

WEEK 3, 2020

THE EPOCH TIMES

# MIND & BODY

The suicide rate among U.S. children aged 10 through 14 has nearly tripled from 2007 to 2017.

## What's Behind the Dramatic Rise in Teen Suicide?

A child psychiatrist shares insights gained from his work with children and teens who have contemplated suicide **4**

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Parents' Mission to Improve the Pediatric Heart Transplant

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# Keeping Up With the Joneses'

Conforming to endless trends can be an expensive distraction from our own values

JOSHUA  
BECKER

Rather than trying to “keep up with the Joneses,” try to “keep up with the person you want to be.” It is, almost certainly, different than the life the Joneses are living. Society has an interesting effect on us. Too often, it calls us to conform. Think of the changing styles and how quickly the masses adopt them. We follow the new fashions. We watch the same shows and movies and

read the same books. We buy the same automobile styles. We conform to modern styles of furniture, countertops, decorations, and even appliances. “Keeping up with the Joneses” is, by its very nature, the pursuit of conformity. We want what they have or buy what others are talking about or click-to-ship the same product everyone else is buying on Black Friday. But one of the rarely mentioned side effects of conforming to the life that others are living (what we buy, how we spend our time, and what we desire to have) is the complete and total loss of individuality. But deep down, do we even want those things? Do we even want to change our clothing styles? Or buy the new car, boat, or bigger house in the gated community? Or would we much prefer our own life and our own choices? Wouldn't we much prefer to pursue our own values? Because almost certainly your values are different than the Joneses. When we take control of our life and

begin pursuing the life we want to live, we discover the best way to overcome envy and jealousy of others is to live a life consistent with our values.

When our time and money are spent on things we consider important, we find inner peace and calm that allows us to experience sufficiency, regardless of how much others have (or how they spend it). When our resources are spent on pursuits that bring us fulfillment, we find fulfillment.

Will others have more? Absolutely. But when we are doing the best we can with the resources we have, it results in the confidence and peace that the Joneses have probably been chasing all along.

Live your life ignoring conformity. Pursue those things that bring you fulfillment and significance and meaning.

Rather than trying to “keep up with the Joneses,” try to “keep up with the person you want to be.”

You certainly won't get there trying to live the Joneses' life.

*Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker and the founder and editor of Becoming Minimalist where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit [BecomingMinimalist.com](http://BecomingMinimalist.com)*

Getting one more toy or updating another room of our home is often an act of conformity meant to match a social norm.

# CLUTTER WARS

How to win the battle with your stuff



“As more junk accumulates in our space, we become victims of ‘junkicide.’”

Don Aslett, author of ‘Clutter’s Last Stand: It’s Time to De-Junk Your Life’

## CONAN MILNER

Spiritual practices have long warned against developing attachments to material possessions, as it can be easy to get sucked in. Our stuff can serve as an extension of our self, represent who we aspire to be and demonstrate our taste and values. But it can also reveal what we greed after or won't let go of.

Hoarding—the inability to part with any possessions no matter how worthless—has become a surreal staple of reality television, highlighting an affliction both fascinating and repulsive. In every episode, hoarders know they have a problem, and

they're ashamed and isolated by the environment they inhabit. But the pain of letting go is too great.

Christine Bowman has spent much of her life with hoarders—both professionally, as a Chicago-based home organizer, and as a child watching her grandmother struggle with hoarding.

She describes her grandmother's house as virtually unlivable: A tight pathway snaked through stacks of furniture, clothing, and other items, allowing just enough space to get from one room to the next.

“There was just one burner of the stove that you could use and the rest were covered,” Bowman said. “You could use the toilet and sink, but you couldn't use the shower. It was

completely full of boxes and objects.”

Even though only a small fraction of Americans meet the criteria of being a full-blown hoarder, these days it seems we all have more junk than ever.

Many factors contribute to our materialism, including a culture of mass consumption, the capability to buy almost anything online, and a booming self-storage industry that happily houses our overflow.

We also face bargains that seem too good to pass up, must-have electronics that we're more likely to replace than repair, and a pervasive mantra that having more will make us happy.

