

B2-C1 English Worksheet

Living for Today: The Problem With Postponing Happiness

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Article

Some people treat happiness as a reward that will follow their next achievement. They put off travel, creative projects or even an unhurried meal until their career feels secure, their finances improve or their personal life follows a conventional script. Writing in *The Guardian* on 8 October 2026, Sheree Joseph described becoming fixated on productivity and the relentless pressure to tick off life's milestones. The harder she tried to keep up with her peers, the more reluctant she became to enjoy anything without a practical justification. Pleasure seemed indulgent rather than a meaningful part of everyday life.

Her perspective shifted during a visit to Italy, when she was surprised to come across a lively street gathering with no special occasion behind it. Joseph began to question the assumption that fulfilment must be earned through accomplishment. Many experiences are fleeting: a spontaneous conversation, an afternoon spent making something or a meal shared without checking the clock. It is easy to run out of energy while pursuing a distant target and miss out on what is happening now. Choosing to slow down does not mean abandoning ambition; even mundane pleasures deserve attention.

Yet this argument needs balance. Saving for housing, caring for relatives and keeping a job are substantial responsibilities, not merely obstacles to enjoyment. People with limited resources may have less freedom to act spontaneously. The useful challenge is to make room for moments that matter without pretending that uncertainty or financial constraints have vanished. A deliberate choice to see friends, create something or take a short walk may not transform a difficult week, but it can help people look back on their lives as more than a sequence of targets. Not every ambitious plan will work out, so the present deserves a place alongside the future.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

No.	Statement	T / F
1	The columnist describes acting as though enjoyment needed to be justified by achievement.	
2	The gathering she found in Italy was held to celebrate a formal occasion.	
3	The article questions the idea that pleasure has to be earned through productivity.	
4	Brief, unexpected experiences can contribute to a meaningful life.	
5	The writer argues that ambitious people should abandon every long-term goal.	
6	The article recognises that limited finances can restrict people's choices.	
7	It treats caring duties and housing costs as irrelevant to decisions about leisure.	
8	The conclusion claims that small pleasures will solve every persistent difficulty.	

Phrase Match

Match the phrases (1-10) to the correct definitions (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. put off	A. fail to experience something desirable
2. tick off	B. create space or time for something
3. keep up with	C. reduce the pace of your activities
4. come across	D. have no more of something left
5. run out of	E. maintain the same pace or standard as others
6. miss out on	F. delay doing something until later
7. slow down	G. happen successfully or as hoped
8. make room for	H. mark an item as completed on a list
9. look back on	I. find or encounter something unexpectedly
10. work out	J. think about something that happened in the past

Synonym Match

Match the words (1-10) to the correct synonyms (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. conventional	A. hesitant
2. fixated	B. satisfaction
3. relentless	C. significant
4. reluctant	D. intentional
5. meaningful	E. traditional
6. spontaneous	F. brief
7. fleeting	G. ordinary
8. mundane	H. obsessed
9. deliberate	I. unceasing
10. fulfilment	J. unplanned

Use the New Language

Choose 5 words or phrases and write your own sentences.

No.	Your sentence
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Discussion Questions

Student A	Student B
1. Which personal plans have you put off while waiting for the ideal moment?	1. Does society encourage people to tick off milestones rather than decide what matters to them?
2. When is spending money on an experience now worth reducing future savings?	2. When is postponing pleasure responsible financial planning, and when is it avoidance?
3. How easily can you slow down after a demanding working week?	3. Is guilt about rest a personal habit or a result of modern working culture?
4. Which spontaneous experience has stayed with you longer than an expensive purchase?	4. Has documenting experiences online made it harder to enjoy them in the moment?
5. Which social expectation have you found difficult to keep up with?	5. Who has the freedom to be spontaneous, and how does economic inequality affect that freedom?
6. If you could make room for a creative hobby, what would you choose?	6. Can creating something offer more lasting fulfilment than buying something?
7. Which small rituals help you maintain your relationships with friends or family?	7. How do expectations about marriage, family and career success shape people's choices?
8. Looking back, is there something you regret missing out on?	8. When people look back on their lives, do everyday pleasures or major achievements matter more?

Answer Key

True/False	1=T, 2=F, 3=T, 4=T, 5=F, 6=T, 7=F, 8=F
Phrase Match	1=F, 2=H, 3=E, 4=I, 5=D, 6=A, 7=C, 8=B, 9=J, 10=G
Synonym Match	1=E, 2=H, 3=I, 4=A, 5=C, 6=J, 7=F, 8=G, 9=D, 10=B

Example Sentences With the Phrases

No.	Example sentence
1	Do not put off meeting old friends indefinitely.
2	It can feel satisfying to tick off a difficult task.
3	Some people struggle to keep up with demanding social expectations.
4	You might come across something memorable on an ordinary walk.
5	It is easy to run out of energy when you never take a break.
6	Tight schedules can make us miss out on unexpected experiences.
7	It takes practice to slow down after a particularly busy month.
8	Try to make room for an activity you enjoy each week.
9	When I look back on university, I remember the friendships most.
10	Not every career plan will work out exactly as expected.