

My younger brother is turning into a loser. What do I do?

August 7, 2018 | 71 upvotes | by [nabosch](#)

My 20 year old brother recently dropped out of college after 2 years of gen ed's, didn't know what he wanted to study which is fine. This was last spring and since then he has been a complete waste of space at my parents house.

He still lives with my parents, doesn't work, and has dreams of becoming a DJ all of sudden out of nowhere, the kid never played an instrument and just dropped around \$500 on random DJ gear.

He's always been introverted but has now developed a serious pot habit since he's been "taking time off" and smokes everyday.

My parent's are pretty weak when it comes to enforcing any sort of rule on him for whatever reason and he has been unemployed and working on his DJ career, stoned in the basement for the last 5 months.

I don't want to watch him waste away, turning into such a bum. I know for a fact he has almost nothing in the bank since he's been an athlete since grade school (soccer) and never really worked.

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Comments

FixYourselfFirst • 90 points • 7 August, 2018 02:25 PM

Lead by example. Be there for him when he hits bottom. Not much else you can do

1z1z2x2x3c3c4v4v[] • 23 points • 7 August, 2018 04:45 PM

| just dropped around \$500 on random DJ gear.

Where did he get the \$500? Your parents are enabling him. Those are the people you need to talk to.

Get them to stop. Stop paying his bills. Stop buying his food. Stop paying for his cell phone. Stop giving him free internet.

Tell them they **must** charge him rent if he is not in school.

Tell them they are not being very good parents. Tell them they are hurting him and not forcing him to grow up.

HurricaneHugues • 4 points • 8 August, 2018 05:47 AM

I hope u never have kids. What if he actualy HASZ a hidden potential in DJing? You wan them to force him out of his hobby so he can become a drone like you? Let him TRY first. He needs the support for now. If he starts to get good, then you can push him to get a job so he can fund his dream. As of now he's not much a burden to anyone.

1z1z2x2x3c3c4v4v[] • 4 points • 8 August, 2018 11:15 AM

LOL. I do actually have 4 kids, and 2 grandkids. You must raise your kids to be independent and to survive on their own. Not to live in mommies basement as an adult. Once you are an adult, you are on your own.

I will fully admit that I kicked my 19 year old out when he decided not to go to school, not to work, slept all day, went out all night, and stopped paying us rent. He learned a great life lesson that summer... Slept on a friends couch until they realized he was a bum and not going to pay them either. He moved to another friend for a day, then slept in his car for a few more days.

Pretty quickly he realized that you must work and must pay someone the rent. (he almost lost his job at TacoBell since he looked like and smelled like shit from sleeping in his car and not showering for a few weeks... the manager was nice and let him come home here to shower)

| What if he actualy HASZ a hidden potential in DJing?

If he can get a good job with benefits doing that, then great. If not, reality will come crashing into his reality. The bills must be paid. Now.

| You wan them to force him out of his hobby so he can become a drone like you?

You know, I have heard that before. Yet I am a computer consultant who does very well for himself and his family. The wife doesn't work and the kids never wanted for much. In the end, as an adult, if you pay your own bills, I don't care what you do.

| If he starts to get good, then you can push him to get a job so he can fund his dream.

So... you imply the parents should just fund his lifestyle now, and maybe just give him some loans and free money? The guy is 20 years old. He is an adult. He can pursue his dreams... after his rent is paid..

As of now he's not much a burden to anyone.

Of course he is. He is a burden and a liability to his parents, who must fund his lifestyle. He is worse than a pet dog. There is no free ride in this world.

Last note. The economy in the USA is great right now. Absolutely great. There are help-wanted signs everywhere. If you can't get a job in this economy, you are just a bum and deserve what ever you get coming to you.

[deleted] • 1 point • 13 August, 2018 05:59 PM

DJing can be lucrative. So if he's interested in music I would support it.

It's just not socially accepted as a wise path, but my buddy makes \$1200 on weekends and \$400 per week working 8 hours....

That's \$6,400 per month my dudes.

nabosch[S] • 1 point • 7 August, 2018 08:56 PM

He has some money saved up but I know he's burning through it fast.

I agree on my parents part.

Epictetus2017 • 30 points • 7 August, 2018 02:39 PM*

Be an active role model that he will aspire to follow your example. Often men at this age (For they are men now, whether they like it or not) have little personal direction, and can feel trapped and intimidated by the accomplishments of those they perceive as their betters.

I'd suggest just offering him opportunities as you are able, but ultimately it's his responsibility to accept those opportunities. If he is an athletic background try to get him in a club, or working at a gym. This will spur him and get him out of the basement.

