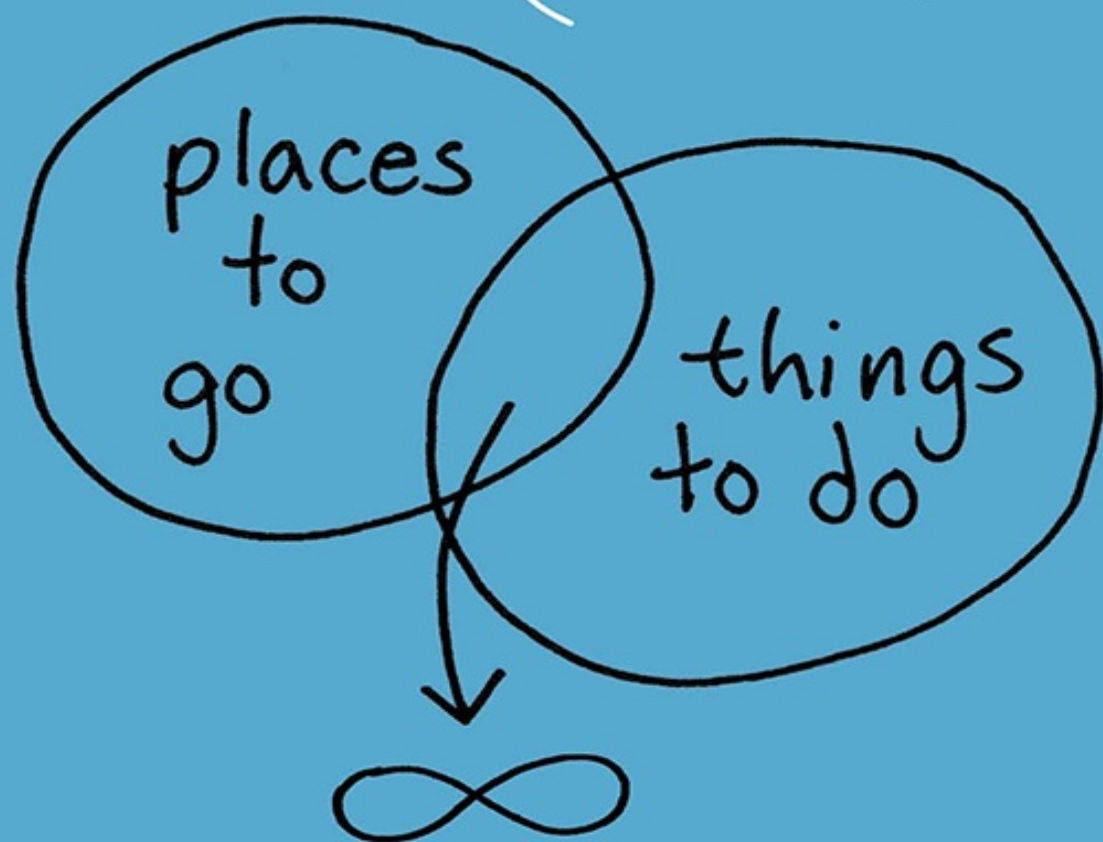


"Jessica Hagy diagrams the heart, maps the world, and charts a course for the soul. Plus she's funny as hell." —Dave Gray, author of *Gamestorming*

JESSICA HAGY

HOW TO BE INTERESTING

(In 10 Simple Steps)



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WORKMAN PUBLISHING • NEW YORK

for Tyrel
(the most interesting person I know)

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Introduction: Why Be Interesting

Why be
Interesting?

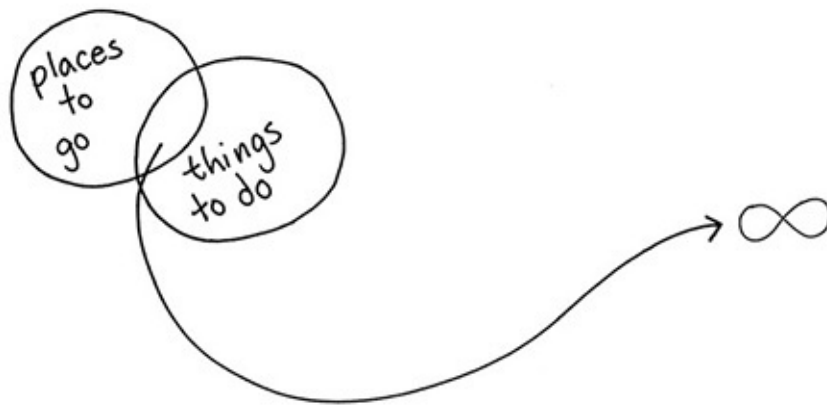
- To limit your regrets.
- So you can respect yourself.
- In order to banish boredom.
- So that you can leave a mark, not a blemish.
- And most of all, because you can.

So Let's begin

Step 1

Go Exploring.

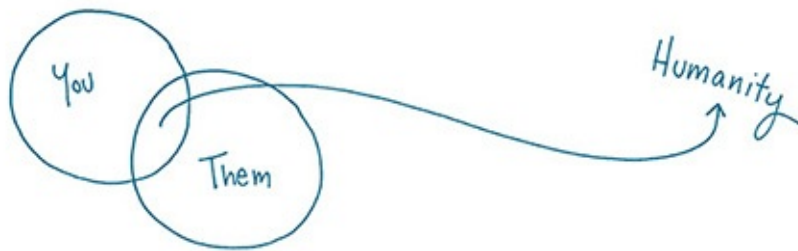
Explore ideas, places, and opinions. The inside of the echo chamber is where all the boring people hang out.



TALK to STRANGERS.

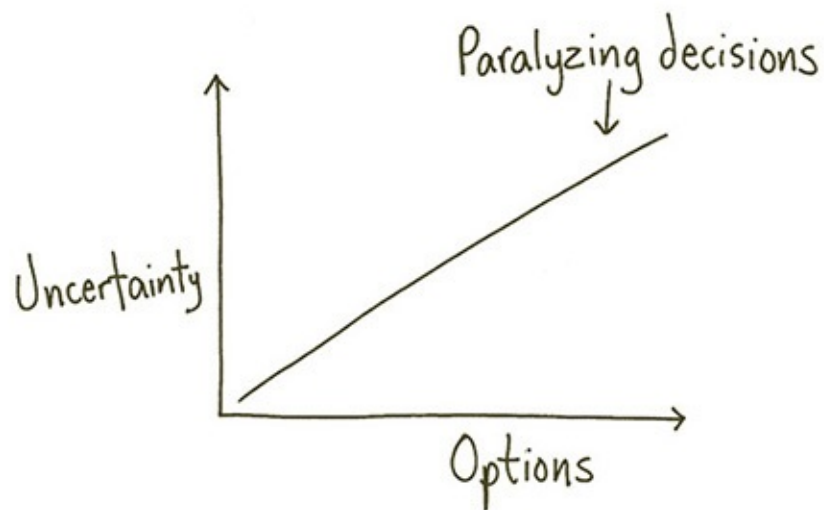
No one has seen exactly what you have. No one has been to all the places you've visited. No one feels just as you do.

Find out why.



Roll the Dice.

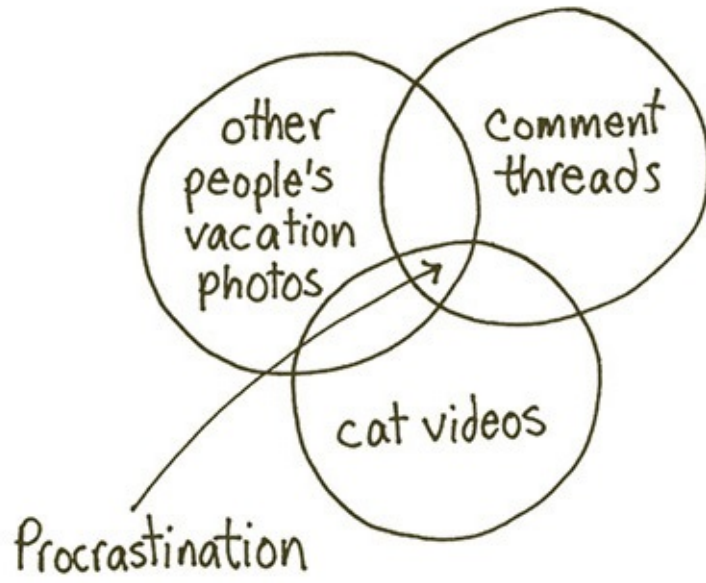
How far to go? Roll the dice. Seven blocks it is. Take the train? Roll evens and buy the ticket. Two dice can take you practically anywhere and save you lots of time on unimportant decisions. Keep them in your pocket. They'll help keep things interesting.





Without a map, you can find uncharted places. Be unreachable; you can talk to people on your journey. Miss a few updates from others, and discover yourself instead. Your gadgets are tethering you to a world you know very well.

Turn them off to explore new places.



Expose Yourself.

To embarrassment.

To ridicule. To risk.

To strange events & conditions.

To WILD IDEAS.

To things that make you cringe.

To strange vistas & new sounds.

Trust me.

It'll be fun.

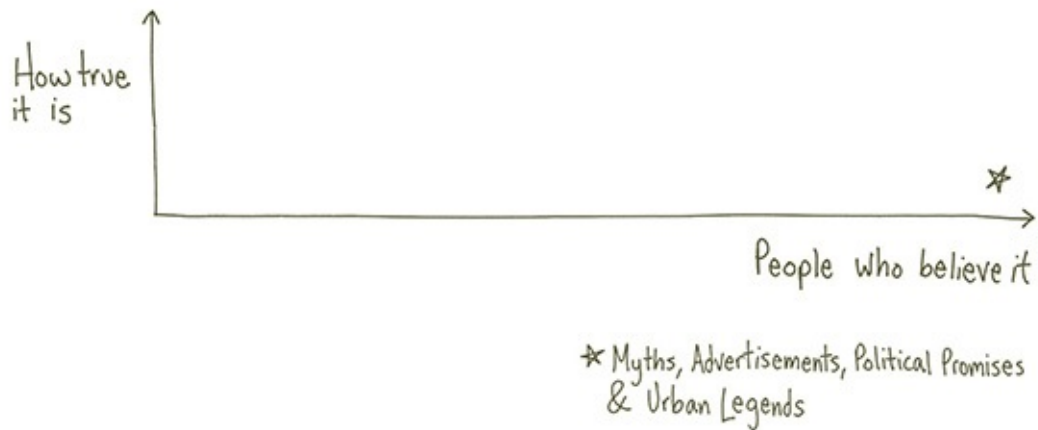


Your comfort
zone



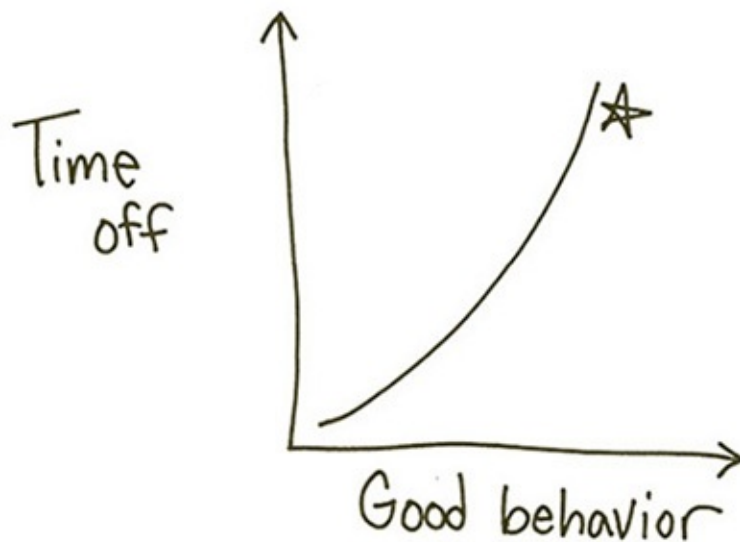
PLAY Devil's ADVOCATE.

Do the opposite of expected. Defend the guilty. Question the pure. See which facts are opinions and which opinions are facts. There are many sides to every story, and they all need to be told.



TAKE daily VACATIONS.

If only for a few minutes. Stroll around in the early hours, when the sunlight is a sliver. Walk to a different mailbox. Read magazines in a Laundromat. Shower in the dark. Sip hot chocolate in an alley. Reclaim your spare moments.



