Develop Healthy Hobbies as a Family



We may feel like we spend lots of time with our family members. But squeezing in a few hugs and meals on our way to and from work, school, and soccer practice isn't really the same as scheduling meaningful family time. Developing family hobbies can help you all spend more purposeful time together, improve your family's well-being, and find new ways to connect.

Mix and match a few of these ideas to find some go-to family hobbies, rain or shine.

The Great Outdoors

Hiking and Nature Walks

Explore local parks and nature reserves. Plan a family camping trip. Or just take weekly walks together through your neighborhood. Walking and hiking can also be the first steps towards other activities, like eating at local restaurants or heading to the park for a game of touch football.

Biking

Whether it’s a leisurely neighborhood ride or a mountain biking adventure, cycling is a fun and healthy family activity. Like walking, you can organize family trips around biking and take some rewarding pit stops along your route.

Gardening

Put that overgrown corner of your yard to good use. Few things make little kids happier than a shovel and a patch of dirt. Older kids, parents, and grandparents can plot out what you’re going to grow and work out a schedule to share watering and pruning duties. Put a big family meal on the calendar for harvest time and share your leftover bounty with friends, family, and neighbors.

Getting Creative

Arts and Crafts

Set up a dedicated space in your home where everyone can let their creativity run wild. Whether it’s painting, drawing, or crafting, encourage each family member to explore and have fun. A great way to start is to find a drawing book or website that offers “daily doodles” and buy everyone a sketchpad.

Photography

It’s easy enough to pass around a cell phone or an old digital camera to preserve family memories. But a couple YouTube lessons could teach you and your older kids the basics of composition, lighting, editing, and publishing to a digital family photo album.

Music

If you have some old instruments lying around the house, cue up YouTube and learn the basic chords of a favorite song. Parents and grandparents who do know how to play can show youngsters the basics, which could lead to a new passion.

Fun Around the Kitchen Table

Cooking and Baking

Turning meal prep into a family activity can limit trips to the drive-thru, teach everyone some new skills, and encourage healthier eating habits. Pick one or two nights every week when a family member can break up your regular meal rotation with something new. Take a weekly trip to the farmer’s market and follow fresh inspiration where it leads.

Games and Puzzles

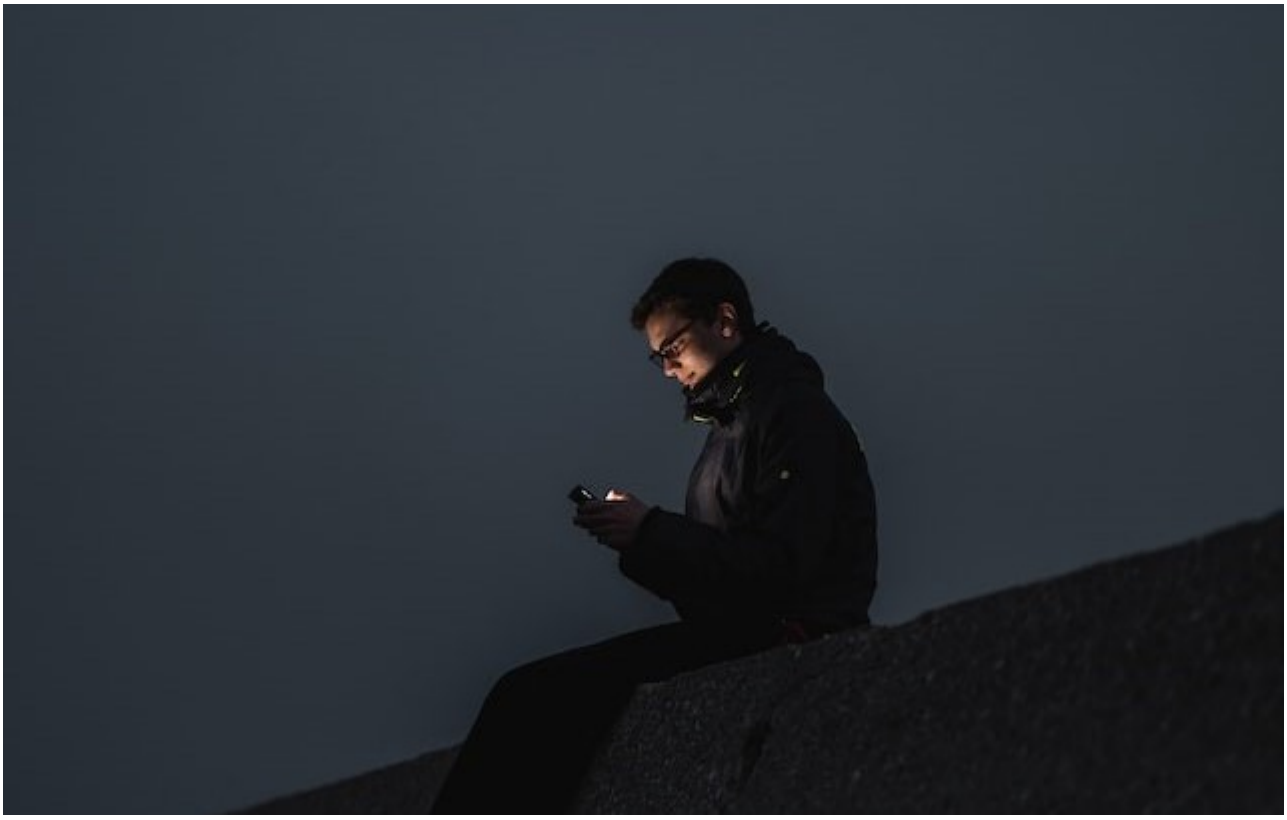
When was the last time you gathered around a classic like Monopoly or Scrabble? Puzzles and Lego sets can also be great fun for families who need to turn down the competitive heat. Aspiring “dungeon masters” can run family-friendly role-playing games that turn game night into an epic story and encourage family members of all ages to find creative ways around that sleeping dragon.

