

# InLife

I N T

A L

NOVEMBER 2021

## GET FIT IN THE NEW YEAR

ARE YOU LOOKING TO FINALLY  
KEEP YOUR NEW YEAR'S  
RESOLUTION & LOSE WEIGHT?



## MONEY SAVING TIPS

SEVEN HANDY MONEY SAVING TIPS  
FOR MOTHERS ON A BUDGET  
THAT ALLOWS THEM TO STAY ON  
TRACK IN ORDER TO MEET THEIR  
SHORT AND LONG TERM FINANCIAL GOALS

## LIFE AFTER A BRUSH W/ DEATH

LESSONS LEARNED FROM SURVIVING A  
LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS

INTRODUCING

*Abi*  
GRIGSBY



→ Video Viral



→ Blog

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# InLife

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

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# InLife

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

November is just a few weeks before Christmas, so it's a pretty good month. My friend turns 45 next month. During our usual chats in the pre-coronavirus era, I would often end up rushing her off the phone due to my hectic schedule. But lately, I have taken the time to really listen to her due to the lockdowns, so I'm hearing stories for the first time. Or maybe it's possible that I have listened to these stories before and somehow forgotten at my age.

Regardless, my friend is a fantastic storyteller, and I love a good story. That said, I am grateful that finding and hearing stories is my primary role here at InLife International. We are lucky to have the trust of hundreds of exciting people worldwide, who in turn trust our writers to bring their memories and experiences come to life. This month, we have some more great stories, including how people are coping due to the pandemic, why Boracay is one of the best places to visit once travel restrictions have been lifted, and how a brush with death opened a woman's eyes to the realities of life. I love my job.

Sue Turner  
Editor-In-Chief

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MS ENTERTAINMENT

# EVENTS

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## WHY "BAYANIHAN" IS CRUCIAL DURING THE PANDEMIC

The coronavirus has had an enormous impact on the 104-million strong Philippines nation, with many of its citizens under 'enhanced community quarantine' featuring business closures and severe restrictions on movement, including checkpoints and the suspension of public transport.

Coronavirus testing capacity is low, and hospitals are under-resourced and struggling to fight the pandemic.

Social distancing is difficult in high-density urban areas, and the closedown of businesses from the extended lockdown has devastated families. Without government support, some cannot pay for the basics.

Stepping in to assist has been overseas Filipinos' 'Bayanihan' – the traditional value of families working together to assist family members and community members who are in need.

Ella Magallanes Martinez is a senior registered nurse in Sydney, and for her, it's normal to have constant interaction with family members all over the world to help those in need: "I am on the phone and texting other family members in Australia and America to make sure we are working closely together. When we do that, we make sure our family has what they need to get through the lockdown."

For Ella, the attitude is to help out for as long as it takes: "There appears to be no end in sight to the lockdown, so it is very stressful, but our Bayanihan will get us through."

For overseas Filipinos, the support often comes down to supporting individual family members who have special needs: "I have two people specifically we are helping at the moment."

"The first is my granddaughter Isabella who was supposed to graduate from year 6, but the graduation ceremony was cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdown."

We want to give her everything she needs including a good living allowance and paying for school fees so she can study hard, get her nursing qualifications and join us in Australia."



Ella's other family member in need is part of the most vulnerable group in Manila - senior citizens, many of whom live paycheck-to-paycheck: "My brother Sedre is 70 this year and his little grocery store business is closed. He is a polio victim with heart disease and I help him pay for his medication. He also gets the basics - kilos of rice and sardines and that's how he is living. I tell him to please take his medication regularly - if coronavirus don't get you then heart disease will!"

A good thing about sending with WorldRemit is he doesn't have to get out of the house to pick up his money. It lands straight into his account."

For families in the Philippines, coronavirus has driven the growth of payments via non-cash methods, such as mobile and online transfers. Under lockdown, it is difficult for citizens to leave their home, travel long distances or queue at money transfer agents. In addition, there is the risk of coronavirus disease transfer through transacting in cash.