★ Parole & Vacations

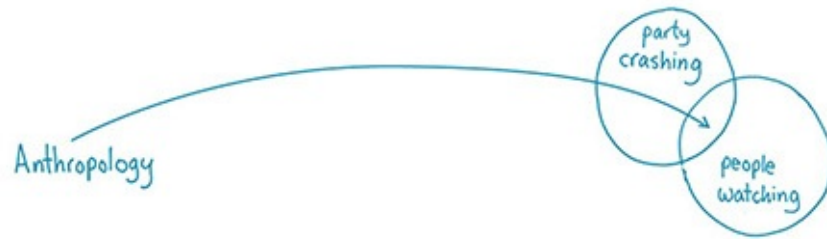
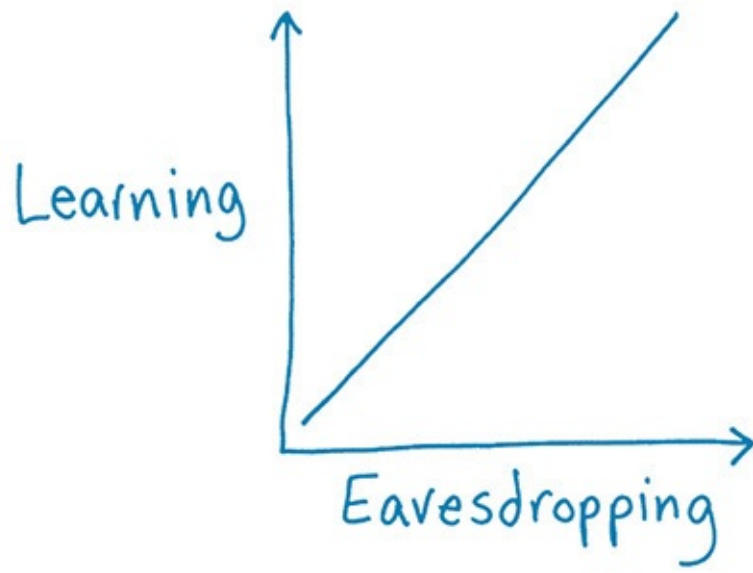
Become a SPY.

People watch. Eavesdrop.

Lurk. Loiter. Listen.

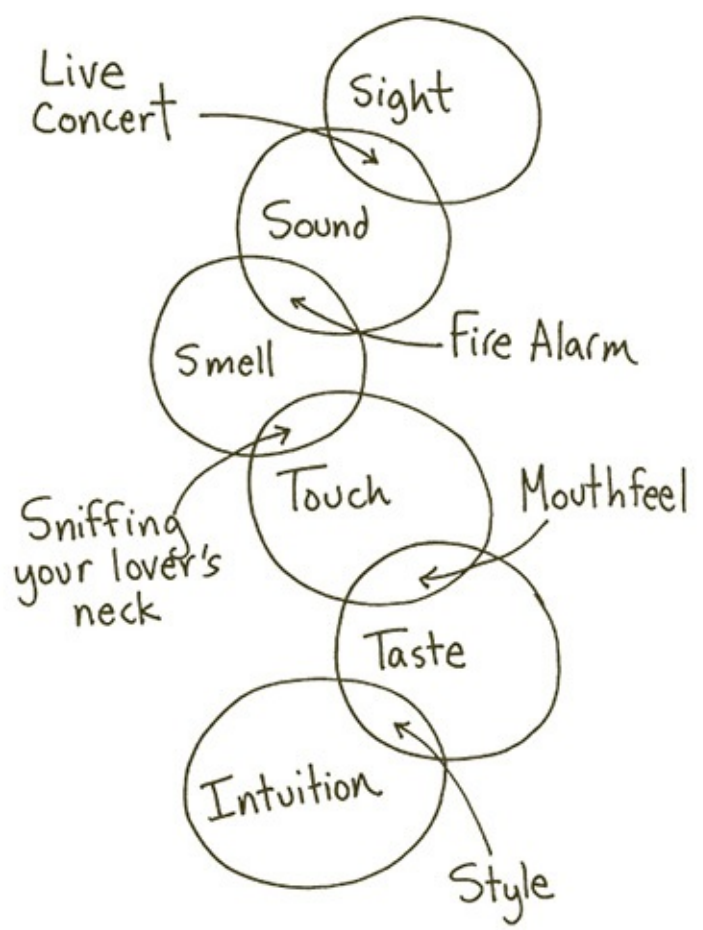
And you will learn the
secret codes of others.

Every day can be
an INTERESTING
recon mission.



SAMPLE flavors.

Open your mouth and say nothing, just observe. How does the early morning dew taste? What is the flavor profile of your commute? Does someone else's detergent remind you of childhood? Why do airports all smell the same?

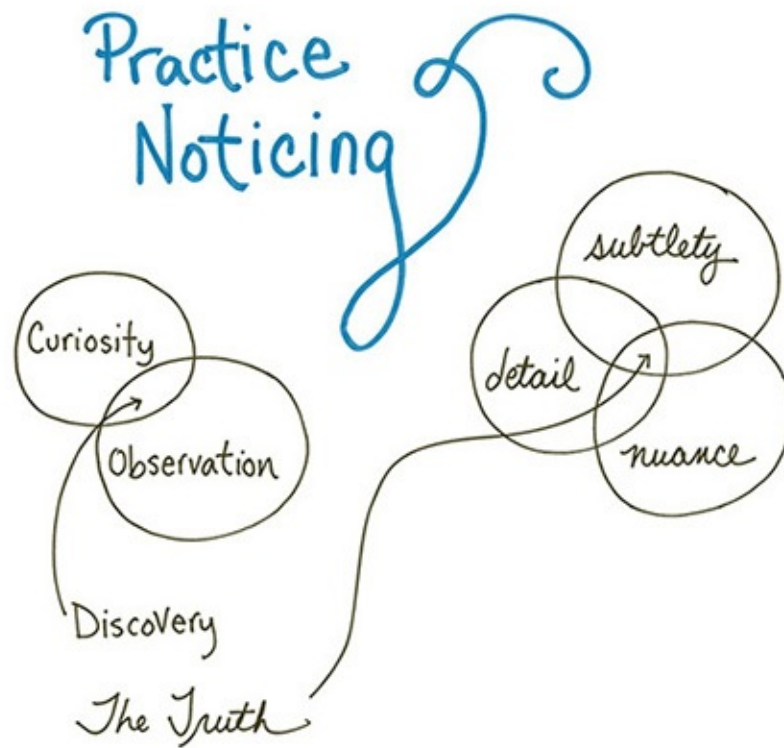


TWEAK the Schedule.

Wake up before the alarm. Steal moments between stoplights to compose poems. Sneak off to a moonlit spot when you'd otherwise be watching something on a glowing screen. Work at night and play in the daytime. Carve out hours for the dreams you've been putting off.

There's always time to explore. You get to decide when it is.





A faded sign. An eye patch. A broken lock. A photo torn in half. A flat tire. A small scar. A spilled cup. A pause when her lover's name is mentioned. Each detail tells a story. And every room holds a thousand details. Look for them.

Find the interesting stories.

Childlike NOT Childish

Look with open eyes.

Remember how amazing the world was
before you learned to be cynical.

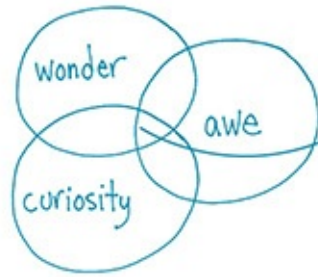
See the neat things.

The messy things.

The funny things.

Less CRANKINESS.

More MARVELING.



→ Eroded by many classrooms, cubicles & reality TV shows

Keep
ASKING
Why.

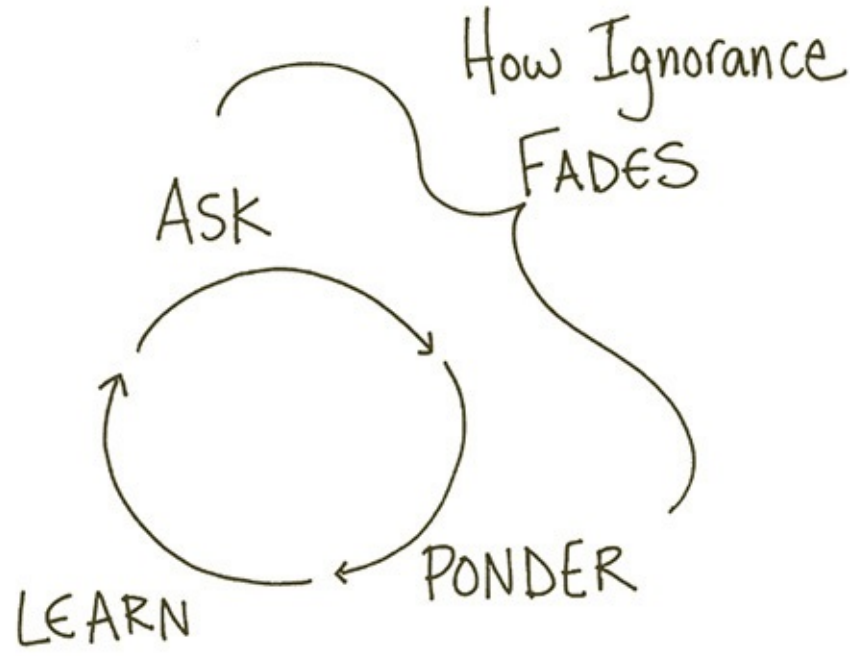
Parents hate it when kids do it.

Why? Because.

Why? Because.

Why? Because.

And on and on. But try it. You'll be surprised at how quickly a simple *Why?* can turn into a fascinating *Because*.

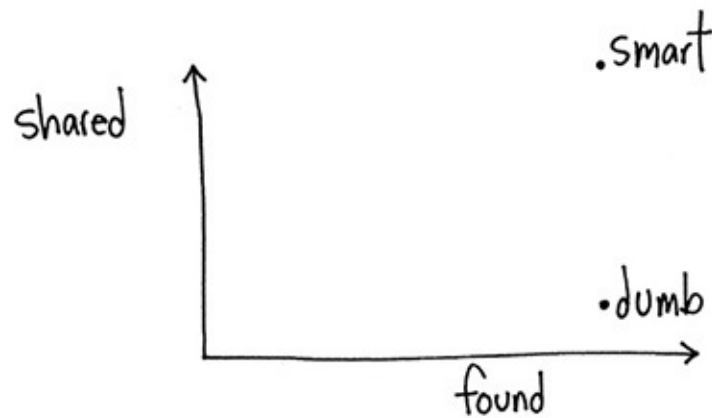


Step 2

Share what you Discover.

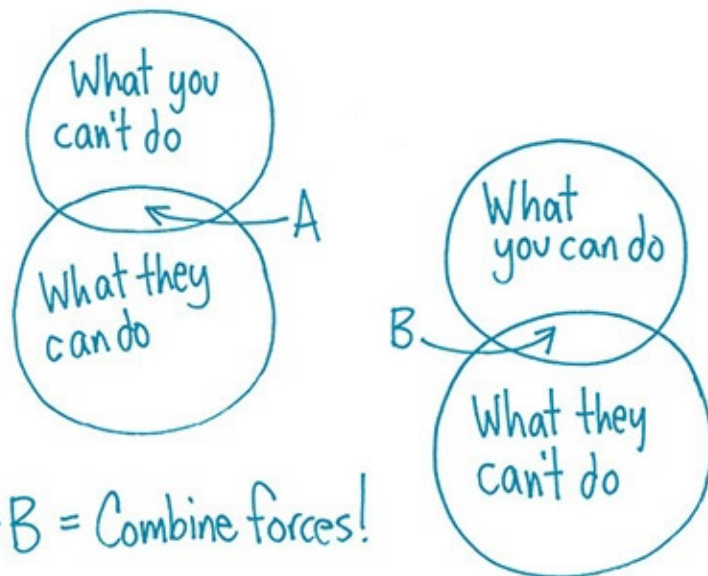
And be generous when you do. Not everybody went exploring
with you.

Let them live vicariously through your adventures.



CROSS Pollinate.

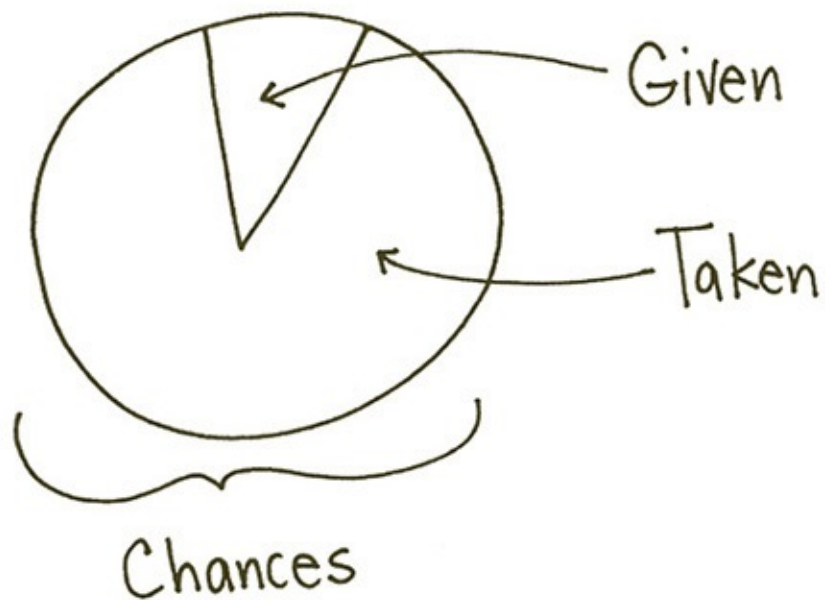
You've got a thing, a schtick, a specialty.
And so does everybody else.
Don't just associate with folks who do what you do.
Seek out those with different passions.
You'll be able to experience exponentially more.



