



**“Nowadays you need the planning skills of an events maestro to arrange get-togethers for family and friends”**

# Code of ethics

It's alarming what is now considered appropriate behaviour. Instead, try my Ten Commandments for Contemporary Life

*By Josephine Brouard*

THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGING and at a scarily speedy technological pace. Moments and milestones are captured in electronic milliseconds, and disseminated around the globe for all to digest and disgorge instantaneously. It's time for guidelines more suited to contemporary life, such as:

**Occasionally, just occasionally, switch off thy mobile phone.** Oh please, don't make excuses about the important calls waiting; how did you manage before iPhone or Blackberry came along? Eschew the technological entrapments and lo, you may actually enjoy the flesh-and-blood company at hand.

**Sign here, please, before we lock limbs.** If you're a politician, footballer or anyone vaguely well known, be careful who you climb into bed with, because it will surely come back to haunt you, typically in the form of SMS. No modern-day rake is going to get sleazy without legal disclaimers firmly in place.

**Burn the altars of Prada and Jimmy Choo.** Today, handbags and shoes signal one-upmanship like nothing else can. Costing more than a deposit on a small house, fashionistas covet these accessories beyond all reason – and cheap knock-offs, typically, won't do. Perspective needed, perhaps?

**Look in the mirror and love what you see.** If Moses had foreseen the popularity of Botox, collagen implants, hair plugs,

paint-on pecs, nose and boob jobs, penile enlargements and other 21st-century body modifications and enhancements, his hair would have turned even whiter (and he wouldn't have had Clairol to disguise the fact). Time to celebrate natural beauty once more?

**Honour thy child – within reason.** Times have become so politically correct that it's no longer fashionable to teach young 'uns that there are limits to wants and whims, and that it's permissible to smack 'em when they're being brats. Exhausted parents no longer have lives; they simply drive taxis. And if offspring expect the world, Mum and Dad experience a galaxy of guilt when they're unable to deliver. Time, perhaps, for the excessive nannying to stop.

**Park the car in the garage and start walking.** Car companies can flog all the hybrid models they like; it doesn't change the fact that we all need to get on our bikes, road-test public transport, or start hoofing it to work and social events. With petroleum only rising in price and the world's resources dwindling, returning to our transport roots is the obvious way to get and stay fit, surely?

**Celebrate your neighbour's plasma screen and marble kitchen splashback.** With marketers bringing out new models for everything from home theatres to water features, you might as well grow accustomed to falling behind in the “must-have” stakes. From home décor to your fashion wardrobe, there isn't an item these days that doesn't become

passé almost overnight. Recycling may be the new black – but not for long!

**Remember family birthdays and keep them holy.** When chips are down, everyone cites “family and friends” as their No. 1 emotional resource... but don't, for goodness' sake, wait for Christmas to roll around before you show you care, even if nowadays one needs the planning skills of an events maestro to arrange get-togethers. When did everyone get so busy?

**Tuck in, but don't pig out.** Food is a wonderful thing, and cooking a tantalising pastime, but don't join the legions of supersized Westerners who burden their countries' respective health systems. In an era when more people are dying of starvation than ever before, gluttony is like a slap in a famine-ravaged face. So watch those portions, folks, and share some of the smorgasbord around!

**Honour thy fellow man.** Some things never go out of fashion, like looking beyond yourself and seeing and feeling the pain of others. Or, to paraphrase a Beatles song, “I am he/as you are he/as you are me/and we are all together.” When next you're preoccupied by grudges or resentments, focus instead on the bigger picture, and walk in someone else's shoes instead. It will make you see things quite differently! ●

*Josephine Brouard has a psychology degree and a fascination for human behaviour.*

*Got a directive you consider essential for modern life? Tell us at [healthsmart.com/twitter](http://healthsmart.com/twitter)*