Ella agrees with the need for extra safety with cash handling: "Before, there was not much card use but now there is a lot

more and I encourage my granddaughter to use the card for safety."

This trend is being felt globally with digital money transfer provider WorldRemit experiencing more than a 100% increase in digital sends from around the world.

For Earl Melivo, country director for WorldRemit Philippines, it is an honour for him to help WorldRemit to play its part: "For those Filipino-Australians sending to their loved ones in the Philippines, especially in these challenging times, it is important that we continue to ensure that the needed financial support is delivered safely and quickly."

"WorldRemit is committed to ensuring this together with our Philippine partners. Senders can make money transfers from the comfort and safety of their homes and importantly, recipients do not need to leave their homes to collect their money."

"I'm also thrilled to offer a coronavirus fee relief offer for sends to the Philippines. We know now more than ever that every dollar counts." (Source: The Australian Filipina)



## SURVIVING A LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS: LIFE AFTER A BRUSH WITH DEATH

Twenty years ago I was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness - and my world was never the same again.

Here's my story .....

Back then when I used to live in the Philippines, my life was surrounded by materialism and ambition. Just like any mother who wanted to provide for her family, I actually worked so hard that I was juggling two jobs. My husband was also always away working in the field so we rarely saw each other. We still religiously went to church every Sunday and we also went on holidays together with the kids, but we never had time to actually serve God.

That's why I consider our big move to the United States back in 1989 such a blessing in disguise. Our arrival in the US led us to join the Couple's for Christ community and we've never been happier. This community has thought us a lot, since joining Couples for Christ I have developed a personal and loving relationship with God and I've also discovered the joy in serving God as well as my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Everything was going really well in both our spiritual and personal lives when a piece of shocking news suddenly struck my family. I was diagnosed with a serious ovarian tumor and I needed to undergo a major operation. My condition had so many complications that my ovarian tumor became a life-threatening illness.

Initially, I seriously could not accept my condition. I was serving God so much - how can I be diagnosed with such an illness? I thought God was protecting me??

Of course, in these times of darkness, I immediately turned to God. I prayed and I prayed ... And I prayed some more. I figured that only God can help me now ....

After a risky operation and four seemingly long months of rest and recuperation - I actually returned to good health. God has answered my prayers, I was healed. It was a miracle!

Looking back over the years, I could honestly say that this specific experience has taught me a lot about life. I have seen first-hand the love of my husband, two kids, relatives, and friends who have proven their love, commitment, and faithfulness towards me when I needed them the most. I have realized that life is short so we should always enjoy and live our lives to the fullest and use our maximum potential to serve God and other people. And I have also realized that God will never leave you - no matter what. His love is eternal and everlasting.

I've also realized that we are all just temporary residents here on Earth, our final place is in fact in heaven with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It's been a truly life-changing and harrowing experience .... Now I am running my race for God.

“Looking back over the years, I could honestly say that this specific experience has taught me a lot about life.”

## FIVE INDISPUTABLE REASONS TO VISIT BORACAY ISLAND

The beach is the perfect place to relax and enjoy the warmth of the sun or the fresh breeze of summer. However, not all beaches are as beautiful and as exciting as The Boracay Island beach in the Philippines. Boracay Island is a small island situated in Iloilo, Philippines where tourists and locals alike can enjoy playing under the sun or diving in coral areas of the Marine Sanctuary.

The beauty of Boracay has definitely captivated most hearts of travelers, beach enthusiasts, and even party-goers. Now here are five good reasons and reasons why Boracay should be on your map for your next holiday once the Coronavirus restrictions have been lifted:

### 1. A place of solitude

Even though some areas of Boracay are overcrowded especially during holidays and summer, you can still have your solitude in Boracay. You can spend a day or night at the beach while watching the peaceful beaches on Station one. There are also other secret beach spots in Boracay where you can have your privacy.

### 2. Easy access to parties

Boracay always holds some of the craziest beach and club parties in the Visayas region. With just a walk away from your hotel or beach station, you can hop from bar to bar and enjoy some ethnic music or jam with the latest groove of disco at the bars. You can enjoy and party at the beach and watch fire dancers perform their skills and tricks. You can also watch the locals create amazing sand sculptures and castles lighted with candles, especially at night.

