

Be Your Own Life Coach: 10 Ideas for Self-Improvement

The thought of transforming yourself into a better person can be daunting – especially if you're older, and you've had several "interventions," and you do not feel as energetic as you were when you were a fresh-faced (or pimply-faced, as the case may be) teenager. Don't fret. Even if you take it a day at a time, you will find that the opportunities to become better than you are, right now, are actually, right there. These are just 10 ideas to help you on your way.

1. Think positive.

Start your day, your week, your month or your year on a positive note. Think of all the things you can accomplish. Dare to dream. Every new milestone is a beginning: take stock and give yourself a pat on the back for what you've accomplished so far.

2. Finish what you start.

Read a book: finish a chapter a day. It could be a subject you've always been interested in but has nothing to do with your work or your daily information-gathering. Attempt a home project – something you can do over the weekend – that will clearly improve your home. Complete your shopping and chores early, and get instant gratification for a job well done.

3. Leave the comfort zone. Face your fear.

Confronting a fear is one way of challenging yourself. Doing something that you are afraid of every day is a way of pushing yourself to grow. It doesn't have to be dangerous (like skydiving) but it has to be something you know will be hard for you to do, but will also be good for you (like public speaking).

4. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day.

You've heard about the benefits. Now it's time to experience them. Exercising will not only make you healthier and stronger, it will make you look good, and you will also feel good.

5. Meditate.

Exercise your mind. Meditation helps you tackle your inner demons as well as readies you to face the world. If you want to battle depression, anxiety, sleep disorder, and personality issues, meditation is one effective remedy.

6. Quit a bad habit.

You know that there are some activities you engage in that are bad for you (such as smoking or binge-drinking), and that there are some people who bring out the worst in you (toxic frenemies, the gossip girl, the enabler buddy) – now is the time to let go of them. Surround yourself with people who bring out the good in you, or who, like you, are seeking to improve themselves via healthful action.

7. Find your passion. Fall in love.

A surefire way to be happy is to fall in love and be passionate about something – or somebody. Give yourself license to be in love. There are only so many years in a lifetime, and it would be nice to spend some of it with people or a significant person whom you love. There are only so many waking hours of the day, so do something that you love and that makes you happy.

8. Make someone else happy.

This can be a daily recurrence, or a big-time once-in-a-blue-moon deal. Either way, making someone happy is the surest way to feel good about yourself, to feel you've made a difference. It could be as simple as finding a way to compliment someone every day, or

doing someone a favor for the week, or orchestrating something major that you know you can do, with some effort, and you know will be most appreciated.

9. Save a life.

Some of us – first responders such as firemen, cops, and medical personnel – are in a unique position to save another person's life. But it should be noted that even those in unlikely positions are also given the opportunity to save a life – the passerby who pulled a youngster out of harm's way, or the friend who refused to let her drunken companion drive, or the kid who adopted a stray cat or dog. When it's your turn, step up and do your part.

10. Be grateful.

It's so easy to forget that there are so many reasons to be grateful to be alive. At the end of each day, look back, and say thanks. End on a positive, life-affirming note.