INSTIGATE.

Do not wait until tomorrow.

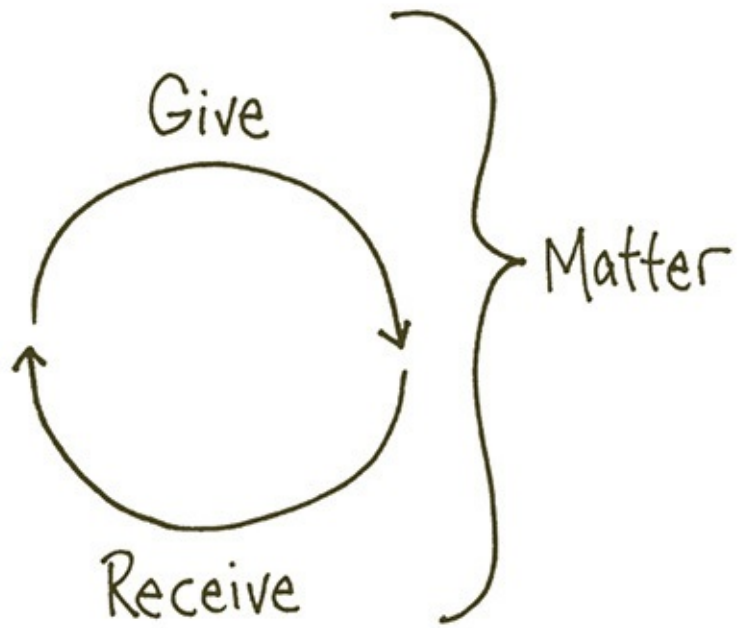
Say, do, or make it now. Go where you need to be. Do not wait to be invited places. Host your own parties. Do not sit by the phone. Pick it up. Spread the word. Press the buttons. Buy the tickets and enjoy the show.



Offer to Help.

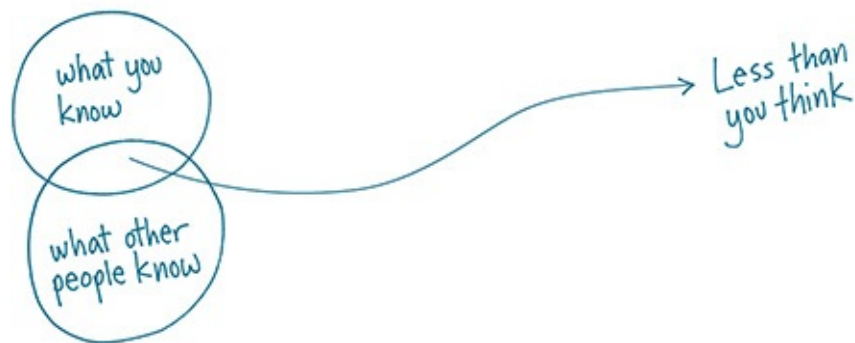
What you have is worth a lot. Seek out the people who need it. Know what you can do and tell people that you're willing to do it. They will treasure and remember you. Your time. Your talents. Your compliments. A seat at your table. A cup of sugar. A clean pair of socks.

The world needs whatever it is that you have.



State the OBVIOUS.

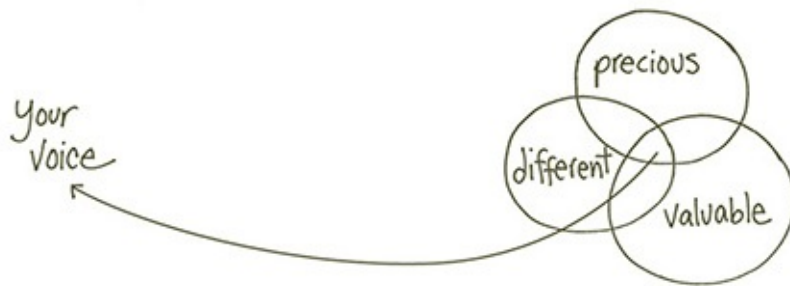
What's known to you is often a mystery to others. Your old fact is someone else's new lesson. Your simple task is someone else's impossible chore. Your mind is full of treasures that no one else has seen. Pass them on. An idea shared is not diminished: It's multiplied.



don't be Shy.

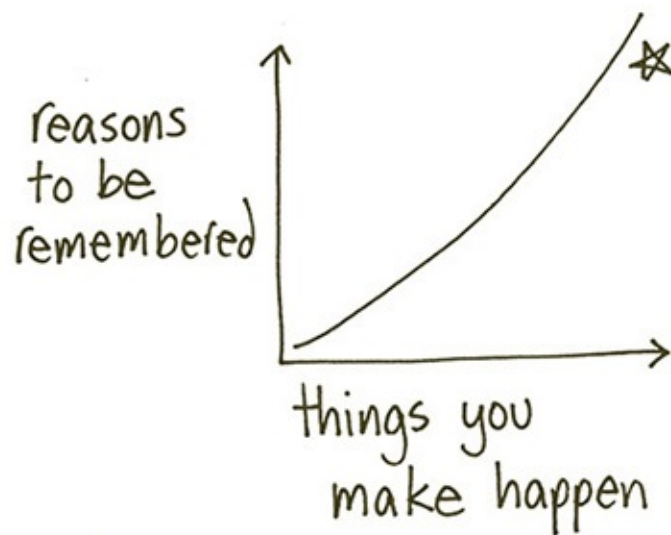
Wave hello instead of looking away. Leave your perspectives in places where others can find them. Put your work in the window, not the basement.

Conversations begin with small steps toward each other.



INVITE MORE
THAN YOU
RSVP

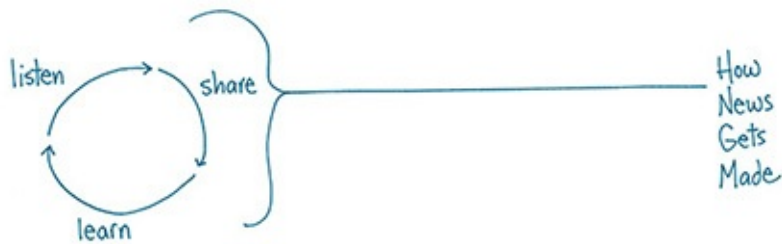
Bring others into your world. Let them play where you hang out. Don't wait for invitations when you can host. You can get something started as long as there is at least one person you can invite.



★ Drama, Comedy,
Tragedy & Parties

Be a link not an endpoint.

Don't just tell. Don't just listen. Make introductions. Set up strangers. Pass on what you know. This is how ideas snowball into events. You can be the fulcrum upon which an entire community turns.

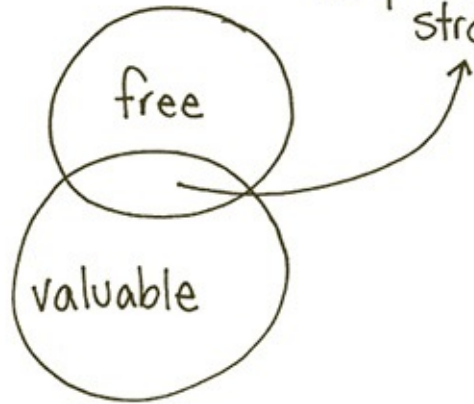
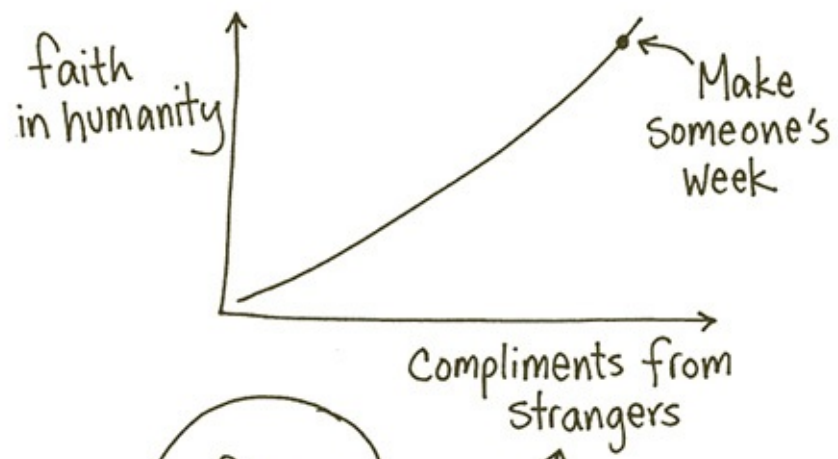


COMPLIMENT

Liberally.

Kind words are quite precious and cost nothing; it's surprising that they're so rare. Laud what you enjoy. Praise the people who excel in novel ways. Do it publicly and often.

Everyone needs more encouragement.



Expand the Group.

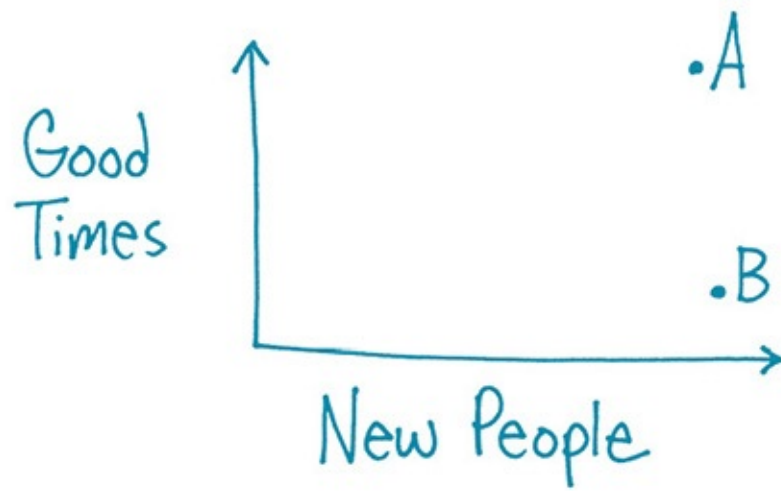
Never take in the welcome mat.

Keep the door open.

Make room for surprise
guests—you never know who
could show up.

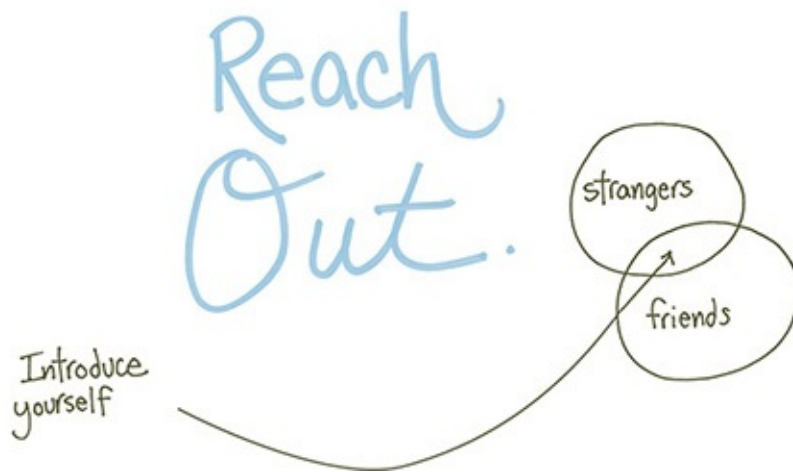
They might be wonderful.

They might be
less than wonderful.
Hopefully, they'll be interesting.



A = The Group

B = The Morgue

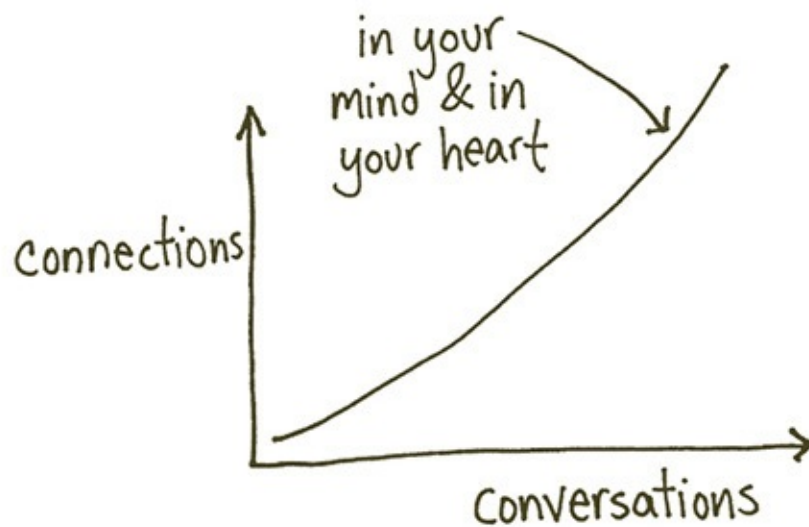


You are only one phone call, one letter, one text message, one email, one “hi there!” away from everyone. Yes, everyone. The people you admire, who inspire and impress you, the people you love or would like to love—they are all so very reachable.