**Unlimited things to do**

There are plenty of things to do while you're in Boracay. You can rent a KTV and sing along with your friends, go sea diving, explore the Marine Sanctuary, rent a banana boat, go on a road trip, visit the wildlife expo, and many more. Travelling within the island is also cheap and you can always hire tricycles or boats to bring you to the places that you wanted to go.

**Convenience if provided**

Tourism in Boracay understands your need to purchase something that you want or familiar with. There are dozens of convenience and grocery stores that are lined up every day for your service. Finding the right restaurants that will satisfy your hunger is also not a problem because there are lots of restaurant spots that you can go to. Some shops sell cheap local dishes whilst some provide quality services and dishes at reasonable prices.

**Giving you leisure**

Boracay provides some of the best pampering services via their spas and saunas. You can always relax and enjoy your day with a full body massage. Famous hotels are also available based on your budget but nonetheless provide leisure and quality services.

Boracay may be a small island with white sand beaches that drives traffic especially in summer but it is also a place that you should go when visiting the Philippines. If you want to enjoy a warm day on the beach that provides everything that you needed in just a few walks or ride then Boracay should definitely be on your map.



AUSTRALIA'S HEMSWORTH BROTHERS' MALIBU MANSION SELLS

## FOR \$4.9 MILLION

A Malibu home that was owned jointly by Luke, Liam, and Chris Hemsworth just sold for \$4.9 million. The brothers purchased the property in 2016 for \$3.45 million.

Luke 40, Chris 37, and Liam 30 have had stellar careers in film and television since Luke began acting in an Australian soap opera in 2001, and the younger brothers followed in his footsteps. Born in Melbourne, Luke and Chris live on the coast in Byron Bay, Australia with their wives and three children each. Liam is also back in Australia after his seven-month marriage to Miley Cyrus ended. As the youngest and now unattached, it is not known if Liam plans to stay near family and friends, though rumor has it that he may have also recently invested in property in Byron Bay.

A nomadic life as youngsters moving between the city in Melbourne, the Australian Outback, and a coastal island, all three brothers were free spirits spending much of their time exploring, surfing and school plays. The brothers gained popularity in roles they played in *The Hunger Games* film series, *Last Man Standing* and *Ghostbusters*. The brothers have collected a long list of film and television credits with Chris adding three video games based on his movie roles. Luke has just completed the film *The 34th Battalion*, soon to be released and Chris is producing and currently filming *Escape from Spiderhead*.

Always close as children and teens, it's not surprising that the three partnered to buy a family-vacation home with views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Pacific Ocean surrounded by peaceful nature. The 4,612-square-foot, four-bedroom, four-bath home was an ideal getaway for family get-togethers and near the film studios. Striking modern architecture in an open floor plan captures the views and optimizes California indoor/outdoor living. Securely gated and with a long drive to the entrance, lush landscaping and exterior lighting create a welcoming ambiance for both residents and their guests. Wide sweeps of polished concrete floors set off the white walls that offer space for art collections and the open floor plan that spills out onto the dining terrace offers room for entertaining either dining or enjoying conversation around either of the two firepits. Included are a sauna, a 750-bottle refrigerated wine cellar, a home theater, and a library with built-in bookshelves. The chef's kitchen includes restaurant-quality appliances. Below the entertainment terrace, lawns, and landscaping step down the hill with a peek of horses through the back hedging. The master suite has Calcutta gold marble in the bath and two walk-in closets.

**Photo Credit:** Alexis Adams

**Source:** [TopTenRealEstateDeals.com](http://TopTenRealEstateDeals.com)









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## HOW TO WISELY MANAGE A CAR LOAN

In countries like the United States, it is important for working people to have a car for transportation. However, an average American is not capable of purchasing a brand new car through a one-time payment. As a result, people would resort to acquiring a vehicle through car loans. In all actuality, a car loan can be paid off within 4 years the most. And the ease of payment within those four years would depend on how you wisely manage your car loan.

