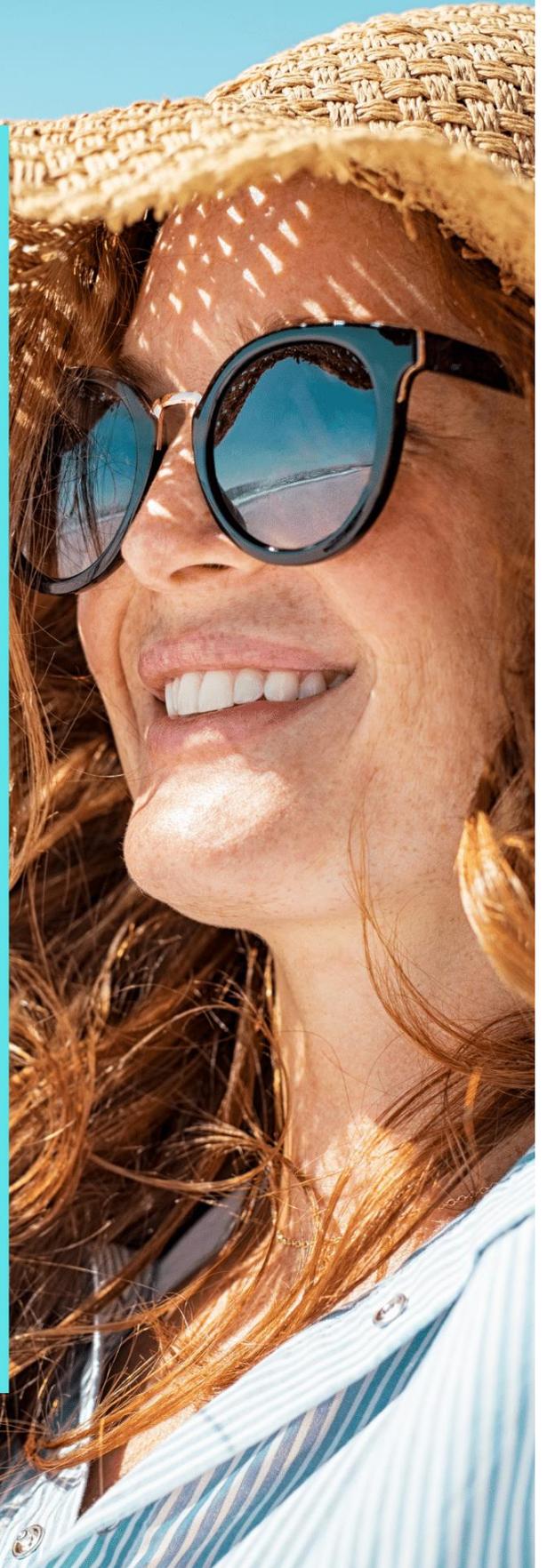


HOW TO
STOP
COMPARING
YOURSELF
TO OTHERS



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■ Part 1: Introduction

Happy Life Rule #1 – Don't compare yourself to others.

The list of ways we compare ourselves to others is long: Money, relationships, height, weight, careers, cars, personality, friends, and more.

Making these comparisons is an awful thing to do to ourselves because we're never happy with the results.

Every time you compare your life with someone else's, a little bit of your happiness leaves.

What moves into that empty space where that bit of happiness lived? Discouragement, pessimism, and resentment. The happiness you felt has now been replaced by powerful, negative emotions.

Those emotions can make you feel bad about yourself and your life. Post-comparison, you're left a lot worse off than you were before the comparison.

That's why the first rule of a happy life is to stop comparing yourself to other people.

But how do you actually do that?

In this guide, I'll show you. First, you'll learn why you shouldn't compare yourself to others. Then, I'll give you tips to help you stop making those comparisons.



■ Part 2: 6 Reasons Why Comparing Yourself to Others is a Bad Idea

Here are six good reasons you shouldn't compare yourself to someone else:

1 It shatters your self-confidence. [Self-confidence](#) – the belief you have in yourself – affects how you feel about yourself and your life. It's a source of emotional security when you have to deal with challenging situations and helps you maneuver the ups and downs of life.

Like fuel in a car, self-confidence gives you the “oomph” you need to take make difficult decisions and manage life's challenging moments. If your oomph reserve runs dry because you lost your self-confidence, you'll find yourself in the same situation as a car with no fuel, i.e., stuck where you are with your self-confidence shattered and broken.

2 It wastes your time. Comparing your life to someone else's life is a waste of time because our lives and circumstances are all very different. No two people have the same life experiences or genetic makeup.

Think of it this way:

You don't make a judgment about an apple by comparing it to a train. The comparison doesn't make sense because apples and trains have nothing in common.

It's a similar thing with people. If we judge our life by how it stacks up to someone else's life, we are making a comparison that doesn't make sense. We all experience life differently.

3 It sets you up to see your life experiences as failures, instead of successes. We are always outsiders looking in on someone else's life. Our view is limited and flawed. We see a sliver of that person's life, not everything.

Then we take that limited perspective and compare it to our own lives. And we don't feel good about the results. We see missed opportunities and would-haves and should-haves.

Comparing your life to someone else's sets you up for failure from the very beginning. It's like making a bet where there's a 100% chance you will lose.

4 It causes you to see everyone as a competitor. Your friends are no longer your friends. Your coworkers are no longer your teammates. They're your rivals.

Instead of celebrating other people's successes, you see them as competitors in a game where you're either winning or losing.

Life is a lot harder when you're stuck in a competition that never ends. It's an emotionally exhausting and lonely way to live your life.