One good piece of advice I received on this matter is the difference between positive reinforcement, and negative reinforcement. To encourage someone, you have to bring out their natural attributes and appeal to their desire to improve or shame them into improvement. (Deserved compliments, general pleasantness, versus expressing dissatisfaction, appealing to their better nature.) You know your brother enough to know if he responds better to negative or positive reinforcement.

A good example of negative reinforcement might be that scene from Glengarry Ross 'Coffee is for Closers'. An example of positive reinforcement from a movie might be most of the scenes from 'The Blindside.'

[deleted] • 7 points • 7 August, 2018 06:12 PM

I disagree with people saying you can't do anything until he comes to you for help. You can help him out. But you need to straddle the fine line between being supportive and telling him the harsh truth/patronizing him.

Like others have said, lead by example and be there for him but obviously don't enable his behavior.

Try to get him involved and out of the house. Ask if he wants to come lift, go for a run, hike, etc. Anything active will do.

I'm not sure how your relationship is with your brother but if it's a good one then talk to him. This is where the line straddling comes in. You have to reaffirm that you're coming from a place of support and not disdain or patronization. Start with telling him you love and support him then just ask him what his plans/motivations are. Then see if you can steer him to at least getting a job, better yet going back to school and finishing his last 2 years.

If that doesn't work then sit down and talk to your parents and tell them you're worried about him. I know you said they enable him but sometimes parents are just so caught up with their own lives they're blind to the wellbeing of their kids. Maybe if you show how concerned you are during a serious talk they'll come to see how bad it actually is.

It sounds like your brother is a bit depressed. I've been there before. It's a tough cycle that's hard to break out of. Good luck.

gekkone • 16 points • 7 August, 2018 03:56 PM

This sounds like me 2 years ago, just get rid of the weed. What did he aspire to be when he was a kid?

nabosch[S] • 8 points • 7 August, 2018 03:59 PM

He was a great soccer player, keeper position. He got burnt out and felt like he was missing "being a college kid" while playing. He quit that.

It was his identity from like grade school on, he was the soccer keeper. Kinda just gave it up out of nowhere.

gekkone • 9 points • 7 August, 2018 06:10 PM

You need to help him ditch the weed and get back into fitness. Basketball used to be my identity, then got depressed and started smoking weed. I got lazy and went to get a college degree I hated, I quit that after 2 years.

What helped me was getting rid of the weed and going to the gym again.

Now I'm about to start my first semester in our countrys top business school. Once you get him on the right track and help him realise his actions will destroy his will, he will sore like a motherfucker.

You're a good brother.

iLLprincipLeS 1 points 7 August, 2018 07:39 PM [recovered]

went to get a college degree I hated, I quit that after 2 years.

You hated the degree or the experience at the college?

gekkone • 1 point • 7 August, 2018 08:37 PM

The degree. I was stoned when I picked it, when I started to sober up I thought fuck it and go to a business school I always had in mind since I was 16. The atmosphere at college was awesome.

nabosch[S] • 2 points • 7 August, 2018 08:53 PM

Thanks man, I think it happens a lot with athletes, especially ones that are better than most and have opportunities to play more than average. The sport becomes your identity and when you're done with it, you all of a sudden are lost.

AggressiveMarket • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 04:46 PM

Push him to start working out, maybe with you if you don't mind the company. It will at least give him a goal and improve his health physically.

sehns • 5 points • 7 August, 2018 04:08 PM

You can gently push someone in the right direction through subtle psychological manipulation and stubborn consistency. As others have said lead by example, and tell him stories of your older buddies who went down the

same path he is and how they ended up and how depressed they are and wish things were different.

I know quite a few people who thought they could 'become a DJ' and ended up just wasting years of their life getting stoned making sounds from their computer. Rather than hang shit on him for that you could teach him lifes about balance - if he's going to sit at a computer all day learning to be a DJ he should also lift. And besides, when he's on stage he'll want to have some muscles to make the girls more interested right? Then start taking him to the gym with you.

End of the day though, you can't really change people more than like 5% and that's if they are open to it. It has to come from within himself.

nabosch[S] • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 04:39 PM

That's a good point, I'll invite him to the gym with me this week.

Shredderick420 • 4 points • 7 August, 2018 04:29 PM

I would get the point of starting producing electronic music but just DJ is kind of generic stuff.

nabosch[S] • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 04:40 PM

That's what he's trying to do, wants to make weird EDM beats. He's never done it and knows no music theory and has just decided to "dedicate his life to it."

Thinks he can make a living doing it.

Aggressive_Beta • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 06:27 PM

Dunning Kruger Effect

HurricaneHugues • 2 points • 8 August, 2018 05:50 AM

Let the young man try. If he doesnt progress, THEN u can talk to him about taking things a little more seriously. Do NOT take out the spark he has. He doesnt have to be like you or be you. All you can do is support him, send him tracks u think that are dope and that might inspire him, send him links to interviews of DJs etc. Show your brother that not only do you care, but you also support him.

