

The If Generation

When I was younger, I thought [redacted]. I would look at my cousins and convince myself that [redacted], skiing holidays in Austria or expensive, fashionable clothes. What I didn't take into consideration back then was the fact that I actually didn't like sports, I absolutely hated the snow and expensive clothes often cover a lack of personality. In other words, I was jealous of things that I didn't want in reality.



Nowadays, I keep finding myself new "ifs" that successfully keep me away from being happy. [redacted]; [redacted]; etc. The result? An overweight 30-years-old, always complaining about how difficult life is.

My problem of "ifs", I've come to realize, doesn't end there. We, yes we, tend to overuse the conditional in situations that could otherwise be quite straightforward. "[redacted]" usually means "I won't visit you, I'm busy" or "[redacted]" equals: "I will not lend you the money, don't put me in an uncomfortable situation". Why do we choose to send confusing messages when we can simply say what we think?

**IF NOT,
NOW
WHEN?**

Reflecting on the power of these "ifs," it's clear they often create more barriers than possibilities. Instead of lingering on hypothetical situations or half-hearted commitments, we might consider shifting our focus to what we can do now. What if, instead of getting lost in "if only", we just embraced the present and tried? After all, true progress and happiness come when we stop making excuses and start taking action with the resources and time we already have.

1. What is the **author's attitude** towards the fact that nowadays people don't appreciate their lives?
 - A. indifferent
 - B. irate
 - C. annoyed
 - D. provoked
2. Which of these does the author **not regret**?
 - A. not being able to train tennis
 - B. being physically unfit
 - C. not saying what they really mean
 - D. thinking "if only" instead of taking action
3. According to the author, people who wear expensive clothes **tend to be**...
 - A. mediocre
 - B. fake
 - C. ordinary
 - D. bland
4. Which of these set of **adjectives best describe** the author?
 - A. uninspired & a liar
 - B. unhappy & regretful
 - C. lazy & in a mid-life crisis
 - D. unwilling & contrite
5. Which of these sentences better **summarize** the article?
 - A. If the author hadn't focused so much on what they could've had, they might have appreciated what they did have sooner.
 - B. You start making real changes in your life when you stop justifying your lack of action.
 - C. Avoid using conditionals, and you will communicate more effectively and make more progress in life.
 - D. If we spent less time on hypothetical "ifs" and more on present actions and honesty, we'd probably find more happiness and satisfaction.