

Throughout most of my life so far, one phrase can be used to describe me until a year ago: all over the place. Mood swings and anger constantly. Frustration every time things went wrong. Depression and bad days multiple times a week. It got better over time but it wouldn't be until a certain experience that things would finally reach the peak.

It's generally regarded that college is one of the most important aspects of becoming a functioning member of society. My experience as a college film major was rocky to say the least. My first two semesters were great; My second two were terrible. Most of it was caused by a dysfunctional toxic relationship. However, since that time, I have been able to learn from my mistakes and reflect. It came to me suddenly. A code of three rules that living by has provided me more happiness day to day than ever before. This is what the code is.

1. Expect Trouble so You Don't Get Caught Off-Guard

Life will always find a way to get in your way. Your car could get totaled. Maybe a family member passes away. You lose your job. Perhaps you break a bone. You never know what life will throw at you. However that doesn't mean you shouldn't expect these things to happen. Life is unpredictable. You'll never know what it has in store for you next. But if you open your mind to expect anything to happen, it will be less of a shock when it does happen.

2. Choose What You Care About.

Life is messy and there will always be people and problems that need attention. However, just because there are a lot of problems in the world doesn't mean you should sacrifice every ounce of your mental and emotional state to worry about it all. Be real with yourself. You have a limited amount of mental and emotional energy you can spend; Spend it wisely. Don't worry about things you aren't actively investing yourself in. If your brother's roommate's aunt's best friend who lives 1200 miles away has a cold, leave it to the people it affects immediately. Of course, it's always appreciated to pass on sentiments and sympathies, but don't waste your energy on a problem you can't invest yourself in.

3. Always Strive for a Positive Attitude.

The base for the other two rules to work is maintaining a positive attitude. Staying positive is the key to happiness. How can you be truly happy without a positive mindset? Easy answer, you can't. Having a positive attitude, even through the negativity, will give you strength you otherwise wouldn't have. Not only that, but keeping positive will begin to close the doors to those negative situations and open doors to positive ones. Mindset is important.

After committing myself to this code, my life turned around. I'm not stressed since I don't worry about a million things I didn't need to. When bad things happen, I'm not as flustered or upset by it. Day to day, I feel a lot more upbeat and happy than I used to. If you find you tend to be stressed out, easily upset, or just down and out, these three rules are an excellent starting point for change.