That’s scary and comforting at the same time, isn’t it?

CHAT.

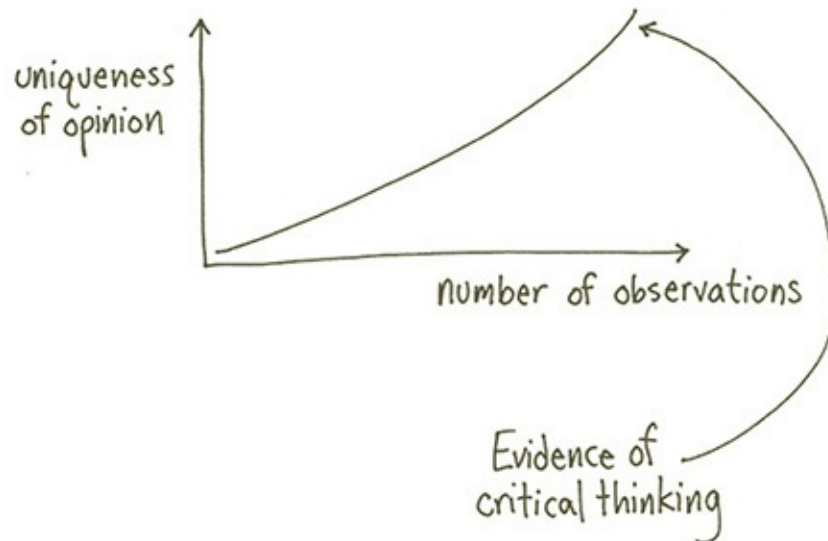
What are people talking about? Love? Loss? The weather? The magical? The mundane? What they have nicknamed their nether regions? The simple act of conversation can bring people together and expose you to interesting topics. So strike up conversations when you can.

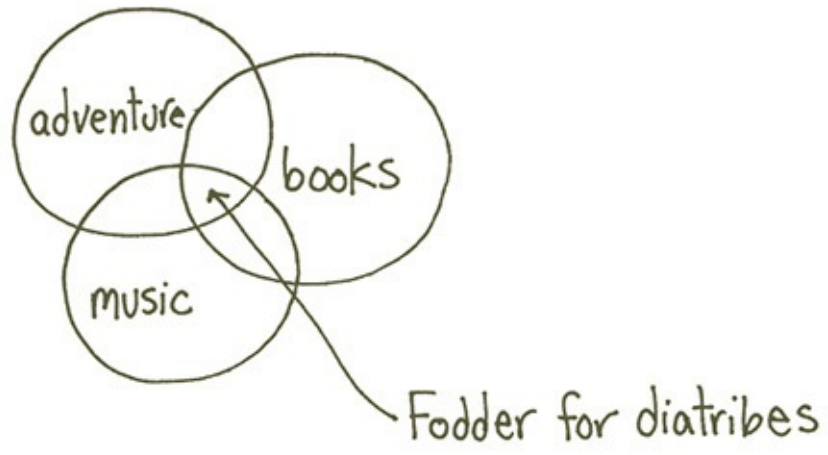


Put your OWN SPIN on it.

You see and you evaluate. You read and you ponder. This is human nature: We interpret information as we absorb it.

Well-constructed options add to the original artifact.

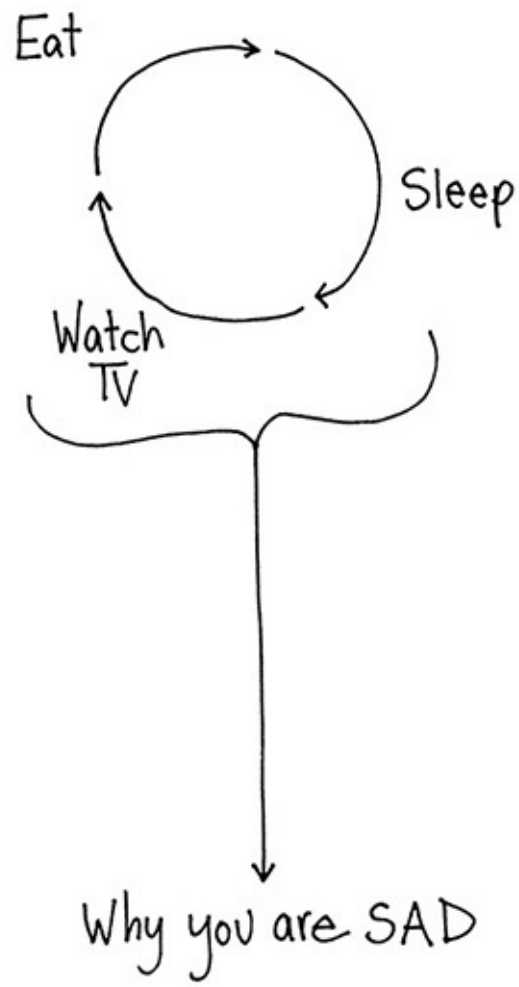




Step 3

Do Something.
ANYTHING.

Dance. Talk. Build. Network. Play. Help. Create. It doesn't matter what you do, as long as you're doing it. Sitting around and complaining is not an acceptable form of "something," in case you were wondering.



GO OUTSIDE.

Real life is always in 3-D. It's always in high-definition. Outside is where the fascinating people and happenings are. It's where you'll find whatever it is you're looking for.

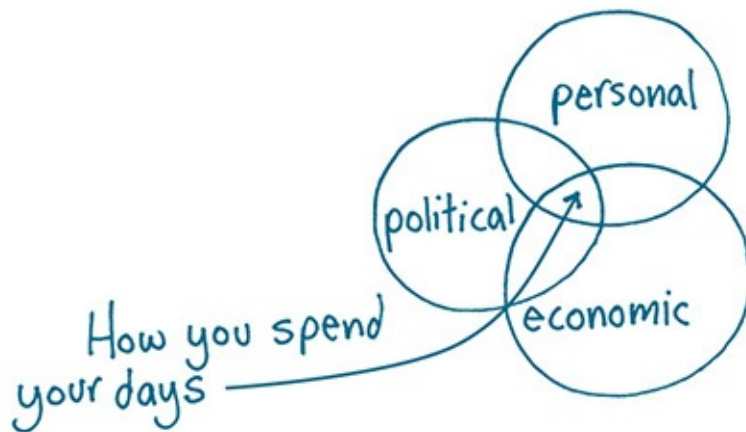
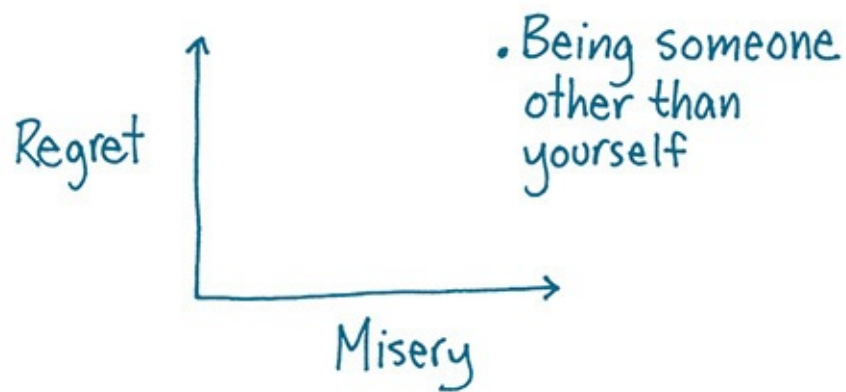


Do what you* want.

*yes, you

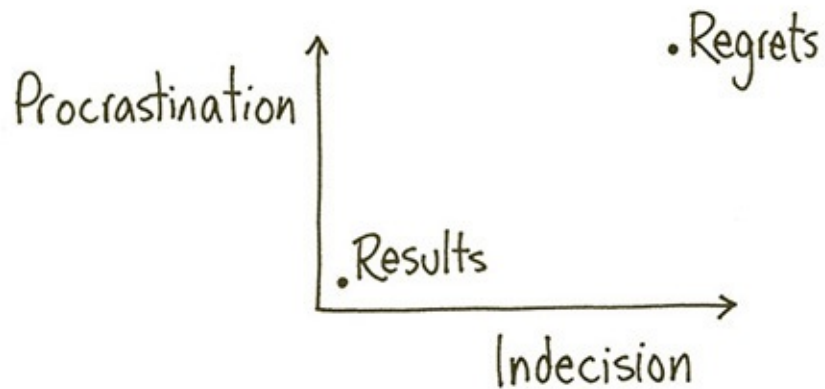
If it is unappetizing: Do not eat, date, or sign up for it. If the mere thought of it is depressing: Do not major in it, sit through it, or devote your life to it. If it is not important to you: Do not do it only because it is important to someone else.

You will thank yourself.



Pick
 Something.

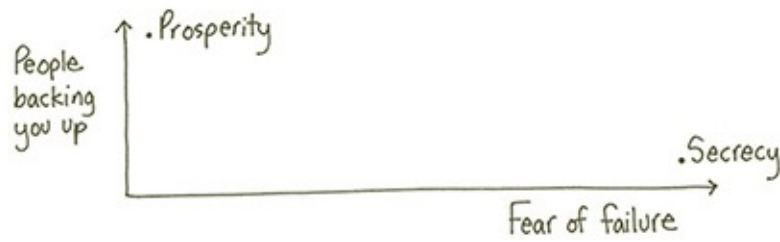
Not sure what to do with your day? Your life? Your career? Frankly, it doesn't matter. Even the most intricately organized plans can crumble. And oscillating between options is a great way to procrastinate your life away. Flip a coin. Spin a bottle. Trust your gut. And off you go.



Involve Others.

You'll need help. You'll need advice. You'll need allies. So you have to tell someone how you feel and what you're up to. Let people in on what you're doing.

They will champion and support you more than you ever imagined, and mock you less than you fear.

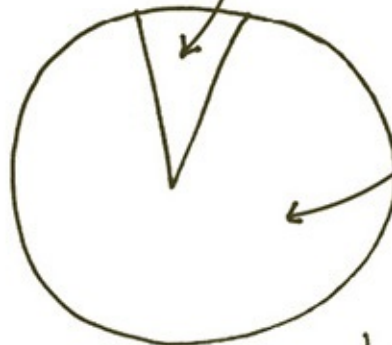


SIGN
UP.

Join a club. Take a class. Volunteer. Have a party. Take a meeting. What we do shapes who we are. Be someone who's been there, done that, and wants to do new things tomorrow.

Luck, Skill
& Daddy's Money

Showing
Up



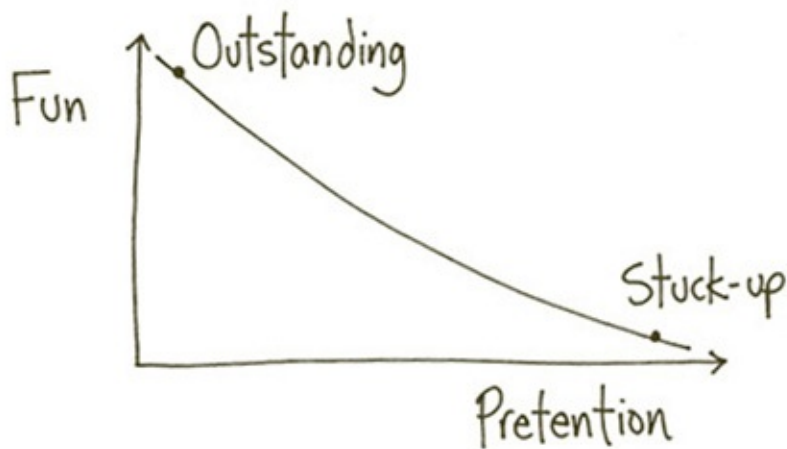
Success

Earnestly
ENJOY
yourself.

Irony gets in the way of experience. Drop the pretense, and you'll have room to carry the day.

Sing along to cheesy pop music. Enjoy things that are out of style. Make silly faces. Stop stifling your giggles.

Give yourself permission to enjoy yourself.



Give yourself some credit.

You deserve a chance.

You deserve to have fun.

