

AST, 6/3/19

5 SUBTLE HABITS KEEPING YOU FROM LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

WHAT do you do every day without fail? You brush your teeth, get dressed and any number of other ordinary, boring actions. You know you did those things, but if you were asked to seriously consider if you did them, you would probably have trouble remembering if you did or not.



Habits are the things we do without thinking. They are actions we take automatically and without any serious thought behind them.

Most people do not even realise what habits they have until one of them becomes a problem. They may have been trying to do something new and find an old habit getting in the way, or they are trying to stop a bad behaviour only to find it has become completely ingrained in them.

It is in those moments that people realise exactly how many habits they have formed

unawares, and it is after they break bad habits that they see how much that bad habit has cost them.

Overworking Yourself

Working hard is a good habit to form. Some people, however, take it too far. They work every night, every weekend and every vacation. This unrelenting work causes them horrendous mental and physical harm and leads to a burnout.

Rest and relaxation are essential for creative thought and problem solving. They will

also improve your productivity when you are working. So, when you are at work, be at work. When you are on vacation, be on vacation and leave the office behind before chronic stress burns you out.

Multitasking

There is an old saying that begins, "Jack of all trades, master of none." This short phrase perfectly sums up a person who is constantly multitasking. They are always busy and always working, but they struggle to complete a single project. They continue to feel like they are working hard, but they are actually accomplishing very little.

If you want to be more productive, you should actually only work on one thing at a time. Finish one project before you move on to the next thing. This is true both in your personal life and at work. Resist the urge to check your email until after you finish your report.

Procrastinating

Working well under pressure is an excellent skill to have. That does not mean, however, that you should create your own pressure by waiting until the last minute to do things. Procrastinators are often convinced that they actually do better work by waiting until the very end of the allotted time or until they simply run out of time. Procrastinating does nothing but raise your stress levels.

If you are always running late, you are constantly stressed. Stress, of course, can hurt your immune system, sleep cycle and make you a grouch to be around. If you really need something to help you focus, set a personal deadline for well before things actually need to be done.

Constantly Connected

As much as people crave it, constant stimulation is not good for you. You need to take breaks in order for your brain to store information

as memories and for your neurotransmitters and hormones to settle down to normal levels. As such, you need to put your phone, computer and tablet away on occasion.

Most people today balk at the idea of being without their phone, but constantly being connected does nothing pleasant for your mental or physical health. You are less likely to be focused during person-to-person conversations which can hurt your relationships, and constant connection to social media or the Internet carries a high risk of anxiety, depression and Internet or smartphone addiction. If you want to live your best life, start actually living it rather than remaining buried in your phone all the time.

Dismissing Your Health

If you want to live your best life, you need to keep your body healthy. This means that you need to take care of it by doing all those things you know you should do but constantly skip. You need to go to bed at a reasonable hour so you get plenty of sleep. You need to drink plenty of water. You need to eat healthy food and exercise regularly. You may not want to hear it, but not paying attention to your basic health necessities pretty much guarantees that you are going to be sluggish, tired, irritable and unable to focus. None of these are conducive to living your best life.

Bad habits can sneak up on you, but you are the one who decide whether those habits die or stick around. You are the only one who can form habits and the only one who can get rid of them. This is your life. Make it or break it, it is up to you and you alone.



DR VIZAYER RAJ held positions in the corporate sector. He has also lectured in business administration in universities in Malaysia and abroad, before moving on to manage his own business in education. He is the director of programmes in Asian Management Development Academy. He can be reached at vizayer@gmail.com or 016-2093156.