5 It causes you to focus on the wrong thing. A large part of our happiness and well-being depends on one thing: Recognizing what you can control and what you can't. This is a particularly important point when you judge your life against someone else's.

There are things you can't control no matter how hard you try or how much you want to control them.

The experiences, opportunities, and choices someone else makes are three things that you cannot control. The combination of those factors led that person to where they are today.

Your life is different from theirs. Your life experience, opportunities, and choices are unique to you.

Judging your life based on decisions and actions made by someone else will lead you down a path that will never get you to your desired destination.

6 It turns into an unhealthy habit that's hard to break. The Cambridge Dictionary describes a [habit](#) as "Something that you do often and regularly, sometimes without knowing that you are doing it."

Sometimes we get so comfortable doing something - like criticizing ourselves for not being as whatever as whoever - that we don't even realize that we're doing it.

Even worse, when you continually tell yourself these things, you start to believe they're true.

Thoughts become habits. Habits become your reality.

For all the bad news about why comparing your life to others is bad for you, the good news is that you can stop. Here are eight ideas for doing that.

■ Part 3: 8 Ways to Stop Comparing Yourself to Others

Here are eight tips you can use to stop comparing yourself to other people:

1 Remind yourself that comparing yourself to others is bad for you.

This is the starting point for one very important reason:

If you don't believe comparing yourself to other people hurts you, there's no motivation to stop. It's as simple as that.

Nothing changes unless you have the motivation to make a change.

If you need a little motivation to break the habit of comparing your life to someone else's, revisit the six reasons discussed earlier.

2 Neutralize a comparison by replacing it with something better.

One of the best ways to neutralize comparisons is to think or do something that will actually make a difference in your life.

For example, let's say your coworker got a promotion that you wanted. Now you're feeling disappointed, discouraged, or you just plain resent the fact that your coworker got the promotion.

It's easy to get stuck in your thoughts and emotions – a self-imposed emotional jail – even though they do nothing to change the situation. In fact, the longer you hold on to them the worse you feel.

Here's what to do to break out of your emotional jail:

Instead of focusing on how you feel, focus on what you can do. In this situation, maybe you make a list of what you need (skills, training, experience) to move up. Then get to work on your list.

Replacing a comparison with something better shifts your focus and energy to something that will make a positive difference in your life.

3 Focus on what you're grateful for, not what you're missing.

If you judge your life by what you're missing instead of what you have, you will never be happy.

You can feel gratitude for what you have or anger for what you're missing. The choice you make will lead you down to very different emotional paths.

Anger leads to more anger and inner turmoil. [Gratitude](#) leads to contentment and inner peace.

Gratitude is one of the best tools we have for transforming our quality of life. And all it takes to begin that transformation is a simple appreciation for what you have in life.

4 Spend less time on social media.

At this point, we all know that what we see on social media is what people want us to see. But what we see isn't the whole truth.

We know that people are only sharing what they want us to see, but we compare ourselves to them anyway. Then we feel bad because our life doesn't look as perfect as theirs... even though we know better.

Social media feeds your curiosity about what's going on with the people you're connected to, but what you see on that endless scroll isn't necessarily healthy or helpful. When social media does you more harm than good, it's time to rethink its role in your life.

There's more to life than staring at a screen and feeling worse as a result. When social media drags you down, cut back or let it go. Life will go on.

5 Bring more positivity into your life.

If you could improve your emotional state by thinking more positive thoughts, would you do it? I would... and I do.

Research shows that [positive thinking](#) is good for your physical and mental health.

There's a great article by the [Mayo Clinic](#) that lists the many ways that positive thinking helps you lead a healthier life. It also gives examples of how to reframe your thinking to be more positive.

Here are a few suggestions you can use right now to bring more positivity into your life:

- Focus more on the positives in life than the negatives.
- Spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself and who value you for who you are.
- Replace the doom and gloom on your social media feed with uplifting content.
- Spend less time watching, reading and listening to the news.
- Do more of the things you enjoy doing and less of the things you don't.

In short, choose to fill your life with positivity, instead of negativity.

6 Be kind and compassionate to yourself.

We're often harder on ourselves than we are on the people around us.

Think about that for a moment:

Would you say those same harsh things to someone else that you say to yourself? Would you encourage other people to make the same unhealthy comparison you are making? I doubt you or most other people would.

Be nice to you. Show yourself the kindness and compassion you would give someone else.

7 Create a realistic plan to help you achieve the life you want.

You make decisions every day about what you will or won't do. You can use that power to create a life that makes you feel happy and fulfilled.

You start by deciding what you want in life, then you create a workable plan to help you [achieve that goal](#). Expect setbacks and make mistakes along the way, and know that when they happen, it's ok. They're all part of the journey.

Focus on creating the life you want, then make it happen.

8 Let go of things you can't control.

If you can't control it, you can't change it. You can do your best to cope with the situation given the circumstances that you're dealing with, but that's all you can do.

Here's a perfect example:

You're walking down a sidewalk without an umbrella during a flooding rain. You're soaking wet and wish the sun was shining. But your wish - no matter how hard you wish for it - doesn't make the rain go away. You can't control the weather, even though you really, really want to.

What you can control is how you respond in this situation:

You can choose to keep walking in the rain, or you can choose to step into the warmth of the coffee shop on the corner and sip a steaming mocha latte. You get to make that choice because your actions are under your control.

Stop trying to control things you can't control. Focus instead on the things you can control.



■ Part 4: Summary

Remember that the first rule of a [happy life](#) is to stop comparing yourself to other people.

Those comparisons often leave you feeling worse and direct your energy toward the wrong thing.

Once you stop comparing yourself to others, you may find yourself enjoying life a lot more.

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