

Perks of living alone



VERONICA GOMES

As people around are becoming more individualistic, the culture of moving out to live alone is gaining momentum, especially in students pursuing higher education. While most of us are no strangers to the various cons of this concept, we often overlook the pros which just might outweigh the cons. The following is a list to highlight the overshadowed perks-

Becoming more responsible: Growing up, most of us were brought up in a household surrounded by our loved ones, with help at our beck and call. Starting a life alone forces you to deal with the absence of such comforts and pushes you to learn to take up responsibility for yourself. This not only makes you better equipped for your future endeavours but also encourages you to start taking care of yourself as you come to realise how important your health is in order to carry the weight of the newfound responsibilities.

Learning more about yourself: This experience enables you to focus more time and energy on yourself than you would've done otherwise. You start getting to know yourself better — about your annoying habits, likes, dislikes — stuff you'd otherwise have never noticed closely before. Finally, you start becoming comfortable with your true self. This is when you achieve a new level of self-acceptance and people start appreciating you for the more genuine version of yourself that you've become.

Channelling creativity and discovering skills: You start taking up new hobbies of potential interest and find yourself more enthusiastic in signing up for new things. As a result, you start discovering hidden talents through

such experimentations and if you stay adamant about learning you get to hone your skills further. This not only helps you grow to your fullest potential but also acts as a form of stress relief in times of high pressure.

Becoming more outgoing: As a result of the aforementioned actions you take up, you go out more and meet new people. As ironic as it seems, living alone results in you becoming more social and even if you were already the social kind, it helps you get out of your usual crowd and gel with new people with different backgrounds and personalities. You get the perfect balance of social interactions needed by humans to survive and then get to go home to your much needed alone time to cancel out the chaos.

Discover true freedom: Every human out there should get to experience true freedom at least once in the course of their lives. Yes, you'll probably make a ton of mistakes but the lessons you will learn from them will be far more valuable and memorable than anything you'd learn from a text book or from the warnings of the people around you.

Aside from the mentioned pros, there are the various small scale perks like not having to share your stuff with your roommate or sibling, getting your own space to work in peace without distractions whenever you want and the fact that you don't have to label leftover food as yours. As a whole, living alone might be a scary concept, but it is arguably a necessity of truly growing up into the person you'd be proud to become.

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THE TIME LIMIT ON EXPERIENCES

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"What do you want to be when you grow up?" — the one question that plagued our childhoods. Somewhere along the line, the answers changed from becoming an astronaut to becoming a doctor who does charity work on the side to even more elaborate, albeit comparatively tamer, plans of where to study for university and picking out a major that has lesser odds of resulting in unemployment. Along the same lines, we also acquire expectations of what life should offer us. We imagine certain experiences locked away for us in the stream of time and space. But what if we feel an invisible force telling us that time is running out to unlock those experiences?

Growing up, we are surrounded by movies, art, music, literature, etc. that celebrate life and dive into the possibilities of what it can offer. These can vary from an array of tropes that begin with people getting whisked away into a world of magic or a person in their early twenties shunning society and running off to an adventure spanning across the country. A prominent feature of all of those would be the subject's journey to self discovery and coming across a lifetime of wonderful events, all before their mid twenties and even younger.

As a result, there is a subtle ingraining of the idea that life, imitating art, will offer us the extraordinary at our doorstep, without even searching for it. But soon, the realisation that life is not a coming-of-age indie movie slowly sinks in. While waiting for the incredible, we are often met with the mundane. However, the notion is still drilled into our heads, and we keep yearning for more and more. This feeling is not to be confused with having ambitions, though. We just end up going through life slowly, trying to figure out a right cheat code, all the while thinking that our time is slipping from our hands. Ultimately, we subconsciously impose time limits on ourselves and feel an invisible force telling us that a certain life experience must be acquired by a particular age. Due to that omnipresent feeling, one may go by an imaginary manual of what they should be experiencing.

In retaliation to that, the one thing that should be accepted is that life does not play out like a neat movie with jump-cuts. It can be gruelling, boring, but amazing nonetheless. Even if someone feels like they're missing out on things unlike everyone else, it would be beneficial to remind ourselves that no two lives are the same. The invisible force should not quietly dictate how life should be lived.

At the end of the day, experiences will come naturally. There is no script that has to be followed by everyone. Similarly, there are no time limits restricting you from finding your North Star or a life changing moment sooner or later in comparison to others.

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