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# RELIVE THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE

Remember the good ol' days? You were healthy, happy and fit. *Oxygen* shows you how to stay that way.

BY JENNIFER ACOSTA SCOTT | PHOTOGRAPHY STEWART VOLLAND

**Y**ou may be far removed from the hallowed halls of higher learning, but that doesn't mean you have to give up all your college ways. In fact, some behaviors you adopted as a student can be carried over to your "grown-up" years for a healthier and more fulfilling lifestyle.

## a few habits to keep

Read on for our list of best campus customs and reasons you shouldn't kiss them goodbye at graduation.

### GROUP SPORTS

If you loved those intramural soccer matches, take heart – playing on a team is a great way to enhance your exercise routine. Sports such as basketball, volleyball and flag football get your blood pumping and contribute to an overall feeling of wellness, says Eric



Co-ed soccer:

fresh air, exercise...

cute guys in shorts.

Lichter, cofounder of Speed Strength, an athlete training center in Cleveland, Ohio. Being part of a larger group may also make you more likely to challenge yourself – it's harder to give up when your teammates are counting on you for the game-winning home run. Plus, these activities can be a lot more fun than traditional workouts, which makes them easier to stick with than tedious treadmill sessions. "They're a lot more fun when you're with other people," Lichter says. "It's a good thing to enjoy exercise." For a list of local sports teams, call the parks and recreation department, or visit [www.eteamz.com](http://www.eteamz.com).

### PIZZA MUNCHING

Those weekend pizzeria runs don't have to be a thing of the past. While pizza can be high in calories and saturated fat, a few smart choices can turn it into a healthy and filling meal.

Flavorful vegetables such as tomatoes and bell peppers are low in fat and high in nutrition, making them the perfect pizza toppers, says Katherine Tallmadge, a dietician and author of *Diet Simple: 192 Mental Tricks, Substitutions, Habits and Inspirations* (LifeLine, 2004). If you must have meat, pass on the pepperoni and choose grilled chicken or turkey instead.

Don't forget to do a crust check – deep-dish doughs wreak havoc on your diet. “Any kind of thick crust is going to be fattening,” Tallmadge says. Good thin-crust choices include Domino's Veggie Feast, (168 calories and 9.5 grams of fat per slice), and Pizza Hut's Veggie Lover's Pizza (180 calories and seven grams of fat per slice).

### PHILANTHROPY

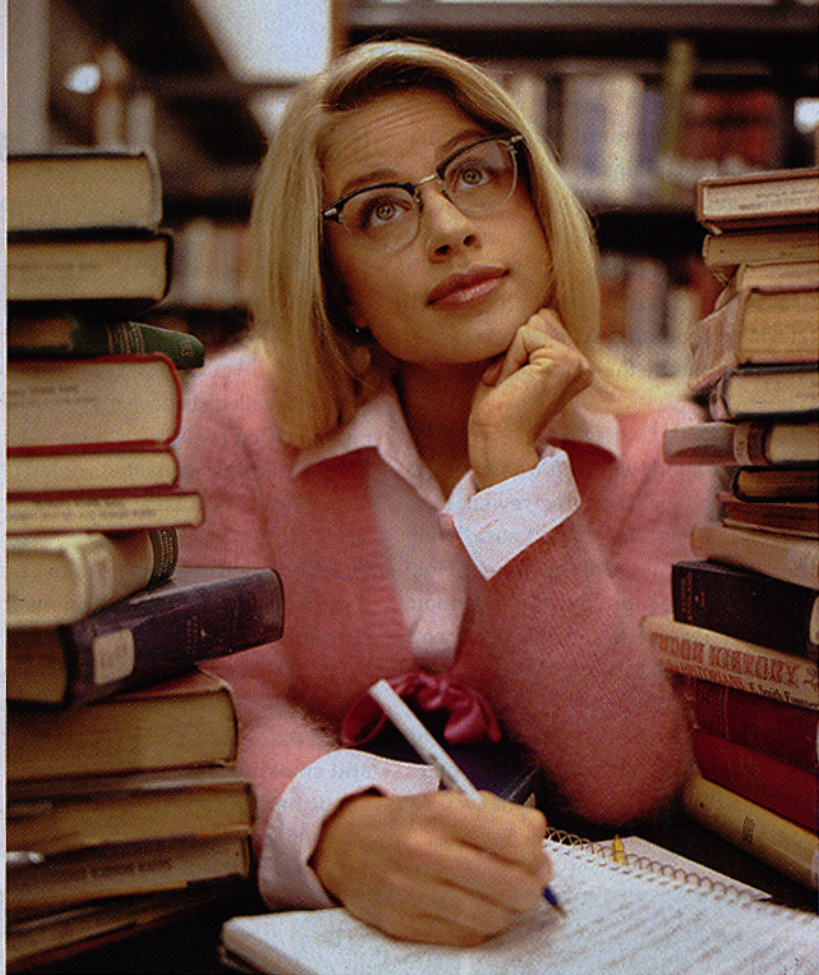
Remember how good you felt after a day of volunteering with your club or sorority? It wasn't all in your head. Doing good deeds, whether it's serving in the local soup kitchen or donating some cash to your favorite charity, can have a profound psychological impact, according to Dr. Daniel Pearson III, chair of the psychiatry department at Methodist Health Center in Dallas.

“There is often a sense of accomplishment and a sense of giving oneself to a higher end,” Pearson says. Virtuous acts also tend to make you feel empowered and in control of your life, since your work is making a positive impact on someone else.

Not sure where to begin? Check out [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org), where you can search for volunteer opportunities in your community.

### LEARNING

You may not be taking classes anymore, but it's crucial to keep flexing those mental muscles. Many experts believe that keeping your mind active actually decreases your risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. “Intellectual stimulation is thought to increase the number of connections or synapses in the brain,” says Dr. William Pendlebury, a professor of pathology and neurology at the University of Vermont in Burlington. “One can actually increase density of interconnection among the neurons of the brain, and in that way create a more robust



## Between classes: the best time at school. ←