If you are earning enough for your car loan's repayments, then, just consider it just the tip of the iceberg because you still have to think of the other expenses related to owning a car—insurance, gasoline, oil, and tires, among others. On top of that, there are still other expenditures that you have to accomplish such as food, rent, other mortgages, utility bills, tuition fees, and more.

With this in mind, a person who has a car loan must manage well his or her expenses in order to pay off the said loan as smoothly as possible.

The first thing you have to do before actually jumping into a car loan is to think of your budget. It is important that you put into writing your monthly cash inflows and outflows in order for you to have a clear view as to what amount you can actually allot on your prospective car loan or if you can even afford to apply for a car loan. Thus, a monthly budget will make you realize a lot of things before you actually sign up for one.

If you deem that you are ready for a car loan, then, by all means, exhaust yourself in finding the best car that will suit your financial situation. There are online calculators that you can access on the internet so you will be able to determine your monthly payments provided you key in your monthly income.

If the calculator gives you a projected amount that is way beyond your capacity to purchase, then, look for another car that is less expensive; keeping in mind that you need to pay off the car within 4 years the most.

Once you think you already found a good deal for a car loan; the next step you have to do is to choose the best repayment method that will work for you. There are a lot of options such as paying online, in person at the financial institution, auto-debit from a bank account, and by mailed check, among others. It is to be noted that an automatic debit from the bank account carries an advantage that a lesser interest rate will be charged because of the timely repayments made. You just have to make sure that your bank account has the available funds to cover the repayment. Make sure you will not miss a single repayment in order to avoid charges that will eventually blow up your interest rate. Lastly, read the terms and conditions associated with the car loan and abide by everything that has been stipulated in the contract in order to avoid being penalized by fees that will yield increased charges.

In cases where you just cannot afford the monthly repayments anymore somewhere along the road, then, you have the option to refinance your car loan. This way, you will be able to switch to a much more manageable loan plan that will work for your budget.





INTRODUCING

Abi  
GRIGSBY

Abi Grigsby initially kickstarted her career in the modelling industry by joining beauty pageants. She originally joined the Top Model of the World Philippines pageant back in July 2016 within two weeks' notice - the pageant needed a certain number of contestants in order for the competition to proceed, and the director of the pageant contacted her to join. Even though she was a last-minute contestant, she still ended up as second runner-up, which surprised her as she had no previous experience at all when it comes to pageants, so she wasn't even expecting to make it as a Top 5 finalist.

The following year she joined the "Mutya Ng Pilipinas Australia" (Pearl of Australia) beauty pageant. Joining this pageant enabled her to gain a lot of exposure in the modelling industry which led her into meeting the majority of the photographers that she now works with regularly. When she competed overseas during the 2017 Miss International Australia pageant, she gained several contacts with various modelling agencies and photographers. She eventually ended up as second runner-up, and she also captured the Miss Model of the World Title. Furthermore, she competed in the Miss Teen Universe Australia pageant in December of that year. All of these competitions led her to meet so many creatives in the industry; photographers who were looking for fresh faces to shoot, as well as makeup artists who needed a model to work on for skill enhancements. Slowly, through these connections, she was able to build the network that she currently has.

InLife International recently caught up with Abi to discuss her journey in the industry, and here's what went down:

**How did you develop an interest in modelling, and what drove you to pursue that passion?**

I feel like I speak for most women when I say that when we were teenagers, we all had a phase where we wanted to be a model. I, too, went through a phase in my life where I thought to myself, "I want to be on the cover of magazines, I want to walk the

runway, I want to be on billboards," etc. Although I was only 15/16 years old at the time, I couldn't shake the thought from my mind, and I decided that I was going to make it happen for me. It was certainly difficult starting out, as I had no connections and no one to contact for any assistance on how even to begin - I had no friends or family in the creative industry, so I completely started from scratch.

