

7 Unhealthy Practices

*That will prevent you
from creating your
true inner beauty*

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Creating a successful, happy and meaningful life isn't about money and material possessions. Placing importance on yourself will carry you further in life than any possession or what money will do for you. Developing your values and beliefs will give you the ground work to create a life that really fits you. We have all come from different backgrounds, we all lead different lives and with this in mind, you all have the power to change. It is always possible.

Who doesn't want a life that is fulfilling and satisfying? How often do you self-reflect and take note of the things around you that may be holding you back from creating the life you could be having? Taking the time to attend to your appearance is also important. If you want to look a little further and tend to your inner self, what is it that you need to focus on to become your true authentic self?

We hear it time and time again. You must exercise more, read more, eat healthier, be more mindful, stop doubting, be happy, show more compassion, have a greater understanding of your own emotions, etc. There are many areas of one's life that can be altered to create more fulfillment. Creating a positive life for yourself, will only create a snowball effect into other areas of your own life.

The profound effects of working on your inner self can help improve many areas of your life. It's about defining and acknowledging who you really are.

There may be some points below, that represent some area of your life that you can relate to that may not be working. Remember there is always a light at the end of the tunnel, where change can transpire.

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1. You've lost interest in the day to day
2. You're suffering low self-esteem
3. You've lost motivation
4. You feel stuck – who do you want to be?
5. You've lost sight of your own values and beliefs
6. You haven't been listening to your intuition
7. It's not always easy to say NO.

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1. You've lost interest in the day to day

Education helps you to learn more about yourself. Creating knowledge helps you to define your values and beliefs. There can often be triggers from recent or past events that can stop you from developing further. Taking that first step towards the right path, can help you to make a positive out of a negative situation, which can inspire you to empower yourself and find the path where your true potential lies.

When did the desire to learn and really value yourself as a person stop? Education not only helps you grow but in doing so will also benefit others. To lead yourself to a new pathway, is an individual process. It is important to look at your life as it is in the current moment. What is it that you want to change? What are your strengths and weaknesses that will help you work on your good and bad habits. Are there any characteristics that you would like to improve about yourself? The questions that you ask yourself are important as they will help you to determine, what you will need to do to get to the place you want to be.

It can often be quite an overpowering process to really look at yourself. A good routine to develop is to acquire a diary, where you can jot down your feelings, thoughts and emotions as you are sensing them at that time. Often when your thoughts are floating around in your mind, this is exactly what thoughts do – they just float around. When you write things down, you can see what you are thinking and you can put all your thoughts into perspective. You then don't lose those thoughts. They all remain important and can create a good basis for acknowledging who you are.

Inner beauty is power. With this power you can aim to make a difference in the world with the knowledge you collect and possess.

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Looks do matter when you're trying to make that first impression to land a job or a new career, yet without intellectual ability and being able to bring your individuality and experience to the table, looks will play some part in the process.

To improve your knowledge, you should try to incorporate reading lots of books to help you to develop your mind and to really discover what it is you enjoy. There are other avenues that will also help you to establish more expertise and wisdom. Along with reading, enrol in a course or attend a seminar of a chosen interest, to help you to develop knowledge that will introduce you to people that have similar interests and where you can share and interact.

Finding your individuality is important. It is ok to be different and your independence will be seen as a strength to those around you. Confidence in knowing who you are will show. What you enjoy doing will be a true testament to what you have worked towards, to find your true inner self.

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2. You're suffering low self-esteem

Have you ever asked yourself the question - what is stopping me from developing my true potential? How would it feel to awaken your inner being and be able to achieve your greatest desires?

Low self-esteem can have dire consequences on your life. Your beliefs about yourself are often based on experiences you've had previously in your life and if they have been negative experiences there is a high chance you'll be suffering from low self-esteem. The beliefs we have about ourselves don't always but do often come from certain experiences we've had from the past.

It isn't always past experiences that impact the way you view yourself but it can often be experiences you've been through in your life that have caused you to develop low self-esteem. This could be from bullying, domestic violence, trauma or stress related issues for example.

Low self-esteem can quite often have an effect on what you are truly capable of. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy helps a person to change unhelpful or unhealthy habits of thinking, feeling and behaving and can influence and change a person's quality of life. There are strategies that can help you have control over your thoughts and behaviours, by being able to challenge your automatic beliefs.

