

Three things you regret most

[Sociology](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Second, when I was in college, my mother once asked me to clean up my cupboards and bookshelves and I would delay the task out of my laziness. After some days, when I finally decided to obey, I emptied my cupboards only to find out that my favorite T-shirt, which I had bought with my own pocket money for the farewell party, had been eaten up by insects! How I wished I had listened to my mom.

Third, on a serious note, my mother stopped me from being too submissive to my fiancé, but I did not listen to her. I would listen to my fiancé's crappy things he talked about my parents but could not do anything because I was too much involved. He took advantage and defeated me psychologically. After months, I found out that a person does not get respect from anybody if he does not respect himself.

Counterfactual Thinking

By definition, "counterfactuals are mental representations of alternatives to the past and produce consequences that are both beneficial and aversive to the individual" (Roese, 1997, p. 133). The three events I mentioned relate to upward counterfactual thinking. I could have said no to my friend who asked me for a combined study and that would have led to my staying at home and studying properly for a high grade. Here, I am thinking about a better consequence that would have resulted if I had altered my action and had come up with a better decision. Again, if I had listened to my mom about cleaning up my cupboard, I could have saved my favorite T-shirt. Once again, a better result could have achieved by altering my action. Also, if I had listened to my mom about not letting my fiancé say abusive things about my family, I could have succeeded in gaining a respectful place in my eyes and could have made him respect me. I could have saved the

relationship by pondering deeply upon the facts of life. The regrets I described are “feelings” while these counterfactuals are “thoughts” (Counterfactual Research News, 2003) that I bring to my mind in an attempt to find alternatives to the past.

All three events are examples of upward counterfactuals resulting from negative experiences and tell that better consequences could have been achieved by changing my responses. Though these counterfactuals are sorrowful for some time, in the long run, these have proved to be very beneficial for me as I have learned how to mutate my actions in the future if I happen to go through similar circumstances. This “what if...” or “if only...” has helped me in coming up with better conclusions that will guide me throughout my life. Thus, counterfactual thinking is not a waste of time; instead, it is very beneficial because it affects future decisions.