

Endarkenment: The Top 40 Ways to Make Yourself Miserable (Along with Everyone Around You)

I have spent most of my life making myself unhappy, and I learned long ago how to share my misery with others. In writing this article, I didn't want to rely on my expertise alone, so I interviewed hundreds of miserable people and asked them to share their most prized misery secrets and techniques.

This Top 40 list is a compilation of the best ways to make yourself miserable, and bring everyone down with you. It is a well-known fact that "Misery Loves Company." Why hoard your suffering when it is so easy to share it with others? Many people have made their entire families miserable. Some of the people I interviewed succeeded in making their entire community miserable. There are historical records documenting people who brought misery to entire civilizations. We have glorious accomplishments that we can use to compare ourselves to. Doing this allows us to feel less than others, or completely unworthy. This is Technique 23.

In this modern time, with so many options for entertainment and distraction, it is easy to lose track of our real goal. There are (too damn many) self-help books that try to convince us that we can, in fact, be happy. But why bother? Happy people are universally disliked for their cheery, Pollyanna attitudes and their smug smiles. If you want to be liked, be like all the other people around you. Be unhappy, and you'll never be alone.

Happy people often try to put us down and they give us crummy advice. They advise us to see a therapist or practice meditation or yoga. They tell us that we could become peaceful, happy, and loving people. They promise wealth, great relationships, and terrific sex if we follow their cult-like behavior. To hell with that. I love to be miserable, so I practice suffering with diligence, and I'm always looking for a new angle. I don't want to take my suffering for granted or lose my sharp edge or my bad attitude. There's nothing worse than a dull edge to misery.

There are hundreds of techniques for making yourself miserable. Many will be familiar to you. You probably use some of them already. The old standards such as *Be Right* and *Make Others Wrong* have been used successfully for millennia, but it's easy to take them for granted and forget to use them just because they're so well known. In this article I review only the most effective methods, whether old or new, because when it comes to misery, technique really counts. And so does practice.

Here are **The Top 40 Techniques for Making Yourself Miserable**, in no particular order (Why should I bother putting them in any particular order? You probably won't care what order they're in anyway.):

- 1) Resist change. Put your foot on the brakes in any attempt to move forward.
Undermine other people's progress so you don't get left behind.

- 2) Resist what is. Don't like it. Let it eat at you because it's not what you wanted. Wish it would change or go away. Think of being happy if it were different, and then recognize that it will never be different.
- 3) Attempt to control the outcome of whatever you're involved in.
- 4) Find the actual outcome insufficient, wrong, or unbearable.
- 5) Try to change or control others' behavior, thoughts, and feelings.
- 6) Try to change or control the physical environment.
- 7) Notice things that are wrong, imperfect, or could be better.
- 8) Be pissed off at someone (or everyone) and don't tell them directly.
- 9) Take things seriously. Very seriously. Very, very seriously.
- 10) Take things personally. They're probably talking about you right now.
- 11) Judge others as inferior, inadequate, stupid or unpleasant.
- 12) Keep yourself distant and unapproachable.
- 13) Scowl, frown, complain, and grump. Squinting when listening works, too.
- 14) Complain loudly to anyone who will listen. If no one listens, complain to God or to invisible people.
- 15) Blame others for everything that's bad.
- 16) Find a scapegoat and make good use of them.
- 17) Inform others that they are wrong.
- 18) Hold yourself superior to others, therefore separate from others.
- 19) Dislike children, wild places, nature, and beauty.
- 20) Be bored, regardless of what is happening.
- 21) Ignore what is happening around you and focus on some other time or place that was or could be better.
- 22) Be bothered by noise, especially other people talking, automobiles, airplanes, and children.
- 23) Hate the weather, regardless of what it is.
- 24) Compare yourself to others, and be sure to choose people that are better than you at whatever you're comparing. Pick the most beautiful, thin, rich people you can find and you won't go wrong.
- 25) Make others wrong for their values, behaviors, beliefs, actions, smells, etc.
- 26) Turn yourself into what someone else wants you to be. Then resent it.
- 27) Have high expectations. When they're not fulfilled, complain. Use the evidence to prove that you don't deserve it anyway.
- 28) Have lots of desires, aversions, repulsions, wants, and attachments.
- 29) Be suspicious of others. They're probably plotting to get your share. Even though it may look plentiful, there's a limit to how much miserable-ness there can be in the world, so if they are too miserable, you'll run out and have to be happy.
- 30) Believe in these essential beliefs:
 - a. Something is wrong here.
 - b. Something is wrong with me.
 - c. Something is wrong with you/him/her/it.
 - d. There isn't enough.
 - e. I'm not good enough.
 - f. You're/she's/he's/it's not good enough.
 - g. I am alone.
 - h. I don't know how to love.
- 31) Live in the past. Hold onto what *was* as being much better than what *is*.

- 32) Hide the truth. They can't handle it anyway, and it wouldn't do any good if it got out. (Unless you want to let it out in order to make someone else miserable.) Besides, it's better to hold onto a grudge, bad feeling, or withheld communication. Then you can obsess about it. "If they only knew what I was thinking..."
- 33) Don't keep your agreements. No one else does, so why should you? They're not that important anyway. Neither is the person you made a promise to.
- 34) Verminize specific types of people, and react to them as if they were vermin. Sudden horrified looks are good. Also good is backing away from them as if they were dangerous acid that might burn your skin. Pick a group – any group – such as Communists, Terrorists, Capitalists, Industrialists, Mexicans, Americans, Christians, non-Christians, etc., and see them as scum. There is a never-ending supply of social, ethnic, and class distinctions you can use for this purpose.
- 35) Be ashamed. "Original Sin" was a splendid idea for creating misery. Believing that you have a built-in flaw, which only someone else can forgive you for, is a sure-fire way to be miserable. Why, you don't even deserve to be alive! Whereas guilt is about what you did (see below), shame is about who you are. Flawed. Undeserving. Taking up valuable space or resources. You should be ashamed of yourself.
- 36) Feel guilty. There are certainly things you should feel guilty about that are bad or wrong to do. Breathing air that might be useful to someone else, for example. Or making a mistake. Or hurting anyone. Or hurting animals or plants when you eat them. Or any natural impulse. Or not doing something you should do or promised to do. You can take almost any action, judge it wrong or bad, and then feel guilty about it. Decide that most of your behaviors are no-no's. Then you wallow in guilt. Besides, it makes you easier to control, which you can then resist or resent.
- 37) Be right. Righteousness is an age-old technique for spreading misery. Although it may have a tendency to make you feel better temporarily, it will cause doubt to creep in. Maybe you aren't right after all. If you are really righteous, you can enjoy moments of doubt as you kill and torture the non-believers that are wrong.
- 38) Find something to obsess about. Anything will do. Just think about it or do it over, and over, and over, and over, and over, and over, and over, and over...
- 39) See in others what you dislike in yourself, and consider it bad and wrong without seeing it in yourself.
- 40) Treat others as objects for your use.
- 41) Disagree violently with others' opinions, facts, or beliefs.
- 42) Seek happiness outside yourself and find everything wanting in one way or the other.
- 43) Have no goals, and resent the fact that you can't accomplish anything.

Well, these are the Top 40 Ways to Make Yourself Miserable. Okay, 43, but "Top 43" didn't sound good. You probably wouldn't have read the article if it had been "The Top 43 Ways to Make Yourself Miserable." You might not have liked the article anyway. Which makes me feel bad. I'm going to pretend that I don't feel that way so you can't hurt me.

I certainly hope that this list has proven useful, and I look forward to hearing of your successes as you bring misery to all those around you. Cheers!