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THE  
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TRUTH and TRADITION

COVERING  
IMPORTANT NEWS  
OTHER MEDIA IGNORE

The very fabric of America is under attack—our freedoms, our republic, and our constitutional rights have become contested terrain. The Epoch Times, a media committed to truthful and responsible journalism, is a rare bastion of hope and stability in these testing times.

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## ECONOMIC WARFARE CORPORATE CYBER ATTACKS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY THEFT

“7Tao is a powerful Industrial Attack and Defence system. Built and tested with United Kingdom Government Funding – and 100% success.

Amar Manzoor,  
Master of  
Industrial  
Warfare

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METHOD OF  
DEFENCE IS  
ATTACK

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TRUTH and TRADITION

## A NEWSPAPER GEORGE WASHINGTON WOULD READ

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Decision fatigue refers to the deteriorating quality of decisions made by an individual after a long session of decision making.

### BECOMING MINIMALIST

## The Reasons I Wear The Same Thing Every Day

The benefits of wearing the same thing every day include saving time and money

JOSHUA BECKER

When I first decided to become minimalist, I can remember looking in my closet and seeing 100, maybe 120 different articles of clothing.

I cut my wardrobe in half to 60 items. But then I discovered Project 333 started by Courtney Carver. After trying it, I cut my closet in half again.

Nowadays, I own about 33-35 articles of clothing. Somewhere during that process, I started wearing basically the same thing every day: a V-neck T-shirt, pants, and black shoes.

I have come to love wearing the same thing each day. And I'm not alone. A lot of people are doing the same thing.

Here are some of the reasons why I wear the same thing every day:

**1. Fewer decisions.** This is by far the most popular reason why people decide to adopt a streamlined capsule wardrobe.

Decision fatigue refers to the deteriorating quality of decisions made by an individual after a long session of decision making. Wearing the same outfit each day removes picking out clothes as a decision to be made.

The truth of the matter is, you have more important decisions to make than what you're going to wear each morning.

**2. Less time and energy wasted.** When you wear the same thing every day, you save time deciding what you're going to wear each morning. And you save significant energy over the course of the week.

Just think about how much time goes into maintaining, and organizing, and taking care of your clothes. Laundry, for example. When you decide to wear the same thing every day, all of that becomes easier. You save time in the morning and energy over the course of a week.

**3. Less stress.** As a result of fewer decisions and more time, wearing the same thing means you have less stress

in the morning.

It also means you experience less stress over the course of the day. I don't ever have to think about, "Oh man, am I wearing the right thing today? I wish I would've worn x instead." I wear the same thing, and it works perfect for almost every occasion. I love it. You will too.

**4. Save money.** The average American family spends \$2000 a year on clothing—despite already having closets full of clothes.

For some reason, we just keep buying more and more and more. A lot of this expense is wasted on clothes that are never worn—trial and error fashion that ends up wasting time, energy, and money.

**5. Feeling put together.** Every moment of every day my clothes fit, match, and just so happen to be my favorites. All-day long, I feel like I'm wearing something I enjoy and look good wearing.

**6. Less waste.** The average American throws away 70 pounds of clothing every year. Deciding to wear the same thing is good for the planet, it's good for you, and it's good for everyone else as well.

**7. An iconic look.** Wearing the same thing every day is the quickest way to become famous. You become known for your particular style, you look put together, you look classy, you look comfortable, and you look confident. Because you're not constantly chasing the newest fashions, you'll communicate confidence in who you are and how you look.

I love wearing the same thing every day. You will too.

If you're looking for help to get started on this in your own life, let me suggest: *The Minimalist Wardrobe: A Practical Guide to Owning Fewer Clothes.*

Joshua Becker is an author, public speaker and the founder and editor of *Becoming Minimalist* where he inspires others to live more by owning less. Visit *BecomingMinimalist.com*

# CLUTTER WARS

How to win the battle with your stuff

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We're constantly prompted to buy, but given little commercial-free space to consider what the items truly mean to us. Bowman says that clutter often takes over when people are too busy and overwhelmed to confront it. "We're accumulating things so fast that we're not being conscious about what we really value and what we really want."