Sometimes people are sitting on incredible talent, but their environment shuts them down. If just ONE person believes in him...

Shredderick420 • 1 point • 8 August, 2018 09:57 AM

I've been producing electronic music for a bit over 5 years and went to music school when I was younger. Doing it to get big and famous is the wrong mindset. Basically you can learn it on the side too while working. The thing is to get the craft to the industry standard level you need to know music theory, sound design, mixing mastering. This is so much information. The 10000 hour rule applies to it very well. If i were you I would encourage him, help him find a piano/88 key midi to practice piano and music theory for starting. You never know and your brother too before trying, maybe he is musically very talented. I know a guy from my country who had no musical background and worked his ass off production wise and 5 years later his track was being played on radio the whole summer

If I would be your brother I would find a job, gather money. Invest in a good audio interface, a mic, a good midi keyboard and ofc good headphones(fck monitors for now, u need a good room to work with them). There are dozens of tuition and tutorial sites to learn from too.

I really do get your point though, let him take it as a hobby and if you dont see him putting hours in, then its not working. Music is a hobby, a passion. Viewing making music solely for landing EDC main act is

not the right mindset. Best of luck. If your brother has questions about production, I can give some tips and advice.

deville05 • 4 points • 7 August, 2018 05:24 PM

He is depressed because he is comfortable and lacks a purpose. He needs something to happen to him or needs to be thrust into a situation beyond himself and he will most likely overcome it as long as it is not overwhelmingly overwhelming.

He may also just need a sensei or a mentor

NightwingTRP • 5 points • 7 August, 2018 07:50 PM

Try taking an interest in what he's doing. Talk to him about it. Sorting yourself out requires you to come to the conclusion that you're a loser yourself. If you tell him that it'll be dismissed. He needs to realise that he's a loser. (Plus you need to be sure... he might turn out to be a brilliant mixer and be going on to have a career as the next Pete Tong.)

You'll want to ask questions like "what have you been doing" "What have you worked on" "what have you completed" "what do you plan to do" in regards to his work. Working independently can be tough motivating yourself sometimes. So don't expect perfection of him doing exactly 40 hours per week, clocking in 9-5 etc. But do expect him to work a fair bit on what he's doing. Try to be supportive and encouraging and see where things go.

When he makes the bad sounds like "haven't done anything this week" then you probably use a bit of amused mastery to remind him "careers don't start themselves. Those big names toiled as nobodies for years mate, working daily on new stuff until something broke through for them. Every day you're not working decreases your percentage chance you can make a success of this. You should keep that in mind when you take a day off." Keep it light and positive.

That way if it does go south, he won't feel alienated by you for his choice. That way you'll be there to give him a hug and let him know his life isn't over and that he'll need to get back to work in getting himself a different career. "Humans don't naturally win at everything. We fail sometimes. But we can learn about ourselves from that failure and get better."

If you really want to help him then keep asking him the questions he's not asking himself. If he falls he'll need a strong man to give an example and help to pick him back up not kick him while he's down like a woman would. The entire essence of TRP is here. Sometimes alphas need to be kind to betas and give them the help and support they need to become alphas. In this case, as your brother, kicking him while he's in such a dangerous place is not the best call. Kicking a guy who knows the truth but isn't doing it is one thing... kicking a guy who is unaware of what he's doing wrong will only drive him away. He's going to have to make these mistakes on his own. The painful bit for you will be watching.

nabosch[S] • 1 point • 7 August, 2018 08:50 PM

Thanks, this is great.

randarrow • 5 points • 7 August, 2018 02:41 PM

You can't fix other people. But, you can love and support him without enabling him. Just figure out how.

yumyumgivemesome[] • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 05:19 PM

Avoid criticism. Look for opportunities to get him outside of the house to chat about life and his passions. Tactfully ask him about concrete plans, but don't make it sound judgmental. Something like "Man I know

nothing about what it takes to become a DJ, what do you think is the hardest part?" or "It seems like such a popular career, where do you think most other DJs get stuck and never really develop into quality producers?" or "Which artists are your main inspiration? Do you want to make the same type of music or a combination of them?" or "I had so much trouble starting out with _____ activity a couple years ago, what is the most difficult starting point for a DJ career?"

By seeking details, it forces him to think about everything more specifically. But the nature of your conversation can be open and light while helping him discover whether he is truly passionate about the approach.

MattyAnon • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 05:27 PM

Read up about addiction, dopamine, habits and willpower. Most of his dependency and situation is explained in there, but what isn't usually explained is how much this will slaughter his self esteem.

Lead by example, and try and persuade your parents to encourage him to actually do something.

