

Uplifting Activities You Should Do Every Few Months

Easy and fun to make the heart whole.



By Jordan Gross

My childhood bedroom had never looked so bare.

I recently returned home to help my parents clean before a renovation. They'd already removed so much from the room where I spent my first seventeen years, and it was now my task to go through the drawers and closets.

In the [words of Marie Kondo](#), I had to get rid of anything which did not bring me joy.

My mom is a collector, and I quickly realized that I probably am too. As I sifted through memories — postcards, letters, toys, clothing — everything brought me joy. Nostalgia rushed through my veins, and my heart was warmed by each item.

I realized that this is something we should all do more often. There are simple activities which can uplift us if we take some time away, and then come back to them. So often in personal enrichment we give advice for things to do each day. Rather, these are easy, fun and uplifting activities you can do every few months to make your heart whole.

Look at baby photos

When I first introduced my girlfriend to my grandmother, she immediately whipped out the baby photo album. Although embarrassing at first — spaghetti dripping from my chin, drool on my face in most pictures — the amount of laughs and smiles we had going through these beautiful screenshots were uncountable.

Each shot had a story attached. My grandma and my girlfriend were able to get to know one another through these photos. Thinking about my life from a different vantage point was extremely grounding.

Not to mention, looking at cute babies is an activity almost anyone can get behind!

Read a children's book

During my Master of Social Work program, I took a class about grief, loss, and bereavement. For one of the classes, our professor read us a children's book. This exercise was a great reminder of the beautifully simple, yet eloquent lessons found in these texts.

Oftentimes as we're racing through our more advanced lives, we forget some of these messages. But going through an old children's book can bring back some of the fundamental stories which make us human.

Watch an animated movie

Similarly, animated films and shorts do a tremendous job of bringing entertainment to life lessons. Not only are they made for children to more easily absorb certain moral principles, but also, they provide subtle reminders for adults as well. Movies like *Soul* remind us not to get too absorbed in our grand pursuits, and *Encanto* teaches us the beauty of our innermost superpowers.

Whenever I need to just *feel all the feels* I turn to animated movies. They never disappoint.

Go through old notebooks

Hopefully your mom is attached to certain items from your past like mine. Who would have known based on my first and second grade notebooks that I'd become a writer? You'd never have guessed it, because the writing was not great!

All jokes aside, reading about how I saw the world when I was little was illuminating. Seeing how I communicated my thoughts and ideas brought butterflies to my stomach and tears to my eyes. Truly I could not keep my cheeks from hurting as I turned each page. This was one of my favorite activities I've done in a very long time.

Look at cards and letters

This was one of the most emotional experiences I had when going through my old stuff. I had saved so many notes, cards and letters I'd received for birthdays, graduations, and various other milestones.

Reading what friends, family members, and loved ones said about me was incredibly touching. Especially seeing notes from those who have entered and left my life— people who have passed, those with whom I've lost touch — it truly made me think. It made me realize the fragility of life, which is always a valuable mindset to have.

Reach out to a long-lost friend

Seeing things in my past encouraged me to reach out to people who were no longer in my life. I saw photos from old birthday parties, and I decided to reach out to some of the people, just letting them know I was thinking of them.

“Hey, I just saw a picture of us on the mini golf course when we were 6. How time flies. Hope you are doing well!”

This led to heartwarming conversations and potentially rekindled relationships.

Recognize old awards, milestones and achievements

Trophy after trophy, medal after medal, I was overcome with pride for the life I have lived thus far. As I looked through graduation certificates, letters from administrators, game balls from coaches, I was so touched to have been recognized for my accomplishments. This allowed me to take a step back from my current pursuits and say wow, what a life it's been thus far.

Baby clothes

Need I say more?

Have a memorable meal

As my return home came to a close, I stayed for dinner with my folks. My mom made one of my favorite dishes from when I was a kid. Again, the memories rushed through my mind of all the times I had this meal. The food provided a portal to so many different happy moments in my life.

When the meal wrapped up, I went back upstairs to my childhood bedroom. No more posters on the walls. No more cowboy hats on the hat rack. Empty closets. Empty drawers.

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But after experiencing the emotions involved with going through these memories, feeling the nostalgia, the room was anything but bare. It certainly wasn't empty.

Rather, it was filled with pivotal moments. Moments from a life I am so proud to call mine. The room may no longer have anything in it physically, but the meaning of the room, the memories of that room live on.

Embracing nostalgia every few months creates a grand sense of appreciation. And it reminds us that no matter where we go, the feeling of home never leaves us.