The root of the problem, according to Don Aslett, author of "Clutter's Last Stand: It's Time to De-Junk Your Life," is that we often confuse ownership with companionship. We're so focused on the memories of how we acquired an item or gripped by its potential ("it might be useful one day") that we fail to see that it's just taking up space. As more junk accumulates in our space, we become victims of "junkicide."

"Junkicide is a slow, painful strangulation and dying of the senses," Aslett writes. "Although our brains are still intact, we've simply replaced thinking with things. Our accumulations have crowded out creativity and frozen flexibility. We've snapped up so much free stuff and bought so many things to keep, store, clean, polish, and protect that we don't have any freedom."

### Fight Back: Get a System

Try as we might, we can't buy a sense of abundance by learning to appreciate the things we already own, while ditching the stuff that no longer serves us.

Imagine how your life would change if your possessions were reduced to the essentials—only the things you truly wanted and needed. Japanese organizational consultant Marie Kondo has written an internationally bestselling book devoted to this idea, "The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up."

Kondo, whose reach has grown thanks to a Netflix series in which she helps people resolve their clutter conundrums, has a view of possessions that may seem strange to the Western mind at first. She asks people to regard their things not as mere objects, but as living beings that deserve respect and purpose. Objects want to be used. Clothes want to be worn. It's what they were created to do.

If you can't give them a job, it's best to set them free. Instead of addressing your clutter by room, Kondo suggests to go by category (clothing, toys, books) and consider whether each item in that category brings you joy. If not, let it go. Tune in to how you really feel about each of your possessions, and you will suddenly notice the book you will never read, the hat you will never wear, or the immersion blender

that you don't use. "Until the hoarder is able to take a look inside him or herself to see what's causing

the hoarding, nothing will change," Luhrs said in an email.

Trauma is the common theme Bowman recognizes in all the hoarders she has known. For her grandmother, it was living through the Great Depression—a time when people saved everything they had because they didn't know if they would ever get anything else.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, addiction, and unresolved grief have all been associated with hoarding. Whatever the backstory, hoarding often serves as a coping mechanism—creating a cocoon of objects to soothe an injured soul.

This is why Bowman believes that people with chronic hoarding issues often need help to address their underlying trauma first, before tackling their stuff. Otherwise, the mess is bound to return.

"These objects represent security," Bowman said. "If you clear a space, they will fill it in quite quickly."

### Mindful Purging

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you never should've purchased.

Done thoughtfully, this project may take a while to complete, but it saves a lot of hassle in the long run. Once you've pared down to the essentials, you won't waste as much time and energy rummaging through things that no longer serve you, and it's easier to find the stuff you actually want. You'll also give your unwanted objects a chance to have a more purposeful existence elsewhere. Once you have a better feeling for what you truly value, it becomes easier to spot the items you don't want.

Having a place to put the rejects ensures they make it out of the house in a timely fashion. Bowman recommends keeping a permanent donation box to hold your unwanted objects until you have time to take them to their next home.

"There's a place always ready, so that when I see an object, boom, it goes right in there. Once a month, I take all the donations to wherever they need to go," she said.

### Finding Balance

In response to the material excess of our consumerist culture, more people are turning toward a minimalist lifestyle: smaller homes, fewer possessions, and more freedom. The 2016 documentary "Minimalism" highlighted this phenomenon, featuring one man who managed to whittle down his worldly possessions to a mere 51 objects.

“We're accumulating things so fast that we're not being conscious about what we really value and what we really want.

Christine Bowman,  
Chicago based home organizer

Bowman is a big proponent of adopting a more minimalist lifestyle, but she knows from personal experience that it can also go too far. In reaction to her grandmother and father (who carried on the family's hoarding tradition), Bowman went the other way. For a time, she tried to live with as little as she could. She cautions that this can also become unhealthy—a coping mechanism at the opposite end of the spectrum.

"We don't want to be in excess, but we don't want to be in a deprivation state. There's this middle way. It's about having the things you need to have the life that you need," she said.



Imagine how your life would change if your possessions were reduced to the essentials—only the things you truly wanted and needed.