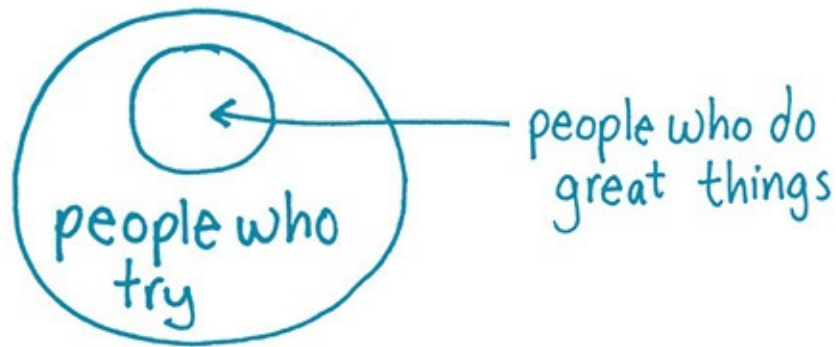
You deserve to be happy.

You've got abilities & curiosities & things to offer.

So go on, jump in there.

Not only is there room for you,
there's a need for you.

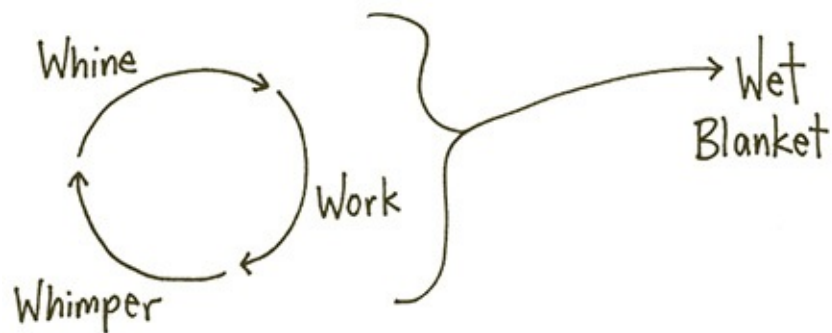
Really.



people who are never invited to parties →

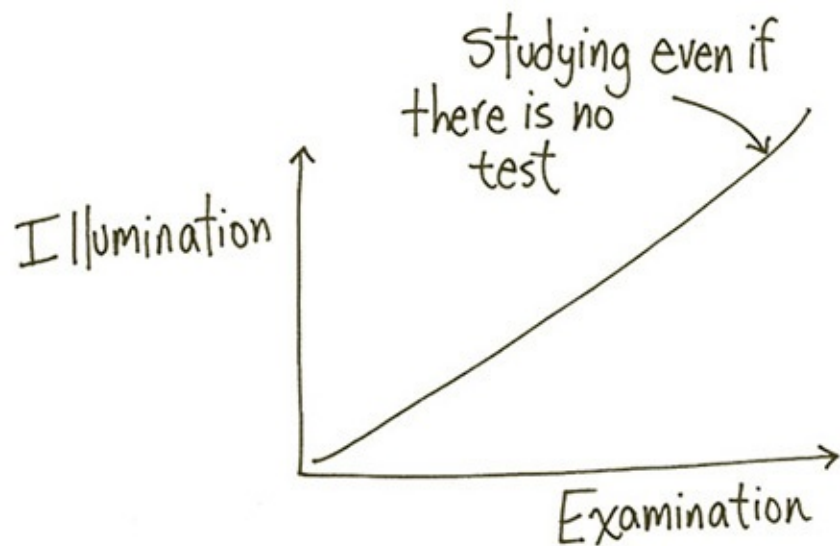
Ditch the JUNK.

Not every activity is worthwhile. Not every dreadful task is mandatory. Avoid the things that drag you down and make you weary. And if you must do them (laundry, taxes), then do them with gusto and put them out of your mind. You'll have more room for what matters. More room for what's interesting.



TINKER

Start with a wonder. How does this work? What makes that happen?
Then poke. Take things apart and put them back together. Push buttons.
Change settings. See how the pieces fit. See what powers the engine.
See how interesting it all is.

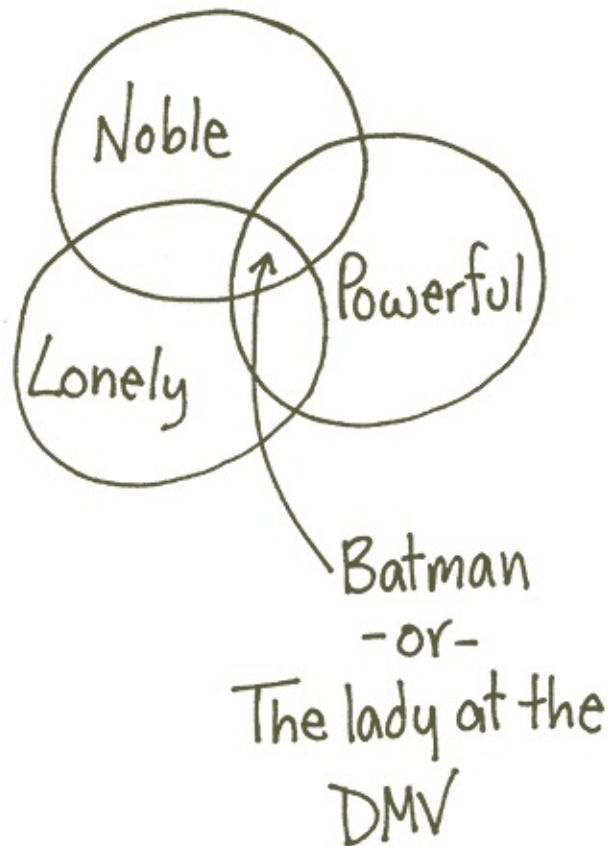


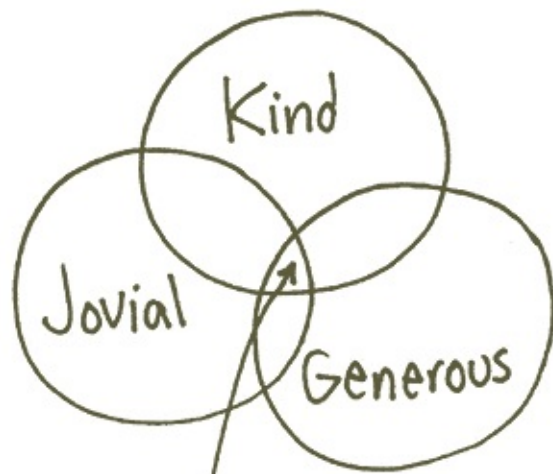
Find yourself a hero.

Seek someone who makes you smile. Someone who lives the way you want to. Someone you admire. Someone real and imperfect.

Learn from them two things:

1. What they do well
2. What they do not do so well





Santa

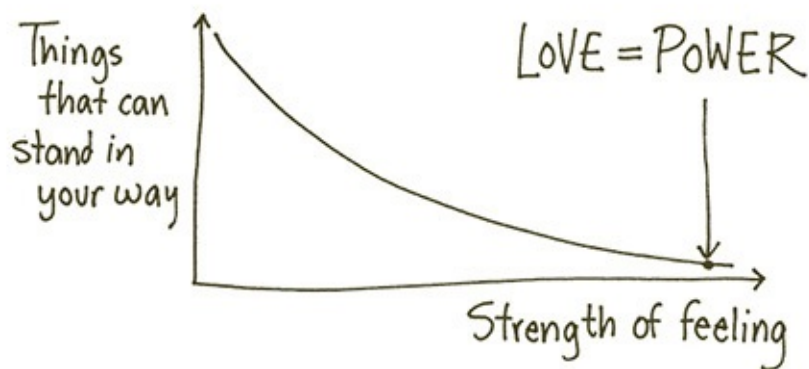
-or-

Your favorite Aunt

Defend what you Love.

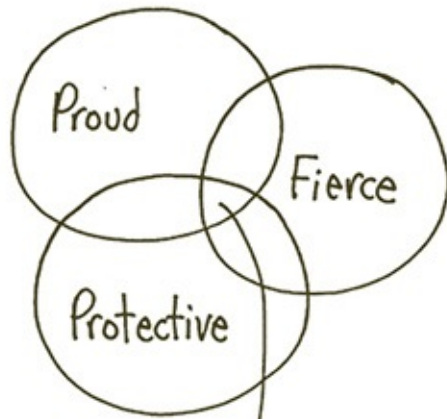
You have treasured people, places, and things. They are precious and powerful. Fight for them. Don't just let them lounge in the back of your mind.

A love ignored will wither and die.



Own your
territory.

Whatever you're doing, enjoy it. Embrace it. Master it as well as you can. Own it. This is how to combine a sense of freedom with a feeling of safety.



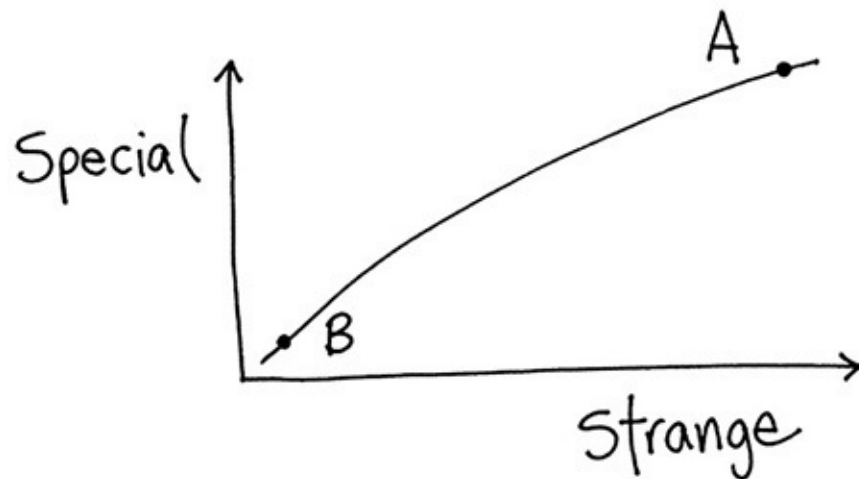
→ Do not mess with:

- * A mama bear
- * Texas
- * A man on a mission

Step 4

Embrace your weirdness.

No one is normal. Everyone has quirks and insights unique to themselves. Don't hide these things—they are what make you interesting.



A=Well-known

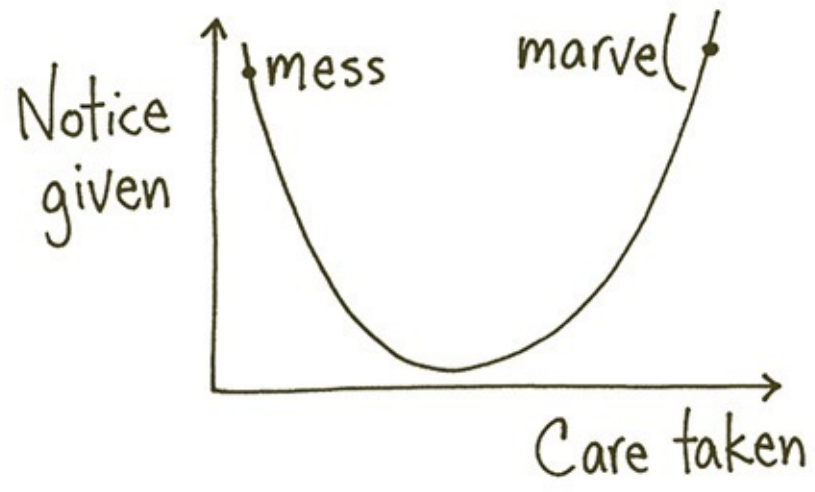
B= Well behaved

ALTER

the uniform.

Dress up. Dress down. Grab a pail for the seashore. Put on a hat only you like. Put on what makes you feel like yourself.

Sometimes the right pair of shoes can make you feel better in your own skin.



Be yourself in PUBLIC.

Leave the house as yourself.

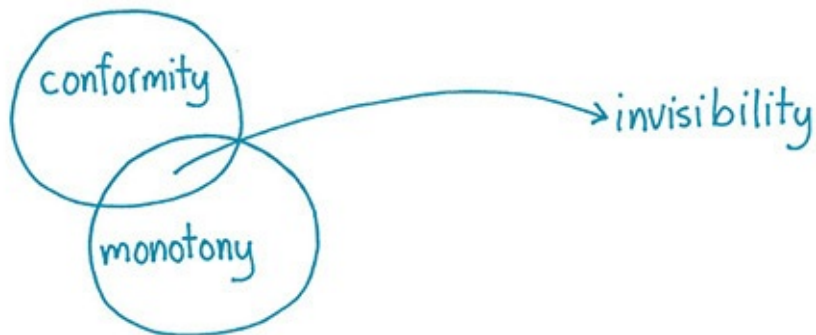
Be yourself at work.

