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20 Things I Wish I Knew in My 20s

Our Friends · Wednesday, May 20th, 2020

I've been "soon turning 40" for the past two years, and those days when I was in my 20s seem a distant memory right now. Today, I'm older, wiser and definitely more chilled. Sometimes I wish I could go back in time and give my 20 year old self some tips.

Here are 10 things I wish I knew in my 20s:

1. You don't need 50 close friends: The older I get, the more I realize that it's totally OK to have a handful of good friends who you can hang out and really be yourself with. It's much better than struggling to stay in contact with 50 so-called friends just for the sake of saying that you have lots of them. As you get older, you go through some tough moments in life, and you realize that those people that you can laugh and cry with on the same scale, are those that belong in your circle.

2. Relationships aren't hard work all the time – Your mom may have told you that you have to keep working at a relationship and she's right in a way. But you don't have to work hard all the time. People who you are in a relationship with should let you also rest when times get tough. They should carry when the burden is too heavy for you. If you find yourself fighting, sweating and crying in a relationship all the time, it's time to move on.

3. Have fun! Entertainment doesn't have to be such a serious business. If you play tennis on the weekends, you don't have to make National Champions to make it a worthwhile pastime. If you play at online casinos, don't spend a fortune in a bid to win, nor should you chase losses. You can have [tons of fun](#) playing at online casinos as a winner, but that joy is not lasting. Play for free or don't spend a fortune. Most importantly, have fun!

4. It really doesn't matter what other people think about you. I've learned not to care about others' opinions about me. Not everyone is going to like me and, surprise-surprise, I don't like everyone back. I've stopped being a people pleaser. If someone likes me for who I am, that's great. If they don't, that's just tough.

5. Save for a rainy day. A famous Arabic proverb goes something about keeping your white money for a black day. In other words, you don't have to spend everything you make. Train yourself to save a portion of your income so that if you are suddenly in need of a large amount of cash, you'll have it on hand. As you get older, your circumstances change. It doesn't need to be only about unemployment, illness divorce. You may want to go back to school, or buy an apartment or go on a dream vacation. It's much easier done with savings.

6. Travel now. The older I get, the more difficult it is for me to get away from real life. I don't have enough vacation days due to me, and when I do, I need to sync them with my better half's schedule, school vacation and other things called life. In your 20's you are less encumbered. You have more breaks. Carpe diem.

7. Be careful about what you make public. It may seem cool to upload a picture of yourself sunbathing topless on the [beaches of Costa del Sol](#) when you're 22, but it may not be the kind of thing you want your future boss of your 35 year old corporate self to see. Think twice about images and opinions that you throw out into cyberspace. They have a funny way of catching up with you a decade or so later...

8. Work in a job you're passionate about. It's better to wake up every day with a smile on your face and go to a job that you love, than make a bit more money at a so-so job but burn out in your forties. If you are passionate about something, you'll find a way of making the rent money doing what you love best.

9. Give back to society. Let's just say that in your 20's, you're a little self-absorbed. You may not see that homeless guy at the entrance to your office. You may not really care that there are [orphans in Haiti](#). I find that the older I get, the higher my level of social responsibility, and the more involved I get. Volunteering gives me a high. I'm sorry that I didn't discover just how great it feels when I was younger. I would have started a lot sooner.

10. Live every day as if it were your last. I know this sounds clichéd, but I've earned the right to say it. I've lost friends and family members along the way. I know how quickly life can get snuffed out. I don't want to look back one day and regret not having loved or lived. Make a bucket list now and live your dreams.

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