

16 THINGS WE SHOULD ALL STOP DOING TO LIVE BETTER LIVES

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Resolutions for self-improvement are great—if you're the type of person who is so self-disciplined that you can actually follow through with your goals for longer than a week. As imperfect humans, some of us are more prone to listen when we are told “no,” “don't,” or “STOP!” Moses knew this: most of the Ten Commandments start with “Thou shalt not....” In that spirit, **consider the following 16 things we should all stop doing to have better lives.**



THIS MEANS YOU!

1. **Stop spending more on material goods than on experiences.** It's great to feel pretty, handsome, sexy. A single compliment can make your day. Better still are memories that you will enjoy for the rest of your life—moments that make your heart pound with.
2. **Stop making up stories to make your life seem more interesting** than it actually is. There is nothing glorious about lying nor is there anything wrong with the mundane.
3. **Stop denying the truth to others and to yourself.** Or else before you know it, you'll lose track between what's real and what's not. Mental health professionals call that psychosis!
4. **Stop being afraid to say YES to more things.** Sitting around at home on the Internet is comfortable and familiar, but there are so many more opportunities if you just show up. Attend more meetings, sign onto new projects, go out for the sake of it, explore a new place by yourself, don't be afraid to speak up. Activity always beats lethargy!
5. **Stop beating yourself up for not having the time to work out.** But also, stop making excuses when you have plenty of time to get some exercise. If you feel like a blob on a couch then that's probably what your brain looks like, too.
6. **Stop hating yourself for eating dessert.** But also, stop eating dessert just because you hate yourself. Chocolate may seem like an instant remedy for all your insecurities, but there are other more productive ways to deal with stress and emotions.
7. **Stop checking Messages and Twitter when you're at dinner with friends and/or family.** Stop refreshing your newsfeed when you're at a party. Stop checking your notifications every time you go out. You will always be able to catch up on social media, but you only have so long with the people you care about.
8. **Stop giving your time to frenemies.** Stop surrounding yourself with people who won't reciprocate feelings of love allowing those who think negatively of you to consume your energy. They don't deserve it. Make friends with people who are interesting and interested in you.
9. **Stop being so judgmental all the time.** Consciously stop basing first impressions on physical attractiveness. So-called homely folks can surprise you with how beautiful they truly are.

10. **Stop basing your every action based on what people may think.** We've all graduated high school! If you think somebody is interesting or attractive, introduce yourself and tell them so. If you want to join a new friend group, club, project, don't worry about the initial newbie awkwardness. Don't refute your beliefs and deny your values because others disagree with them. Don't look disinterested or indifferent because you think it makes you seem cooler. It doesn't. It only makes you seem dispassionate, emotionless and boring.
11. **Stop complaining about being busy all the time.** No one cares; no one will pity you except for yourself, and the pity party can only last so long before it runs dry. The next time you're idly procrastinating, remind yourself that you are not so busy after all.
12. **Stop over-analyzing everything.** Real friends don't send veiled images that have to be translated. Why does every text, email, or Facebook "Like" need to have an alternate meaning? Relax and accept things at face value. Reading between the lines will often make you believe motives that were never intended.
13. **Stop non-purposeful dating.** Don't try to "emotionally seduce" someone you can't imagine spending the rest of your time with. Life is too short to date aimlessly. Keep your eyes open for a life-mate 24/7, especially among people you've known as friends for a long time: you never know when your life-mate might show up and how, so don't waste time now: later you'll wish you had with that special person and the children you share.
14. **Stop being afraid of pursuing your dream,** no matter how cliché that may sound. You may dream of writing books, creating films, becoming a CEO or this country's president. So why not let the desire to attain your 'far-fetched dreams' overpower the fears of reaching them?
15. **Stop beating yourself up for not being your best all of the time.** Self-improvement is a gradual process. Self-discipline is important, but we all mess up. Give yourself a break now and then, and then get back on track. Take some time off; even God rested on the Seventh Day!
16. **Stop "blowing off going" to Church regularly, no matter where you go.** If our true destiny is to be reunited with God and our loved-ones in Heaven, start/build the relationship now. We all were/are created in the image of God (Genesis 1). Developing our relationship with God positively affects everything else we do. Getting in touch with our roots helps us find our true identity and real happiness. Just because you hated Church as a kid—or because your parents used to make you go—doesn't make faith a bad thing. Church helps you live as if the world is bigger than the part you play in it. It makes you more loving and understanding...more attractive and more fulfilled. As we grow closer to God, we grow closer to each other and become more satisfied with ourselves. Staying away from things religious isolates you. Don't miss this chance for happiness and personal fulfillment: it's a natural and, if you give it a chance, it always works! Guaranteed.