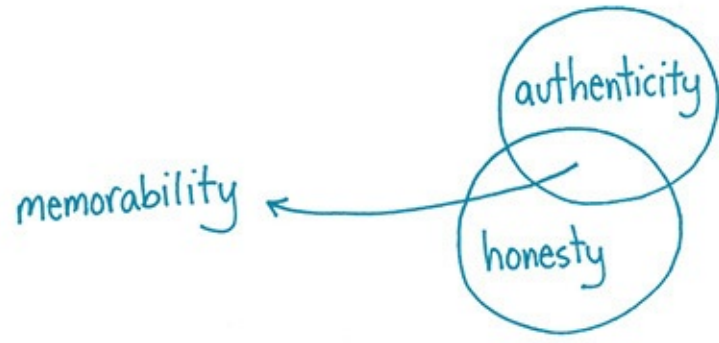
Wear your personality
PROUDLY.

Don't censor your skills
or hide your unique features.

To have a difference is
to have an identity.

To make it public is
to be truly yourself.





DO NOT FAKE IT.

Costumes. Poses. False smiles and forced conformity. It all gets in the way of what's truly interesting.

You are innately unique: There's no need to hide behind an ill-fitting mask.



No more apologizing.

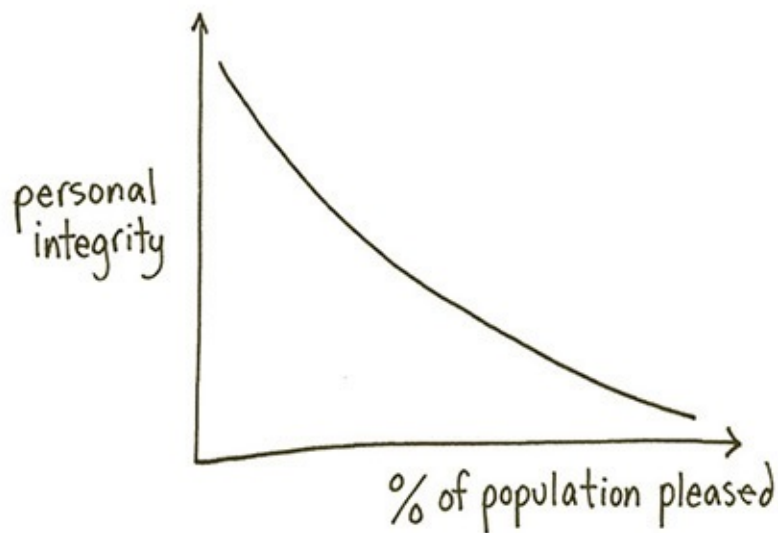
You are not wrong to be unique. You not incorrect because you are different. You should not be sorry for being interesting.



Smile at Sneers.

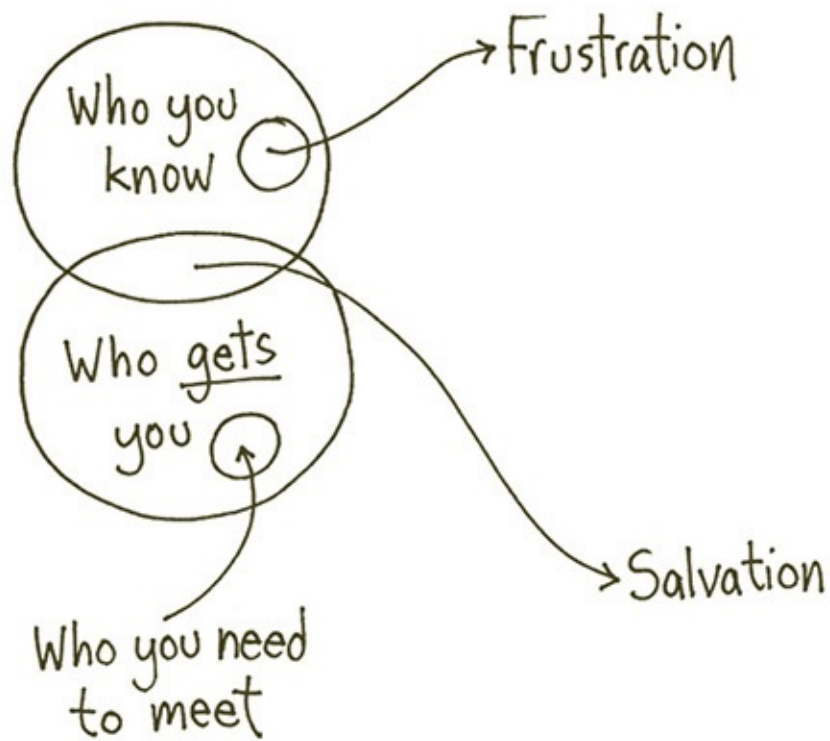
Not everyone will understand you. Not everyone will appreciate you. Not everyone will embrace you.

Do not change for them. Just smile at them, and move along.



Stand
PROUD

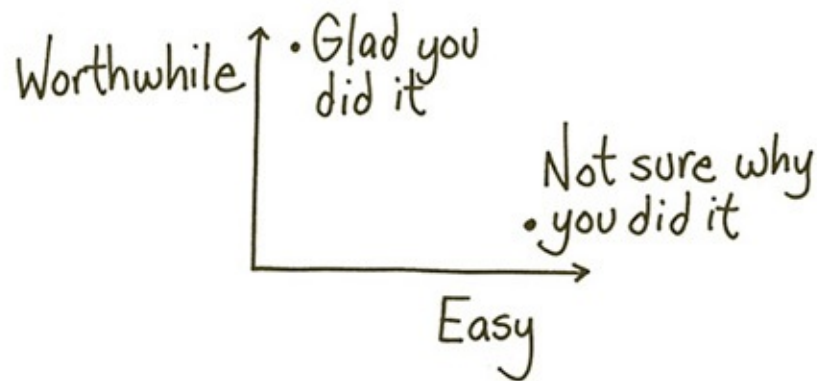
Your weirdness is a valuable thing. A badge of honor. A point of pride. It sets you apart and helps you find other people who will revel in your presence—and you in theirs.



Question Your MOTIVES.

Interesting people are motivated by things bigger than the status quo. Are you doing what someone else expects you to, or what you feel, deep down, that you must do?

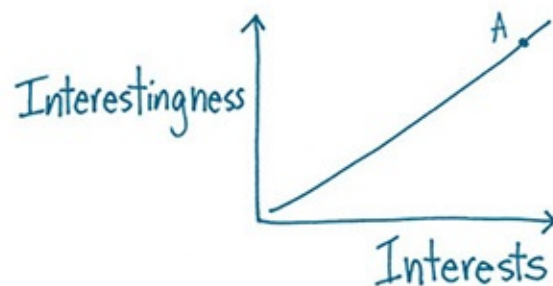
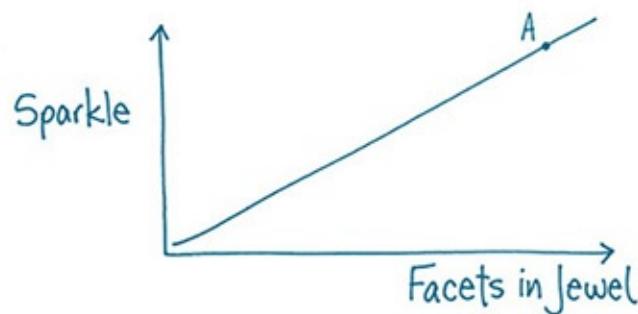
The only way to exceed expectations is to ignore them—and do what needs doing instead.



get SIDETRACKED.

Who's more interesting: A famous scientist, or the famous scientist who plays the cello and whittles marionettes in a lighthouse at the edge of the world where he sometimes writes poetry by the light of passing ships?

Exactly. Follow your weird impulses and do all sorts of things. Getting sidetracked can lead you to exactly where you belong.

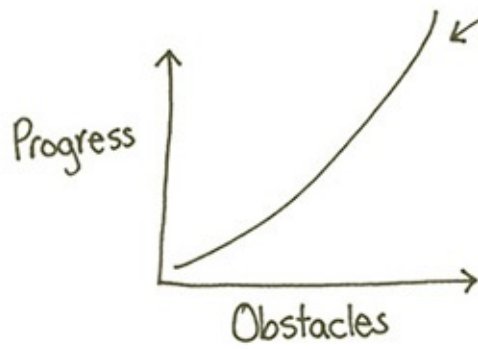


A=Brilliant

Keep moving.

Every day, make another move toward what makes you happy. Take another step toward adventure. Let another piece of your special sort of weirdness out.

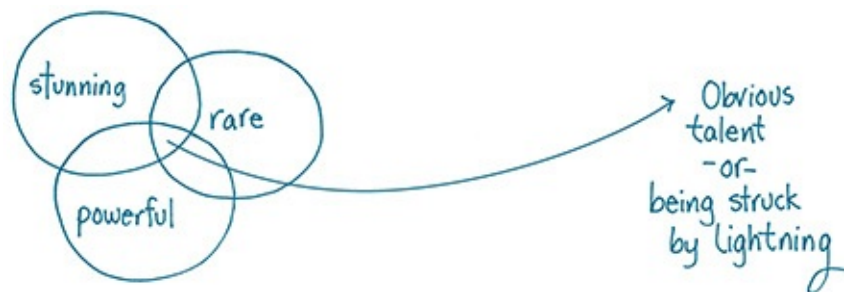
Before you know it, you'll be in a very different place—a far more interesting place.



FOSTER *the* DIFFERENCES.

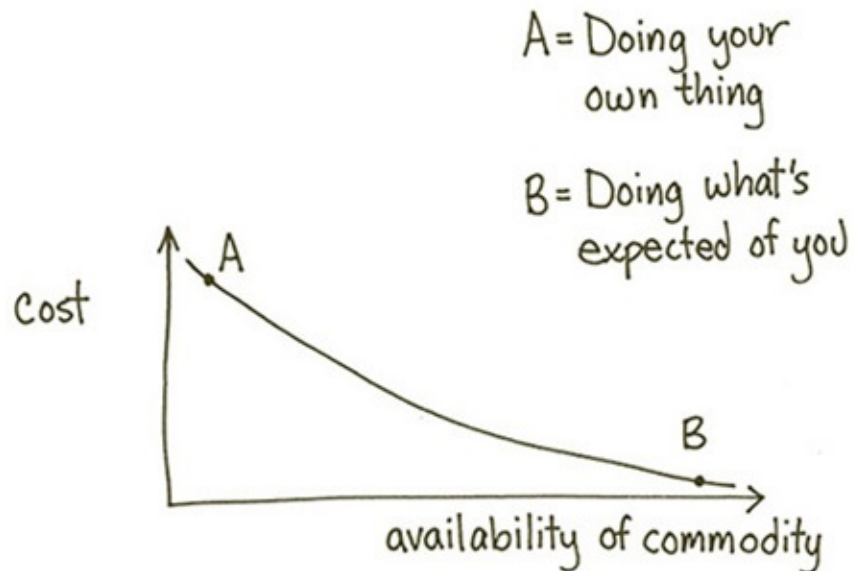
Encourage the uniqueness of others. Support what's odd. Put your money where the weird is. Spend time doing what's different, strange, or amazingly odd.

The world expects compliance, and wonderful weirdos need all the help they can get.



CAPITALIZE on your QUIRKS.

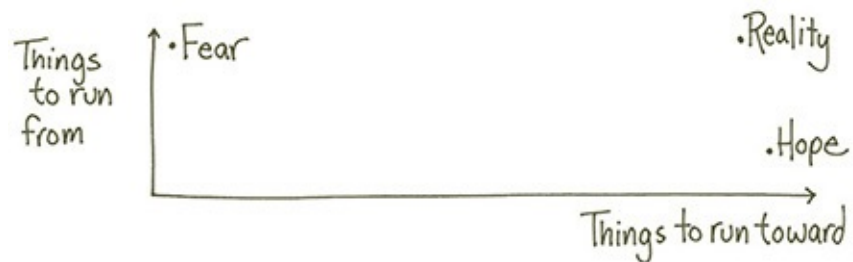
What makes you interesting makes you valuable: Only you can express what you know, do what you do, and know what you know. You don't need a giant niche, just one big enough to plant a flag in.



Find your CIRCUS.

Don't run away and join the rat race. Run away and join a circus full of people who are living their dreams.

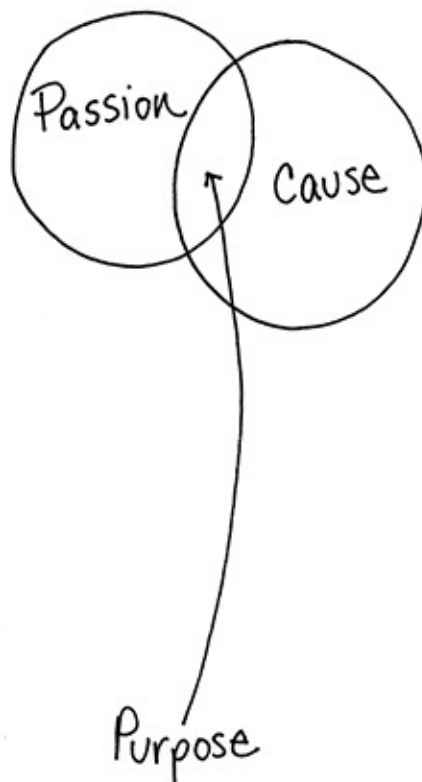
If you seek a circus, you'll be running toward something enjoyable, instead of merely exhausting yourself.



