

Five Tips for Enjoying Everyday Life

By Angela Baca

Do you live in an everyday world where idealized notions of what life should be like obfuscate your enjoyment of the present? These notions include situations like finding the perfect car, the perfect marriage, the perfect children, the perfect school, the perfect home, and the best memories. If you have learned anything from the hardest lessons in your life, it is hopefully this – no amount of longing creates a future as perfect as a fairy tale. Using your own willpower, you shape your reality. If you can move past idealistic views of how life should be and rejoice in everyday life, you can get more out of the present.

Here are five tips for enjoying the present instead of setting yourself up for emptiness and disappointment:

1. Each day wake up and inhale fresh air deeply into your lungs. Fresh air is a gift from the universe or the divine (depending on how you look at it). Make the most of each day by breathing evenly and living one moment at a time. Instruction in tai-chi or yoga can provide you with new breathing techniques.
2. Look around you and appreciate the beauty of nature. When you spend all day running from one job to the next, it is easy to miss the scent of freshly cut grass and the musty smell of wet leaves after a heavy rain. When you open your eyes beyond your little bubble, you can discover nature's everyday wonders.
3. Earth is a fragile home for humans, and some people live each day without giving thought to the impact of their habits. Brainstorm what you can do to protect the Earth by taking the time to recycle and conserve natural resources.
4. Realize that fulfilling your dreams is important, but the journey through life is the most valuable. Look around you for examples of people who seem very happy in their own skin.
5. Consider these thoughts from Maya Angelou:

"I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights...I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw some things back."

Think about how you expend your daily mental and physical energy. You might need to relax and find a new approach for living. An idealistic perspective helps you to maintain positive energy in tough situations, but wasting time wishing for what you don't have is not the path toward self-fulfillment. The key is to recognize the power of your own choices and to learn from them.