

Pinterest should be inspirational. That's certainly the intent behind the bulletin-board-centric website where users can share images of DIY crafts, fashion ideas and tips, and quotes reminding us to be strong and smart and brave. But funny enough, content shared to motivate can sometimes instead feel shaming.

I have around ten boards: a few for fashion, one for home decor, one of words to live by, and of course the ubiquitous wedding ideas board, aptly vaguely named "One day". But all of my boards should be named that, because other than a cosplay idea carried out this past Halloween, I've barely glanced at the ideas and instructions I've digitally hoarded. The indigo dyeing tutorial I want to use to make cloth napkins for the table wedged in the space between my kitchen and living room that I optimistically label the dining area? Yeah, I'll get to that sometime.

Some pins are intended more for reference than action, general ideas for shopping trips to the mall or the thrift store. But the rest sit waiting for that fictitious free time when I have nothing to do but sit down for some arts and crafts, when all the laundry's done and my apartment is spotless and no other errands need to be run. The ideas have been organized, and that's some small accomplishment.

But I want more. I want my apartment to look like the ones shown in the pictures I collect, bright white and bold colors and spotless counters with quirky forest green appliances. I want my nails to be bright red with perfectly placed white polka dots (my hands, of course, never once shaking while I dab those on.) I want coordinated outfits, maybe a few of them including upcycled clothes designed using the easy-to-follow instructions from a pin.

Instead, I collect ideas and continue to judge my apartment, my nails, my clothes, and my mind by the aspirational standards of Pinterest. No one's ever going to have a life that clutter-free and clean, and realizing that is depressing. The perfectionist in me likes to pretend that if I pin something to my quotes board, I'll remember to incorporate its guidance into my daily life instantly. But while there's something to be said for aspiring to an organized, inspired life, it's also perversely inspiring to realize that when you die, you won't be judged for the afterlife by how many of those DIY step-by-step guides you actually attempted.

So go ahead, keep pinning photos of shoes and tips on how to clean every inch of your apartment. It's the thought that counts. And who knows, maybe one day you'll actually make that recycled newspaper wreath for your front door, and you can proudly move that pin to a board labeled "Complete".