

APPENDIX

Nine Things You Can Do to Improve Yourself and Help Others

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1. Seek God. When we seek God we are seeking the highest level of knowledge. Respect the presence and contributions of those who've come before us. The greatest "thank you" we could give to whatever God(s) we believe in, and to those people who've come before us, is to make a serious commitment to our personal and collective well-being, growth, and empowerment.
2. Read read read. Seek out reading lists, ask folks for book suggestions. Read at least one daily paper and one weekly alternative newspaper regularly. You must see reading as a commitment to learning. This will help broaden your worldview and sharpen your critical thinking skills. With this in mind, minimize television watching, or, at least, balance television viewing with reading, as constant reading will help you to interpret *all* media, including television, in a broader and healthier way.

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3. Strive to be of good character, learn to be compassionate toward the plights of others, and struggle for consistency between your public and private lives. Always be conscious of what you say, think before you speak, and ask yourself, “Am I about bridge building or destroying bridges?” or “Do I know how to love myself, and others?”
4. Be proactive with your life and in your community. For example, educate yourself about the history of voting in America, register to vote, and vote in each and every election. Voting does make a difference on the local and state levels, as evidenced by who gets to control our school systems, land usage, and monetary allotments to our communities. Finally, join an organization that is in support of average, everyday people. Develop a high threshold for the difficulties associated with organization building, and with various personalities. If one organization disappoints you, seek out others, or make it a point to learn how to build an organization yourself by studying various groups and movements, then start one with like-minded folks.
5. Debate ideas and learn to formulate your own opinions. Debate in a healthy manner: always come with facts, not emotionalism, and make sure you are listening as opposed to waiting for your turn to speak. In other words, use your intellect, not your ego.
6. Avoid frivolous spending at all costs. Purchase what you need, not what you desire. Strive to own something in your life, be it a home, a business, or land.
7. Make a commitment to holistic living: eat healthy, exercise regularly, pray or meditate at least once every day, and seek out counseling in one form or another if you have *any* minor or major emotional issues.

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8. Be creative. Discover what your creative expression is (e.g., writing, dancing, sewing, cooking, playing music). Learn the political and cultural history of your people, your group, and other people, other groups, so that you can develop a global vision.
9. Be bold, be fearless. We should never be afraid of living our lives with a commitment to honesty. And we must be comfortable with resisting and protesting when necessary.