
Wisdom from the older generation.

Stuff is just stuff. A true friend will come running at 2am. Floss regularly. Nineteen short lessons from people who have lived long enough to know.

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Some years ago a collection of advice from people in their later years did the rounds online. It was shared without names, so I can't credit the people who gave it, but it has stayed with me. Here it is, lightly edited.

1 Treat them as such

The most important person in your life is the person who agreed to share their life with you. Treat them as such.

2 Look after yourself

You might live a long life, or you might live a short one. Who knows. But either way, trust me when I say you're going to wish you took better care of yourself in your youth.

3 Stuff is just stuff

Don't hold onto material objects. Hold onto time and experiences instead.

4 Jealousy destroys relationships

Trust your partner, because who else are you supposed to trust?

5 The right job

People always say, "Make sure you get a job doing what you love." But that isn't the best advice. The right job is the job you love some days, can tolerate most days, and still pays the bills. Almost nobody has a job they love every day.

6 Come back to now

If you're getting overwhelmed by life, return to the present moment and savour all that is beautiful and comforting. Take a deep breath. Relax.

7 See the world

Years go by in the blink of an eye. Don't marry young. Live your life. Go places. Do things, whether you have the means or not. Pack a bag and go wherever you can afford to go. While you have no dependants, don't buy stuff. Any stuff. See the world. Look through travel magazines, pick a spot and go.

8 Don't take life so seriously

Even if things seem dark and hopeless, try to laugh at how ridiculous life is.

9 The 2am test

A true friend will come running if you call them at 2am. Everyone else is just an acquaintance.

10 Nobody wishes they'd worked more

Nobody ever dies wishing they had worked more. Work hard, but don't put work ahead of your family, your friends or even yourself.

11 Live like a patient

Eat and exercise like a heart patient who has had a stroke, so you never become one.

12 Floss

Maybe this one isn't as profound as the others, but I think it's important. Floss regularly. Dental problems are awful.

13 Take your own advice

Don't take anyone else's advice as gospel. Ask for advice from someone you respect, then think about your own situation and make your own decision. In short, my advice is to take your own advice.

14 Mind your joints

The joints you damage today will get their revenge later, even if you think they've recovered completely. Trust me.

15 One time on this earth

We have one time on this earth. Don't wake up and realise you're 60 and haven't done the things you dreamed about.

16 Appreciate the small things

Be present in the moment. Younger people today seem to be all about instant gratification. Instead, why not appreciate every small moment? We don't get to stay on this crazy, wonderful planet forever, and the greatest pleasure can be found in the most ordinary

activities. Instead of sending a text, pick up the phone and call someone. Call your mother and talk about nothing in particular. Those are the moments to hold onto.

17 Stay out of debt

Pay your bills and stay the hell out of debt. If I could have paid myself all the money I've paid out in interest over the years, I'd be retired already.

18 Try for the impossible

If you dream of being or doing something that seems impossible, try for it anyway. It will only become more impossible as you get older and become responsible for other people.

19 You know nothing about them

When you meet someone for the first time, stop and realise that you really know nothing about them. You see race, gender, age and clothes. Forget it all. You know nothing. The assumptions that pop into your head, because your brain likes categories, limit your life and other people's lives.

Which of these would you have ignored at 25?

That's probably the one worth acting on now.

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**Don't seek to be a person of
Importance.**
Seek to be a person of Value.

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