 years. During that time, we might marry and have kids, we might get divorced and remarry, our kids will move out and we’ll care for our ageing parents. For young people, doing the things we always wanted to do — ticking off our bucket list — has to wait until retirement. There are simply far too many ‘serious’ things to be wanted to do — ticking off our bucket list — has to wait until retirement. There are simply far too many ‘serious’ things to be...