Participating in beauty pageants acted as the stepping stone I needed to get my foot in the door. After competing and winning both local and international pageants, modelling opportunities began to present to me, and I haven't looked back since! I'm thankful I only live an hour away from Melbourne city, where all my modelling opportunities are. I enjoy traveling into the city from where I live, so a photoshoot will always be a fun day for me!

**How do you balance maintaining a fit body while being busy with your regular work?**

I work in hospitality, so I am always on my feet. Anyone who knows me knows I enjoy going on walks quite frequently. I always make sure I am out and about, rain, hail, or shine at least once a day! I love being outdoors as much as possible, regardless of the weather, so this definitely helps me stay in shape and stay active.

**What's your diet like at the moment? What do models eat?**

If I'm being completely honest, my diet hasn't been great these past few months.

On top of going in and out of lockdowns, being busy with work and my life in general, it can be hard to prioritize diets and health. It's a struggle that I believe most of us have faced; no matter how invested you are in your health and fitness, it can be very easy for those goals to slip away once the stress and busyness of life come to occupy your life every day.

I will try and squeeze in a workout whenever I can, but I won't let it get in the way of me getting proper rest when I need it. Let this be a lesson, not to push yourself too much! It's okay to miss a workout here and again; ensuring that you are well-rested and happy is the most important thing.

**Do you have a moment in your modelling career when you felt it was the pinnacle for you?**

Around 2019 and early 2020, I would call the "pinnacle" for my modelling. I was frequently photo-shooting, at least three times a week, to a point where I felt I could cut back some shifts from my day job. It felt great to finally be at a point where I wasn't just attending photoshoots every couple of weeks, as it had been since my modelling career started.

I had also modelled for milliner designers, swimwear/lingerie clothing brands. I walked in different fashion shows around Melbourne, so I felt delighted to have accomplished all that entirely on my own.

**Do you have any "secrets" to modelling that you would like to share with everyone?**

I don't think I have any "secrets" when it comes to modelling, but more so advice. And that would be to just keep trying! It can be a tough industry to break into, and it can be discouraging when you have so much competition - it's easy to get overwhelmed.

But if it's truly your dream and your passion, then just keep on going and give it your 100% focus, as this opportunity will only come around once in your life.

**What's your view on pageants right now? What do you feel has changed since the days when you were competing?**

I have always loved competing in beauty pageants. It's what started my career, after all I first started competing five years ago, back in 2016. Although it doesn't seem like a long length of time, I have definitely seen many changes take place in both local pageants and big international pageants. The main thing I've noticed is that currently, pageants are more focused on a woman's mission and what they can do for their community or what they can do to help those who are struggling. Nowadays, pageants are not just solely focused on a woman's outer appearance, but more on what they can do with their title should they win and how they can influence and inspire those around them. I believe this is a significant step forward in feminism, and I know we'll only continue to go up from here.

**Are there any people you would like to thank for helping you get to where you are today? Is there anyone in particular who inspired you?**

If I had to thank anyone, it would be my parents. Like me, they knew of no one who had done modelling or beauty pageants, so for me to want to get into this industry was certainly daunting for them, as they had no idea what it was about or how it works. Despite this, they continued to support me, whether it was picking me up late from rehearsals for a fashion show/pageant, driving me into photo-shoots, or coming to watch and support me at each competition.

I have numerous women in my mind who I could say inspired me to start modelling, but if I had to pick one, it would definitely be Pia Wurtzbach. I've always taken in her story as inspiration, to never give up on your dreams and to keep trying until you accomplish what you want in life. She had numerous setbacks and was rejected in the industry many times before she made it to the top, and that always serves as a reminder to me to just keep going.

**What are some of the difficulties of being in the industry?**

Some difficulties of the industry would definitely be rejection. It's hard not to take it personally, but it happens to everyone. Especially when you are just starting, it can be hard not to get discouraged, but it pays to stay the course! As they say, "we are never rejected in life; we are redirected." So keep your head up - you never know what's coming.

**If someone is going to make your life into a movie, who would play you?**

I could think of countless people I would want to play with if they made a movie about my life. But if I could pick one, it would be Shay Mitchell; she has been my favourite actress for a long time!





