

MY ADVICE ON HOW YOU SHOULD LIVE YOUR LIFE

LIVE FOR TODAY

As John Lennon said, "Life is what happens when you're making other plans." We're too obsessed with the future and how good or bad things are going to be. We put ourselves through shit now in the theory that it will make the future better. Then the future turns out to be nothing like we thought it was going to be and in fact is a lot more like the present. We've all been raised on tales of some ant who worked hard and some grasshopper who didn't and how somehow it was better to be the ant. But at least the grasshopper had a bit of a laugh some of the time the ant was just miserable all the time. So my suggestion to you is stop living in the future so much. If you're not enjoying at least some of the present then change it. Now.

STOP HOLDING DOORS OPEN FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF OPENING THE DOOR FOR THEMSELVES

There's a distance (about 3 metres by my estimation) between you and the person behind you after which it's not helpful to hold the door open any more. Now they have to do the little half run, the little thank you and all in aid of what? Not opening a door? Believe me, they've opened a door before. They know how it works. My rule is: if they're not elderly, if they don't have a pram or a wheelchair and if it doesn't fit into your own smooth transition through the door just let that sucker fly. Otherwise you're just wasting your time and theirs.

EARN MONEY

I can't emphasise that enough. After a while not earning money really begins to grow stale. I've been doing the not earning money thing for a number of years now and I'm really starting to regret it as a career choice. I'm eager to move into the earning money area of the economy but once you've been not earning money for a while people tend to pigeon hole you as a not money earner. If you have some money that you'd like me to earn contact the magazine and they'll send you my details. If you're looking to earn money yourself a great place to start is with employers.

READ LESS (OR MORE DEPENDING ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT)

How many times have you started a book, not really enjoyed the first hundred pages, presumed it gets better once you get into it (after all, it is a classic), got halfway through without even noticing, kept going, got two thirds of the way through, realised that you're never going to enjoy this book but you might as well finish it now just so you don't always wonder if it got good at the end (after all, it is a classic), finished it without any enjoyment whatsoever and put it up on your shelf just in case you want to read it again or look up some particular part or lend it to a friend (after all, it is a classic).

When you're enjoying a book you read it much faster because you want to read it. When you're not enjoying it you pick it up every now and then, read a couple of pages, get bored and go to sleep. ('The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night' took me two days, 'The Turn of the Screw' took me two months) So when you think about it, if half or even a quarter of the books you read are shit then your reading is shit most of the time. At least a shit film is over within 2 or 3 hours. A shit book goes on for weeks (or months if you read as slow as me).

I say read less. Or rather read less of more books. If you don't enjoy it within the first hundred pages throw it away. Authors will just have to learn how to entertain for a change.

(NB: If you didn't enjoy the first paragraph of that last section you probably should have just skipped the whole thing.)

ITS

Don't use the word its. It's a complete waste of time. Why waste time trying to remember which it's you're supposed to be using, even if it just takes half a second? Just use it's across the board. And don't let people tell you that it's wrong. 's means the possession of. They may have this extra word its which they like to use but you're just putting 's after the word it and that means the possession of it. So there.