Step 5

Have a CAUSE.

If you don't give a damn about anything, no one will give a damn about you.



Recall
what
makes
you
CRY.

A place. A person. A creature. A song. Now devote a little more of yourself to that memory.

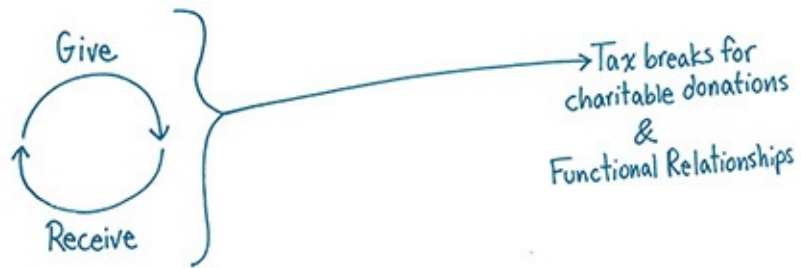
leaves you
speechless

stops you
dead in your
tracks

→ Moves you
to ACT up &
SPEAK out

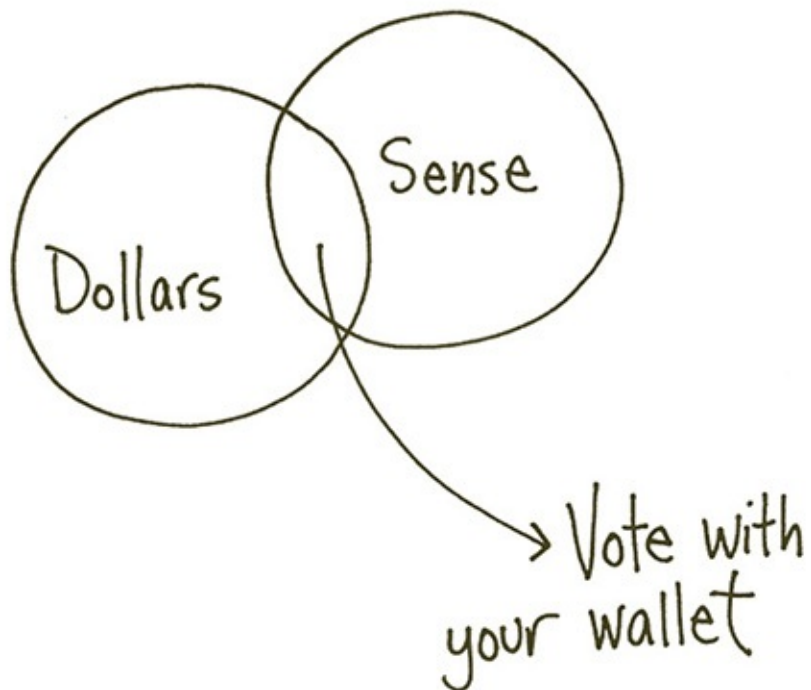
Give Selfishly.

It feels good to be kissed back. It feels great to give gifts. It feels spectacular to be a catalyst to the happiness of someone else. Being generous is disgustingly satisfying.



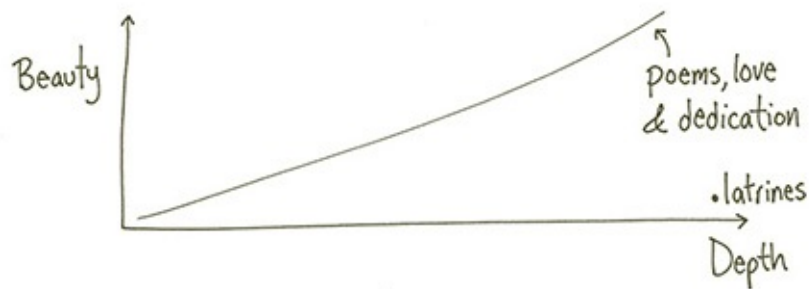
Spend
money
like it's worth
something.

Who gets your cash? Where do you get it? What people and companies are involved? Do you agree with their politics, practices, and behaviors? And is that all okay with you? If not, know you can always make change with your money.



Get Dirty.

Spectators do not make news. Observers do not steer history. Be vulnerable. Be serious. Be immersed. If you want to matter, you have to climb all the way into the mess that is before you.



SPEAK UP.

Praise the marvelous. Shut down the nasty. Articulate what others are afraid to say out loud. Further the discourse.



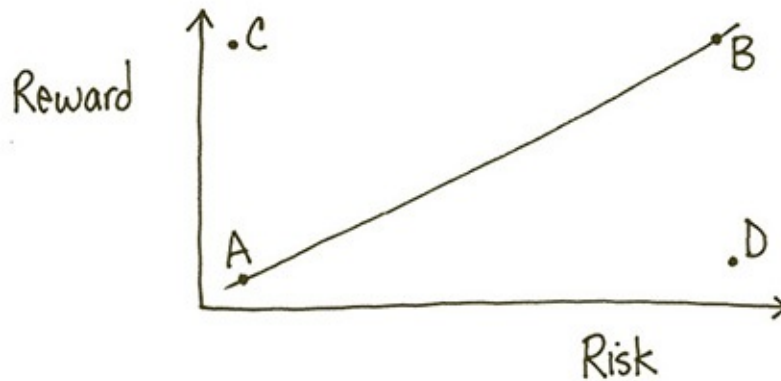
Do the best good.

Ask yourself: Is this the best that's possible? Then ask: Well, what is?
And spend your time working on that.



Risk ORDINARY for GREAT.

Feel greater than fine. Do better than just okay. Amazing is rare, if only because so few people reach for it. Risking the ordinary is the only way to get something extraordinary.



A = Boredom

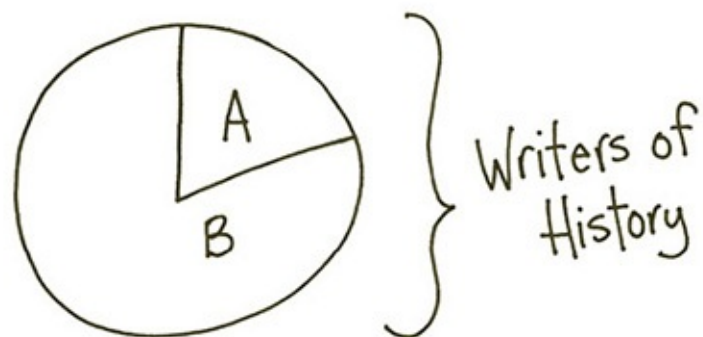
B = A biography worth reading

C = Ponzi scheme sales pitch

D = Danger



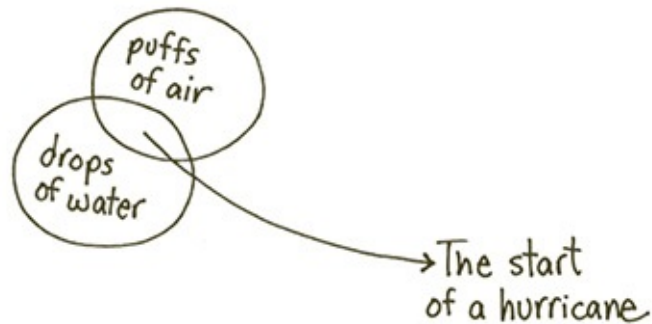
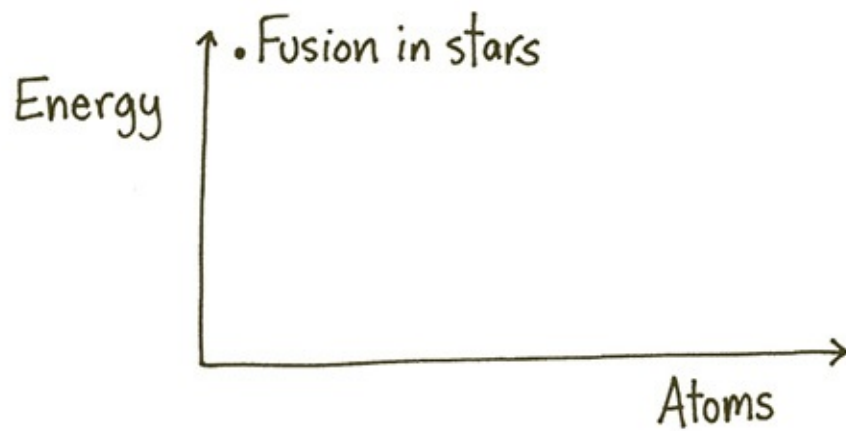
You are the protagonist and author of your life's story. Perfect? No one is. Compelling? We all can be, if our hearts drive the plot. Be a character worthy of the ages.



A = The self-appointed winners
B = Ghostwriters hired by A

ANYTHING
is better
THAN NOTHING.

Actions matter. Even small ones.

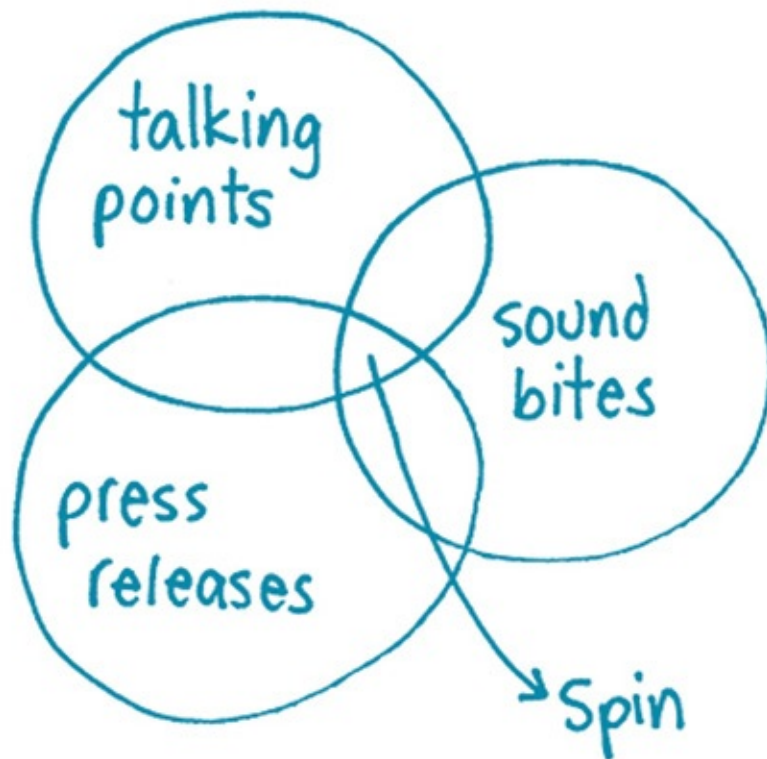


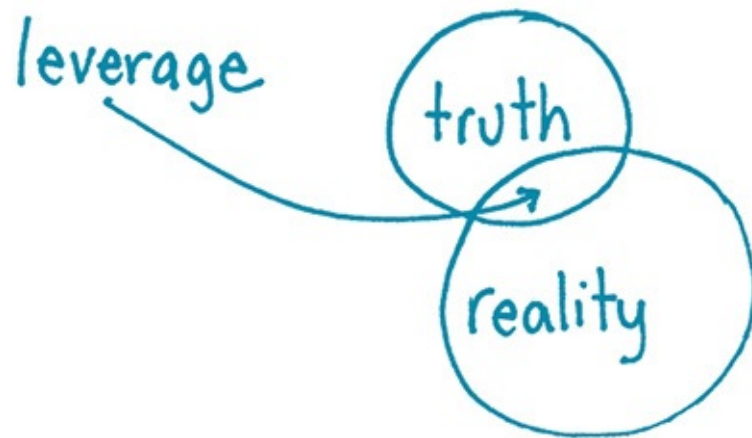
Find the fulcrum.

Below the obvious, behind the superficial, under the excuses & facades, you will find the crux of the matter.

Work from that point.

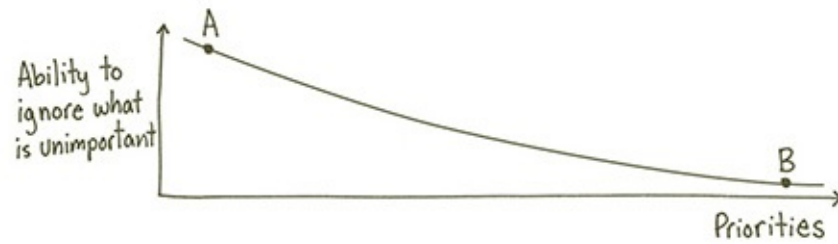
Proper leverage gets a hell of a lot of work done.