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Automatic beliefs and negative thoughts can be extremely destructive and harmful. There are ways you can work through those thoughts. One example of constructively working through low self-esteem issues is by keeping a detailed diary on your thoughts, feelings and behaviours. It is being able to overcome unhealthy ways of thinking, which can be done with some work and possibly a few sessions with a good therapist.

Seeking validation from within instead of seeking it from external sources will also help you to clarify what it is you are capable of to develop your own self-esteem and to help you define who you really are. Although outside sources such as family and friends may have your best interests at heart, it is only you that will know what your abilities are and what you are truly capable of.

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"Self-confidence is the most attractive quality a person can have. How can anyone see how great you are if you can't see it yourself?" - KushandWizdom

3. You've lost motivation

There are many factors that can leave you feeling un-motivated. Daily stresses, work and personal issues can have major effects on your ability to function.

How do you develop the right strategies to encourage motivation?

When the passion for motivation has been lost, this can affect every avenue of your life. Getting that motivation back is a big part of the puzzle. It's hard to find the light at the end of the tunnel when you're not feeling motivated.

When you begin to feel this way, it is a good idea to take note of your feelings and thoughts. It is beneficial to get an idea as to what triggers these feelings and why you feel a lack of motivation. What thoughts do you have when you begin to feel like the passion has gone? Is everything getting too much? How can you work on finding the motivation to finish things you don't like? How can you feel the motivation you use to feel in the past? Do you need to take a step back and drop some things from your day so you can focus on other areas that need as much attention?

It is important to note when you begin to feel this way. As soon as you can place the feelings, thoughts and the moments of when the triggers take place, the sooner you can grasp ways to work on those triggers.

It can often be a hazy period when you feel overwhelmed from losing direction and motivation. The importance of noting the triggers will be an important part of your journey to recovery.

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Having motivation and direction can help you to achieve many things. It can also help you to plan goals. Without motivation and without planning goals, there can often be a lack of a desire to fulfil and succeed in life.

Having motivation drives us to strive and try for the things we wish to achieve or want. We strive for goals, for happiness and for passion, among many other things.

It is often in times such as these that the support of others is helpful. It isn't always possible to tackle everything on your own. You should never be afraid to put a hand out to ask for help. There are always people available to lend a helping hand or someone to talk with. It is important to remember the power is within you.

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"The whole secret of a successful life is to find out what is one's destiny to do, and then do it." --Henry Ford

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4. You feel stuck – who do you want to be?

You might often feel like there is no change in sight. You want to feel and see change but you don't know how to get there. Everything can seem so overwhelming. So you ask yourself – where do I start?

There may come a time in your life when you realize you feel you have come to a crossroad and you need a change. In order to grow there needs to be change. In order to grow, goals are needed, to set some strategies in place. Goal setting can be a task yet it can help you to define what strategies you need to put into place and what will need to be implemented, to help you get to those goals.

It may be in times as these that you need the support of someone to help guide you to setting some goals and getting to that light at the end of the tunnel.

Determining what you want to change and what you have around you will help you to make concrete plans.

As it is with many things that can be applied to goal setting, writing or jotting your thoughts down will help you to complete all the images and often negative thoughts that are wandering around in your mind. This will help you to visualize and plan what it is you need to do and help to see things in a positive light.

Goal setting and diarising your thoughts is a positive start and a good goal to making a start in implementing change.

When you have your goals set in stone, it is time to make that step and to take action. You may need a bit of help and support to guide and help you on the right track.

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It is never classified as failing if you ask people to help you.

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*"If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change".
Wayne Dyer*

5. You've lost sight of your own values and beliefs

What happens when you lose sight of what is important to you? How do your own values and beliefs shape you as a person? What happens when you go against your core values and beliefs? Are you living someone else's idea of what your values should be? Have you engaged yourself in activities without really wanting to? How do you get that balance back?

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Often when you stop following your own belief system, things can get out of hand and life gets on top of you. Waking up and starting a new day can seem like an effort. You can feel this way when you have lost direction, when you begin to lose your purpose and when you begin to feel negative about your daily life instead of feeling happy and positive. How do you get back on track?

Can you remember a time when you felt on top of the world and everything was working out well? What happened at that time and when did things begin to fall down around you? It might be that your self-esteem has taken a tumble or you start listening to others instead of yourself.

When you have an understanding of your core values and beliefs you'll be living and displaying the person you really are. Living by your own core beliefs is important and incorporating them into your daily life will help you to live a happier and more fulfilled life.

