

How to live your life to the fullest

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Although most people strive to live their lives in a meaningful and purposeful way, they may still question whether they are truly living their lives to the fullest. Baylor College of Medicine's Dr. Karen Lawson gives her advice on what it can mean to live your life to its full potential.

"Living life to the fullest has different meanings to different people. If you feel that you are not living your life the way you feel you could be, there are some adjustments that you may be able to make that can help," said Lawson, a [clinical psychologist](#) and assistant professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Baylor.

Maintain a healthy personal life

A great way to help you live your life to the fullest is to take care of both your mental and physical health, Lawson said. This entails paying attention to what role others play in your life, which may mean solving any dilemmas or grudges you may be experiencing or clearing your mind of stresses.

You should not stay in relationships that are harmful, she added. Your relationships should be enjoyable, pleasant and reciprocal. Participating in activities with your partner, friends or family members that are pleasant and bring pleasure to everyone involved can be very fulfilling.

Faith or religion can be a helpful and powerful resource in people's lives to feel that they are living life to the fullest, Lawson said. For many people it is an important part of life that helps them know or believe that whatever they are doing is what they were meant to do.

Try to find a job that you enjoy doing

We spend many hours a week at our jobs, and so it is important to take a hard look at what you do and assess whether your job is a contributing factor in helping you live your life to the fullest.

"Sometimes it may be worth pursuing work in an area that you love, even if salary, benefits or location aren't as ideal," Lawson said.

Find other activities that give you pleasure

There are also ways to augment our professional lives by engaging in other activities, even if they do not make up our entire livelihood, Lawson said. For example, if you really enjoy working with animals, but your chosen career does not allow you to pursue this, then you may want to volunteer on an evening or weekend at an animal shelter or other location which brings you into contact with animals.

Take inventory, then take action

It's important to periodically assesses your happiness by taking a self-inventory, Lawson said.

"If you aren't happy with where you are or where you are going, then you have to decide if change is needed," she said. "We can almost always achieve satisfaction by changing our mindset or by simply deciding to make the best of a situation. We should all keep in mind that the grass isn't always greener somewhere else."

Lawson cautioned that although it can be helpful for some people to make a bucket list or a dream board, others might find this does not work for them. However, if items on your list are realistic and within your means, it can give you a sense of accomplishment after you complete an item.

Provided by Baylor College of Medicine

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