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## NEW YEAR NEW YOU: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO STAYING FIT

If you are becoming too nostalgic recently, that is probably because time flies too fast and we are now again traipsing our way into a new year. This means we're eyeing seemingly endless gatherings and family reunions. Sounds fun? You bet! But the fun won't last longer than the period of merriment as we begin to notice bulges and fats getting comfortable in our bodies. Now, that's not sweet, is it?

With the mark of the new year coming our way, excessive eating has also found its saccharine vengeance against our rejuvenating, healthy lifestyle. It is the biggest culprit that always makes us surrender ourselves to the temptation and we pay the price so devastatingly the moment we feel our weight on the scale. The truth is -fitness does not have to be back-burnered. You can still enjoy the sumptuous food while keeping the abs; you just have to learn to get ahead of yourself. Here are a few practical ways on how you can stay fit this new year 2021.

### **Practice small frequent feeding**

Proper meal distribution will keep those extra pounds at bay. While the sight of palatable goodies distracts you from keeping your healthy routine, avoid eating big portions all at once. You can also inject the idea of walking before hitting the sack as it will contribute to proper food digestion.

### **Eat before you party and do not skip meals**

Ensure that you take your meal first before you frolic at parties, family reunions, or any sort of gatherings where there will be plenty of food. By doing so, you are saving yourself from overindulging or overeating. The idea here is to fight temptation as much as possible and this is a very easy job when your stomach is full. Moreover, skipping meals would do more harm than good since it is often known for its counterproductive effects.

### **Encourage outdoor activities as part of your celebration**

Family reunions are the best occasions in which you can infuse some outdoor activities. Appreciate the beautiful weather outside while doing energetic pleasures and other physical games. Who says you can't burn those calories while enjoying your family get-together?!

### **Know your beverages**

Get rid of those extra holiday weight by knowing which alcohol or beverage is more damaging to your lifestyle. When you figure this out, remember to drink in moderation. Excessive alcohol drinking could invite more pounds faster than your unpleasant eating habits.

### **Embrace your fitness routine or find alternatives**

Hit the gym whenever possible or make use of the space in your house. The goal is to keep your body as active as you can to burn unwanted calories. Other alternatives would be walking around the parks, jogging at night, or even biking. No matter how much you eat, these activities would make you feel better at the end of the day.

The easing of the Coronavirus restrictions means that there will more gatherings with family and friends. With friends coming over and parties happening everywhere, it would be too difficult to separate ourselves from the entire merriment that circulates us. Staying fit calls for unwavering self-discipline and it is the only way to keep the guilty grinch away.

## FIVE WAYS TO TAKE ACTION AND GET ORGANISED THIS NEW YEAR

It's hard to believe 2021 is already here. 2020 has definitely been an extremely challenging year full of change and uncertainty. As we are all aware, the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve further and we are still dealing with a massive global challenge as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to escalate globally impacting how we all operate and manage our businesses and lives day to day.

In addition to the immediate and serious health concerns, we are also seeing a much wider impact on all of our lives as well as the global economy as a whole. Understandably, there is a considerable sense of unease all over the world.

So how do you plan to welcome the year ahead?

New Year, like the sun, is almost shining its rays on us. A couple of days from now, we will be celebrating the coming of new hope, a new inspiration, and a continuing triumph against the challenges in life. It is a display of loud and colourful fireworks thrown into the vast sky, a grateful celebration of the year we bid goodbye to, and a hopeful invitation to a new slate in our life. But what does it really mean to you?

Every year, we are faced with heightened anticipation as we lay out our goals and plans for the year ahead. We think of it religiously in the promise of daily opportunities and 365 days of chances. The more it draws itself to us, the brighter we see ourselves in its glorifying blessings and exciting beginnings. We look forward and bombard the first midnight with endless wants and wishes that we sometimes tend to forget the sturdy platform where these plans of ours stand—our inner self. So how do we work on ourselves to be able to successfully map out an organised 2021 despite the pandemic looming over our very heads?

