

What does it mean to Live Big® in these trying times?

What does Live Big® mean? Some may interpret it as meaning “spend big”, “live large” or a recommendation to some other form of overindulgence. But Live Big is not about the size of your wallet, it’s about the size of your life. In these crazy economic times, it can sometimes be difficult to remember the areas in our life where we can Live Big without spending (much, if any) money. But if we can find the place of gratitude for what we have, we can find joy in the most mundane of places, and, hopefully, at least get our minds off of how scary the world can feel at times. We offer these ideas for your consideration. And we will be updating this document with additions from anyone who wants to participate, so please send us any ideas you might have.

- *Walk the dog (borrow one if you don't have one of your own)*
- *Hug someone (be careful, in general it should be someone who you know)*
- *Start a gratitude journal – every morning/evening, write down 5 things for which you are grateful*
- *Read all those books you've been collecting, meanwhile drinking all that tea that has accumulated in your cupboard*
- *Get Skype and call friends all over the world*
- *Write a poem, or at least read one*
- *Continue to make your Charitable Contributions*
- *Watch “It’s a Wonderful Life” or “Love Actually” or some other super feel good movie*
- *Make a game out of cooking dinner for a week using only ingredients already found in your pantry or freezer (adding fresh vegetables)*
- *Have a book swap party with everyone bringing a few books they'd like to swap and a refreshment*
- *Write a letter to a soldier*
- *Exercise*
- *Join Netflix (30-days free and then \$8.99/month) and watch 100 -200 – 300 movies! (They're available instantly on your PC)*
- *Teach a teenager to balance a checkbook*
- *Write an old fashioned letter to someone*
- *Take an elderly neighbor lunch*
- *Breathe, pray, meditate*
- *Play cards or a board game with someone fun*
- *Journal*
- *Volunteer*
- *Watch a comedy routine and laugh the day/night away*
- *Burn an aromatherapy candle*
- *Listen to music*
- *Dance*
- *Do a craft (find something on sale at Michael's or another craft shop)*
- *Make a hobby out of finding free weekend activities and planning outings with family friends*
- *Look at old pictures and marvel at how great you still look*
- *Make somebody laugh*
- *Get fresh vegetables from a farmers' market*

- *Watch a thunderstorm – on a porch if possible*
- *Donate blood*
- *Catch a snowflake on your tongue*
- *Volunteer at an animal shelter*
- *If you get a premium cable channel, invite your friends over to watch shows they might otherwise not get to see*
- *Give a stranger a compliment*
- *Feed someone's parking meter*
- *Go to the library and check out books and DVDs (for free!)*
- *Pay a true compliment to someone who annoys you*
- *Throw a Board Game Night at your house for friends, family, neighbors*
- *Match all your mismatched socks*
- *If you find a tails up penny, turn it over for someone else to find a heads up penny*
- *Be a Big Sister or Big Brother*
- *Create something (stained glass, a photo album, a collage)*
- *Print the photos you've been meaning to get off of the computer and put them in a photo album or scrap book*
- *Make a quilt*
- *Color – with a child, by yourself, outside the lines*
- *Have a special story time with your children/grandchildren*
- *Organize a silly 2K or 5K walk/run in your neighborhood*
- *Visit monuments and museums in your area*
- *Put a puzzle together*
- *Take silly/pretty pictures just for fun*
- *Bake some bread or cookies ~ share them with a neighbor or friend*
- *Plant some flowers or vegetables. Fun to watch them come up from seed*
- *Discover a new park. Go for a hike*
- *Take a leisurely walk around a new neighborhood in your city - be a "tourist"*
- *Give yourself a beaming ear-to-ear smile for five minutes, just because you're alive. A big grin triggers a flood of serotonin and endorphins, creating a virtuous cycle; literally creating happiness where none may have existed before*
- *Stare at the spring flowers*
- *Smell the spring flowers*
- *Give special attention to your spouse who may be worried*
- *Kiss your spouse who may be worried*
- *Hug spouse who may be worried*
- *Hug your pet*
- *Write a letter to someone you love*
- *Call a friend and tell them you value their friendship*
- *Visit a Virginia winery to taste the new releases*
- *Another happy movie to watch: About a Boy. If you don't feel good after watching it there's no hope*
- *Pay it forward, volunteer, it comes back tenfold*
- *Get an almost free vacation through a home exchange*
- *Listen to your feel-good iPod list during your commute to work*
- *Taking a yoga class at Mala Yoga*
- *Reading my son a book, especially one by Mo Willems, who is hilarious*

- *A square or two of Lindt 70% Cocoa Dark Chocolate*
- *Petting dogs (We don't have one -- yet!)*
- *Clean out the closets and donate good useable clothing and shoes to the Homeless Shower program in town*
- *Volunteer at the Homeless Shower program in town. Get gratitude that you aren't homeless and can help others*
- *Volunteer at the Food Pantry/Meals for homeless programs*
- *Walk the dog with your partner (or just go for a walk together), enjoy discussing the day*
- *Teach a class of 3-5 year-olds*
- *Instead of going to a photo studio for family pictures, set up a "studio" at home and have a friend take the pictures*
- *Don't live in the wreckage of your future--enjoy today*
- *Remember, if you pray, why worry? If you worry, why pray?*
- *living simply (less stuff – more room for life)*
- *being grateful to have a good job (or just a job)*
- *being really grateful when matching funds remain a part of your financial plan*
- *feeling empowered when using a debit card (instead of a CC)*
- *trusting your financial planner to help optimize your financial goals*