Reading and Writing

A lifelong love of reading is often inherited from parents and grandparents. Take family trips to the library or local bookshop. Share news stories relevant to everyone’s interests. Start a family book club or organize your own reading around what your kids have been assigned at school.

Sometimes it’s too easy to hustle and bustle right past things that matter the most. Our planning tools can give you a new perspective that will help you spend both your time and your money in ways that will more align with your values.

Does FOMO Hold You Back?



What are you missing out on?

Probably not as much as you think.

But in our hyper-connected world with its 24/7 news cycle, the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has made many people focus more on what they're not doing than on what they are doing. That can lead to some bad decisions and missed opportunities to improve your quality of life.

Here are three ways that FOMO can distort your perspective on what's really important.

Losing perspective on your portfolio.

The vast majority of investors who build wealth through the markets do so by making consistent contributions to a

balanced, diversified financial plan. That might not sound as exciting as jumping on the latest social media investment craze. But over time, this experienced strategy is a lot more feasible than trying to take shortcuts.

For example, the "meme stock" craze boosted shares of GameStop and AMC in 2021. But those companies came crashing back down to earth in 2022. And while all securities experience ups and downs, many folks suffering from FOMO "bought high" right before the meme stock bubble burst or overinvested in these trendy stocks instead of diversifying into traditional brokerage or retirement accounts.

Will some of these FOMO investments rebound and turn profits over time? Maybe. But if you treat investing like a slot machine, you may "miss out" on the ability to build a strong foundation for long-term financial growth.

Losing perspective on your time.

According to Statista, in 2022 the average person spent 147 minutes per day on social media. Some of that time educates us about what's happening in the world, connects us with friends and family, and brings an extra smile to our coffee breaks.

But a big chunk of those 147 minutes is spent seeing other people do things that we're not doing. Not surprisingly, more and more scientific studies are finding a link between high social media use and FOMO. And when we're looking at exquisite snapshots of meals we can't afford or tropical vacations we can't find time for, that can lead to feelings of low self-worth and even depression.

Rather than worry about what everyone else is doing, it might be worth reexamining your own daily schedule to make sure you're spending time on the things that are most important to you. If you've always hated running, training for a half-marathon just because your friends are will only make you – and them – miserable. Instead, consider unplugging at the

beginning or end of every day to do something you love, whether that’s half an hour of yoga or reading an extra bedtime story to your children. Using your time your way will be much more fulfilling than eating food you don’t really like, planning for a trip you don’t really feel like taking, or buying a boat you’ll never drive enough.

Losing perspective on Life’s milestones.

As we age, FOMO can take on some complicated new dimensions. Seeing colleagues promoted ahead of you might make you worry that you’ve peaked in your career. Market fluctuations and global economic challenges might make you worry about the security of your retirement. Packing your kids off to college might make you worry about missing out on their lives.

Acknowledging, planning for, and celebrating all the important moments in your life is an essential part of our Planning Process. Looking back on the milestones you’ve crossed should fill you with pride and gratitude. Hopefully, those feelings can help you stay focused on the personal goals that you’ve plotted in the future and the financial plan we’re working on together that will help you to pursue them.

This article was prepared for Aaron Larson’s use.