### **Leave Unnecessary Things**

Needless to say, de-cluttering may be one of the most neglected words we have but this year, be the difference that you desire and start by offloading stuff that you don't actually need. This goes beyond tangible things since often, your negative emotions like anger and grudges take over your life. Release the bad vibes in your life and carve a path for a peaceful surrounding and stress-free day to day living.

### **Prioritise Big Things and Lift Your Littlest Ambitions**

Maneuver every now and then to reckon if you're doing the right thing at the right time. Are you caught up between the rocks of your short term goals and long term aspirations? Visualise yourself and maximise time by weeding off your life-destroyers and pick up the points that strongly contribute to your self-effectiveness and spectacular rewards.

### **Make Friends With Your Calendar**

Mark important dates such as school and business appointments and devote a time that is solely assigned for you to face your to-do lists and accomplish those set-off goals.

### **Start a Healthy Financial Management Strategy**

Know all your finances by heart and arm yourself with strong self-discipline and a realistic budget. File your bills accordingly and limit your credit card expenses.

### **Stay Focused**

The way to an organised year entails hard work and conviction. There will be days when following all your set life draft may seem impossible and this is where staying focused on your vision comes in. Your self-productivity and time management play a lead role in keeping you present and motivated.

The countdown for New Year begins with you. It's a blank space waiting for you to take as you shape your destiny so take it, draw your vision of life, write your big dreams in it and get up to steal them. 2021 is here, embrace it!

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ETIQUETTE: HOW TO PROPERLY BEHAVE ON TRAINS

By Nina Tagintingan

As restrictions ease, I now find myself returning to work in the office, a relatively long commute on the bus and the train. Some things make the ride pleasant, mainly when I'm organised enough to catch it before peak hours (anytime before 7 am) or have to work back late and dodge the 5 pm rush. But more often than not, the train ride to and from home is stressful, not because of the train itself (clean, modern and runs on time) but the behaviour of other commuters. These are the top things I wish I could avoid when I'm catching public transport.

Talking loud on the phone – for the entire trip

Sometimes, some people act like the train is their private carriage. There have been numerous times where I'd take a seat, hoping for a peaceful respite after a hectic day at work, only to have the bad luck of sharing the same carriage as a Filipino in an international phone call with a relative. The call would last for half an hour or more, and you can tell that everyone in the carriage is quite annoyed at her, but she just keeps yapping on the phone, oblivious to everyone else. No one says it's illegal to take a call on public transport, but a little courtesy to the people around you would be nice.

Eating smelly food

This is primarily fast food, from Hungry Jack to McDonald's. There's nothing worse than having to endure the smell of someone else's food, especially in an enclosed space like a train.

Coughing without covering your mouth

Given that we are in the midst of a health crisis, I wish people had the courtesy to stay home if they are feeling sick or at least wear a mask if they know they'll be coughing and sneezing on a bus.

Body odour

Nothing's worse than sitting next to or behind someone who forgot to spray deodorant on or has decided that washing one's hair should only be a monthly occurrence, if at all. There were also times when I've been unfortunate enough to sit near someone who thinks it's okay to take their shoes off.

Putting feet up on the seats

I've never seen older people do this, but kids and teenagers seem to think it's okay to put their feet up knowing that someone is bound to sit on the same spot after they've left. This is just plain rude and inconsiderate.

Leaving your rubbish behind

If you're going to eat or drink on the train, take your rubbish with you. It doesn't take a lot to do but makes a big difference to everyone who catches public transport.

Playing music on speaker

Again it's usually young kids who do this. I wonder how they could rationalise inflicting everyone else with their musical tastes. It's inconsiderate and makes me wonder how they are brought up.

All of these might sound like trivial inconveniences but imagine how good it would be if everyone who catches public transport were more considerate. There would be fewer people getting sick, and it would be a more enjoyable ride for all. [Source: The Australian Filipina]



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white wide-brimmed hat, a white short-sleeved dress with ruffles, and brown leather boots, is sitting on a sand dune. She is holding a brown leather crossbody bag and sunglasses. The background shows a beach with wooden posts, waves, and a blue sky with light clouds.

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