More extreme cases of possession attachment may require deeper reflection.







# Prediabetes Rampant Among US Teens

Nutrition research too often influenced by companies behind unhealthy foods

**KRISTINA MARTIN**

The health, food, and education systems in the United States are failing young people. According to a new study from JAMA Pediatrics, an estimated 18 percent of adolescents aged 12-18 are prediabetic, while 24 percent of young adults aged 19-34 were estimated to be prediabetic. Young people with obesity were more likely to be prediabetic. That's not great news for Americans, as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development predicts that 47 percent of the United States population will be obese by 2030.

**A Big Bundle**

Diabetes is a serious yet manageable health condition that costs the United States health care system an estimated 327 billion dollars in 2017. According to Dr. Linda J. Andes, a mathematical statistician with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and one of the lead authors of the study:

"The average medical expenditures for people with diagnosed diabetes were about \$16,752 per year. After adjusting for age group and sex, average medical expenditures among people with diagnosed diabetes were about 2.3 times higher than expenditures for people without diabetes ..."

This study should be greeted with a call for greater education and awareness. Andes continues:

"We hope that this research expands the pool of available research on prediabetes in adolescents and young adults.

Monitoring the number of young adults and adolescents with prediabetes and varying levels of glucose tolerance can help determine the future risk of type 2 diabetes in youth. We also hope that this news sounds an alarm for young people, parents and clinicians - and that those who may be at risk or living with prediabetes are encouraged to take the necessary steps needed to prevent or delay progression to type 2 diabetes."

**Pushing Backward**

Instead, this news will likely be greeted with a chorus of "get your butt off the couch and eat better." Unfortunately, outdated and patronizing advice ignores the difficulties faced by young people today. Most food is sprayed with large amounts of agricultural chemicals, or chosen for its shelf life rather than taste, and then much of it is processed in a way that kills the little nutrition not bred out of it. Healthy, tasty, organic fruits and vegetables are costly. If you want good quality, tasty food, you're going to have to pay for it—and cook it.

There's also the issue of nutrition education. As nutrition science evolves, we are better able to measure more variables in food and how these interact with our body. But that doesn't mean consumers are getting that info.

Coca-Cola finances in-house research institutes like the "Beverage Institute for Health and Wellness," designed to promote the hydration benefits of their products while conveniently ignoring the

health damage caused by sugary drinks.

Nutrition and dietetics conferences are frequently sponsored by corporations with a vested interest in the least healthy option, like McDonald's, Hershey's, and Kraft Foods. This year's Food and Nutrition Conference Expo's sponsors included PepsiCo, Big G Cereals (the manufacturer of Lucky Charms, Cinnamon Toast Crunch, and Cocoa Puffs), and Splenda Sweeteners. This isn't to say all studies have been bought, but it can be difficult, sometimes confusing, and incredibly time-consuming to sift through all the noise and find truly helpful health information.

This doesn't even touch on the issue of the weight fluctuations that can occur with prescription medication, especially antidepressants and mood stabilizers. Even if you have the education needed to choose well and can afford quality food, you're still at a massive disadvantage.

Studies have found that the offspring of generations of mice fed a poor, low-fiber diet lose a high percentage of gut bacteria diversity, and they are unable to get it back. Though human studies haven't been conducted, it's not a stretch to think the same phenomenon is happening in people. At the end of all of this, the most basic act of care-taking we can perform (eating) can feel like yet another part-time job. No wonder more Americans are dying sooner.

**The Bad Snowball**

It's highly likely that some of



It's not a surprise that more young people are obese year after year given the degeneration of the American food system.

those prediabetic 12-year-olds who have been diagnosed with prediabetes are being raised by some of those 34-year-olds with the same condition, or its next evolution stage, diabetes. The percentages of young people diagnosed with prediabetes are lower than the nearly 34 percent of Americans adults with prediabetes. Children and young adults may catch

up sooner than expected, especially if the American way of life, eating, and addressing health continues the path it is currently on.

*Kristina Martin works at Green Lifestyle Market and is a natural health wellness reporter for Organic Lifestyle Magazine, which first published this article.*

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