Having an awareness of yourself and what is important to you will help you to work on your core values. There are factors that will influence what will determine your values and beliefs. They can be greatly dictated by your culture, relationships or religion just to name a few.

A good method to determine what your values are is to take pen to paper. What do you believe in and what is it that you don't believe in? By writing these down you'll be creating a list of what you value. Putting these into action and living by what you believe will be your strengths, will help you to get balance back into your life and live by the core issues of what is valuable in your life.

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“My beliefs will run through everything I do. My beliefs, my values are my anchor and when people try to drag me, as I know they will, it is to that sense of right and wrong, that sense of who I am and what I believe, to which I will always hold”. Ed Miliband



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6. You haven't been listening to your intuition

How often have you had a feeling something isn't right? Have you ever had that funny sense of knowing without knowing anything and haven't been able to explain the feeling?

Some people get a feeling that something is wrong or something can't be trusted. This is your gut telling you to listen to what your body is feeling. When you get this feeling it is definitely worth listening to.

How often have you argued with the voice in your head as opposed to the gut feelings you have felt? Our intuition tells us that something is or isn't right. It is your 'inner voice' telling you that it just knows.

It is important to listen to your intuition as we take note of what life is saying to us through our intuition. Intuition can pop up at any time and will guide us into the right direction if we listen to it.

I'm sure there have been times when we have often failed to follow our intuition due to fear. Change can bring feelings of fear and it can be daunting yet listening to your intuition is all about change. It can be electrifying with the potential to influence your life.

Would you classify yourself as highly sensitive? When you have developed a sensitivity for your environment you develop your intuition picking up on cues and behaviours of things and people around you. The most important ingredient of intuition is hyper-sensitivity. Intuitive people are highly sensitive to their environment.

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“Everything I do is just really my intuition, and every time I go against my intuition, it's a mistake. Even though I may sit down and analyse and intellectualize something on paper, if I go against my gut feeling it's wrong”. Tamara Mellon

7. It's not always easy to say NO!

How productive is it to continue with what is asked of you – at the expense of your own happiness? For some people, saying no is not easy.

Do you place a lot of emphasis on keeping others happy while putting yourself last? Has there been a time when resentment sunk in because your pleasing others was draining you? Do you get tired of not being able to say no and worried others may take offence if you say no?

The only person you are hurting is yourself. It is ok to say no without having to justify your response.

Learning to say no requires confidence. Often when we're lacking confidence pleasing others is important to keep our self-esteem feeling on a high but in reality this is not the case. You can be doing yourself a huge disservice by saying yes when really you want to say no. If you are lacking confidence there are ways to learn how to develop your own values, beliefs and what you stand for by taking some time to understand what is important to you.

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We're often seen as an easy target when we don't know how to set boundaries. It is unfortunate but it happens. When we're not confident in ourselves we can be easily manipulated because others can see we'll not hesitate to say yes. As we all know a decent person wouldn't take advantage of someone this way but it is a fact there are people that will take advantage of others. You may also find yourself going along with others because it is easier or you feel fearful for having an opinion.

To begin making your way to assert your own needs, takes small steps.

1. Take some time to work on your values and what is important to you.
2. If you're asked by someone to do a favour or asked to help, just stop and think for a while. It is ok to say I'll think about it and you'll get back to them. This way you're not over extending yourself yet you're giving yourself time to think about your decision.
3. Don't defend your answer. Your response doesn't require justification. Learn to take care of yourself and put yourself first.
4. Learn to speak up for yourself. Know what your own needs and values are.
5. You do have a choice and saying no is ok.

Depression, anxiety and stress can set in if we continue pleasing and saying yes to others. The health implications can be dire. Over committing, fear of failure and putting others needs above your own can only lead to disappointment in time. Disappointment and pain for you and no-one else.

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How does it feel to devote little time to yourself? In time you may begin to feel resentful towards others and your levels of happiness will continue to dissipate if you don't start considering your own needs and begin to make them a priority.

In a work environment you may find yourself taking on more and you may find work mates are putting more on you because they know they can. This can all lead to resentment, fatigue, stress and depression. In the long run we are teaching others how to treat us. If we don't know how to look after ourselves we're opening ourselves to being taken advantage of by others.

Learn to love yourself and work on knowing who you are. Remember never to feel guilty for establishing your boundaries.

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"Saying yes to happiness means saying no to things and people that stress you out" - Thema Davis.

Elegance From The Inside