I_am_an_intern • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 05:39 PM

Help him to explore the career path of a professional DJ. I'm a strong believer in money follows passion.

[deleted] • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 10:37 PM

Whats wrong with what hes doing? He saved up and is working hard to achieve his dream and smokes while doing it. I dont know of many famous or even half decent djs or musicians that dont smoke weed. As long as hes living off his own money, i dont think theres too much of a problem.

seedster5 • 2 points • 7 August, 2018 04:40 PM

You can't until he comes to you. Nothing you can do for other people. Whatever help you give him he will take for granted and will never learn how to fish.

blister333 • 2 points • 7 August, 2018 07:15 PM

Sounds like me several years ago. Despite all the various advice given here, sometimes it just takes people longer to figure out what they want in life then others. Hell, I know people who followed the traditional model of life and they don't really know where to go once they hit a certain point

Peter_B_Long • 2 points • 7 August, 2018 11:07 PM

It sounds like he's rationalized to himself that what he's doing is ok. Shit happens man. Sometimes men just fall into a hole and we have to hit rock bottom before we realize how low we've gone. If he's not actively looking for help or guidance, there isn't much you can do. Just check in on him, let him know you care, and just accept it.

[deleted] • 3 points • 7 August, 2018 05:33 PM

Sounds like he's a 20 year old finding his way. I say let him find out the hard way if he's not going to be a DJ.

Giving your all to something is a good thing. If he does it for three years, his life will not be over. Maybe he'll make it, maybe he'll realize it was all a big waste of time, and that time lost willll kick his ass into gear.

Just let the man live

[deleted] • 1 point • 7 August, 2018 09:45 PM

Honestly there's nothing morally wrong with smoking weed. The fact he dropped out of college may be a good thing since he doesn't know what he wants to do in life- why rack up more debt if you don't have a plan? I regret going to college for political science and wish I went for computer science instead.

As for the DJ thing- that's just a stupid ID tbh but this is likely a phase and/or a hobby that has really taken root.

UEMcGill • 1 point • 7 August, 2018 10:22 PM

I'm not a religious person but the phrase "pearls before swine" always comes to mind when Captain-sav-a-bro comes and asks how he can save some poor sack who's about to waste his life or fuck up some how.

Its meaning upfront is simple, why would you waste valuable advice and resources on someone who doesn't even appreciate it.

The second part is like crabs in a bucket they may drag you down with them.

What going on in your life you need to save him? Look inwards and fix your own faults first.

Adrenation • 1 point • 7 August, 2018 10:24 PM

Does he want to improve tho? You can take a horse to the water but you can't make it drink.

wheresMYsteakAt • 1 point • 8 August, 2018 12:47 AM

Help him out, go to raves to study the scene, help him plan basement bangers with people paying to get in. Like, share and subscribe to his SoundCloud channel.

suitcasecity • 1 point • 8 August, 2018 03:10 AM

Is he good? Is he self motivated and promoting himself? Depending on where you live, dj'ing could be a decent path.

Andgelyo • 1 point • 8 August, 2018 03:34 AM

Your brother is not turning into a loser, **he is a loser**. Unfortunately, change is internal. He has to have a drive to change. The most you can do is talk to your parents, and stop enabling his lazy behavior. Good luck dude!

Ruueee 1 points 1 September, 2018 04:34 AM [recovered]

Wtf bro, you don't fucking know that kid. Can't think of anything more pathetic than calling people losers online

Andgelyo • 1 point • 1 September, 2018 04:37 AM

I can call anyone I want a loser, shit, and anyone can call me a virgin and poor bastard if they want to.
It's the internet, grow some balls

HurricaneHugues • 1 point • 8 August, 2018 05:44 AM

You dont need to play any instrument to be a DJ. Thats a dumb statement. Djing is about recognizing sounds that go well togeher and mixing shit. A lot of DJs are self taught, and a lot of DJs didnt play any instrument until AFTER they started fucking around with DJ tech.

Dont tell him to give up his DJ idea. Instead, you should invest time and money in him if u can. Take some time to sit with him and have talk to you about this new hobby of his, have him play u some of his work, give him feedback, and most of all tell him to keep grinding. Have him do chores/errands for u if he asks u for money for equipment. You could be looking at the next to blow after 9th Wonderor or Eric Prydz. Support his dream and believe in it as hard as u can.

[deleted] • 1 point • 8 August, 2018 06:23 AM

It's his life. If weed kills him, more inheritance for you. Why do you care? I'd coax him along and encourage him to keep smoking weed.

[deleted] • 0 points • 7 August, 2018 04:00 PM

Introduce him to nofap

CalvinRichland • 0 points • 7 August, 2018 04:03 PM

Convince your parents to kick him out