PUT IT ALL IN ORDER.

Give what is important precedence. Everything else will arrange itself.

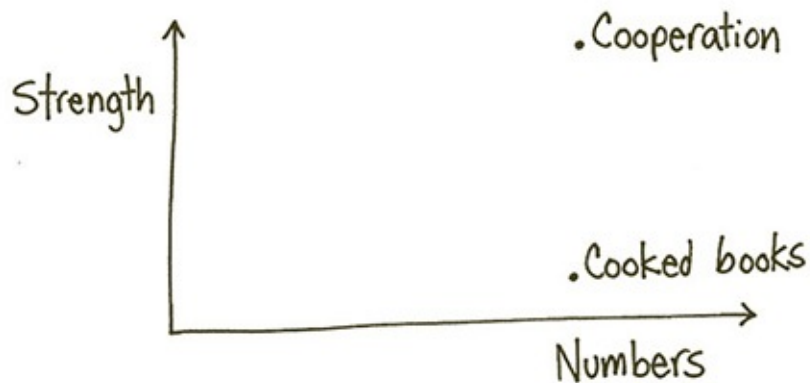


A = Everything makes sense
B = Everything stresses you out

Set tables & Examples.

Bring together as many people as you can to help you. Share your energy. Share your ideas. Share your cause.

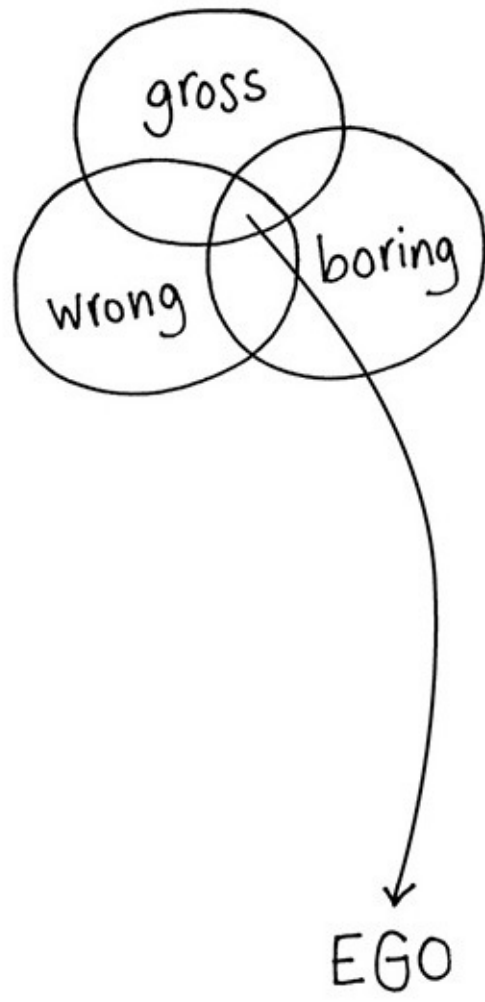
And make sure you have plenty of cake. Everyone loves cake.



Step 6

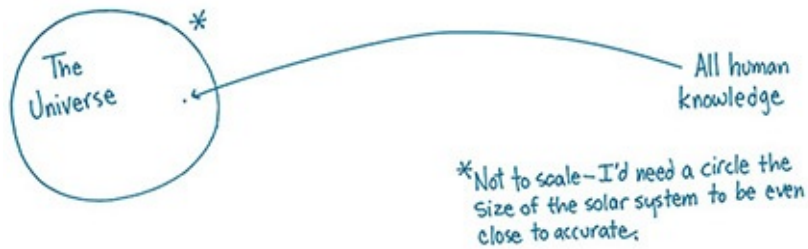
Minimize the Swagger.

Egos get in the way of ideas. If your arrogance is more obvious than your expertise, you are someone other people avoid.



Imagine
Everything You do **NOT**
know.

Everything you'll ever know is only a fraction of a microscopic dribble in the great, churning universe of information. Let this humbling fact be comforting in its enormity.



Just Listen.

To what is said and what is left out. To the messages between the words.
To the tone of voice. To the sarcasm and to the reverence.

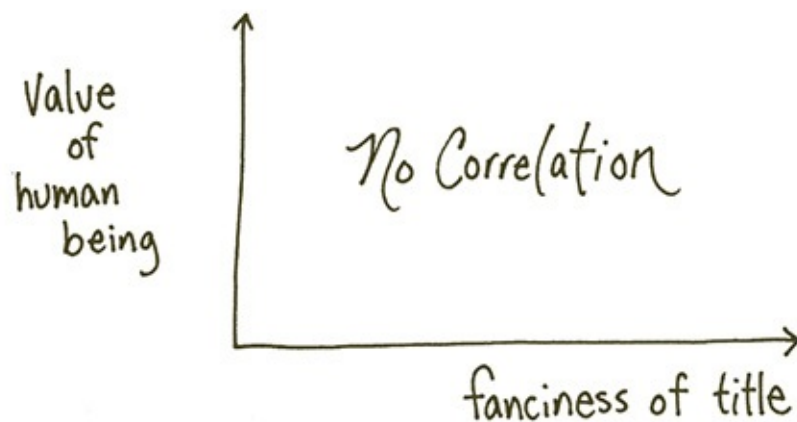
Communication is far more than just words.



Drop the Titles

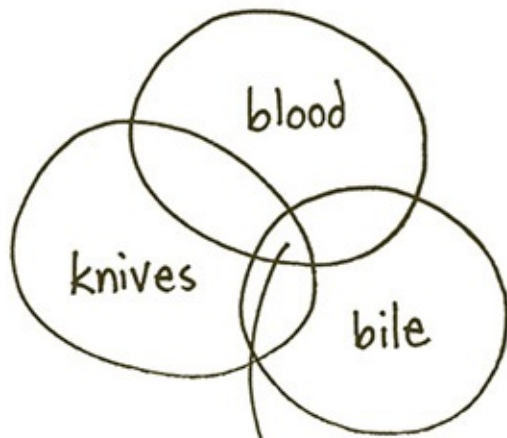
Kings and Queens. Doctors and Lawyers. Popes and Mayors and Fishmongers. Prostitutes and Librarians.

It's not the title that matters; it's the person behind it.



Not everyone
WANTS
what you
HAVE.

Your greatest accomplishments, no matter how impressive you think them to be, are someone else's worst nightmare. Your most prized possession is another man's disgusting chunk of trash. Be careful what you brag about.



→ Why not everyone
is a doctor

Imagine your own caricature.

Your nose. Your walk.

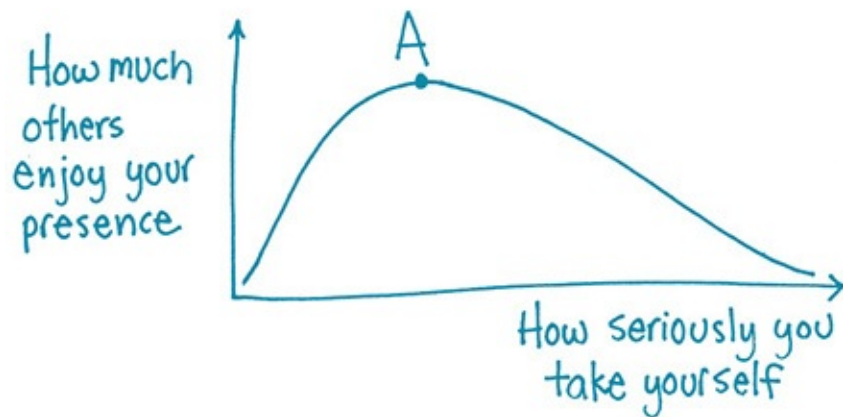
Your hair. Your teeth.

Your house. Your school.

Your middle name.

They're actually pretty funny,
if you think about them.

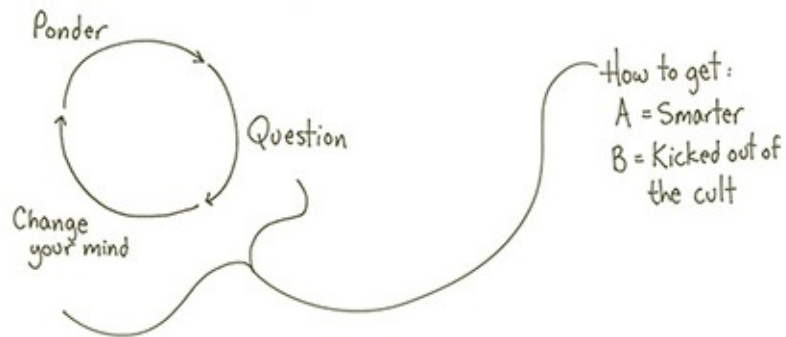
Don't take yourself
too seriously.



A = Not a clown & not a snot

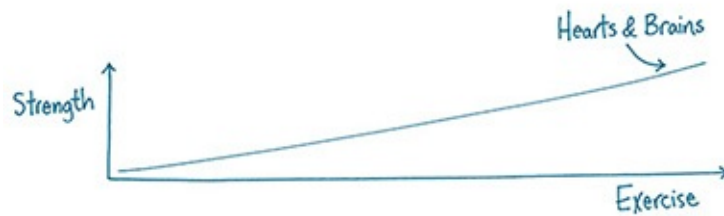
Ask more Questions.

Interesting people are interested in things other than themselves. They're educationally omnivorous. And so they end a lot of sentences with honest question marks.



Remain A Student.

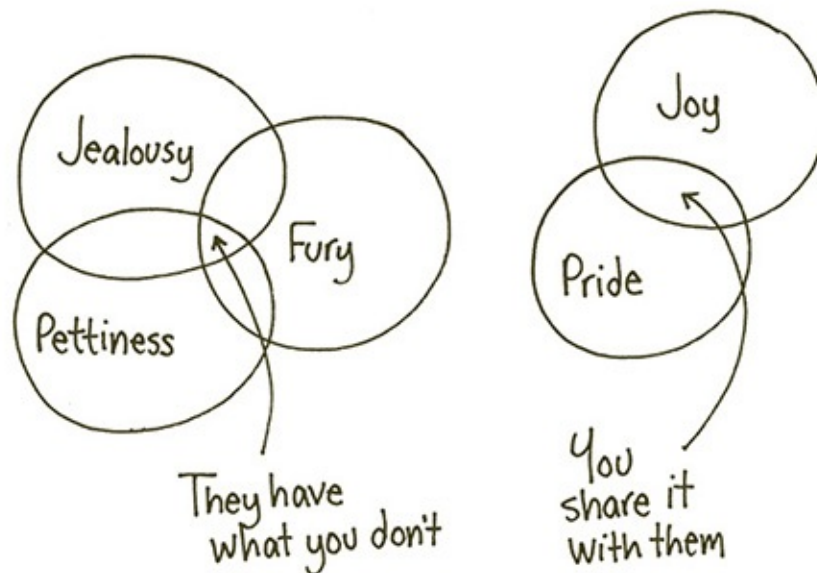
Sign up to learn things. Philosophy, archery, accounting, painting, diving, fire eating—anything you can admit you do not understand. You never know when you'll need a random skill.



Practice VICARIOUS Pride.

Have you ever been overwhelmingly proud of someone other than yourself? If you have, you know how buoyant and uplifting it feels.

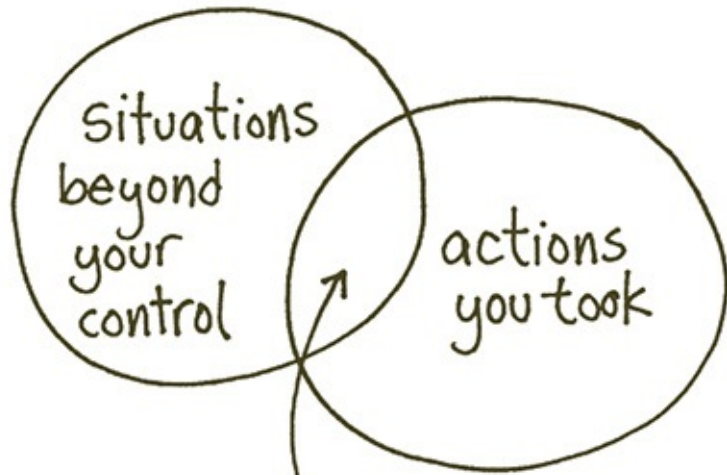
If you haven't, you need to get close enough to someone to try.



Ponder
[your
LUCK.

Do you deserve what you have? Maybe a little. What you don't have?
Probably not.

Acknowledge the roles coincidence, chance, systemic processes (and
yes, maybe even luck), play in our world.

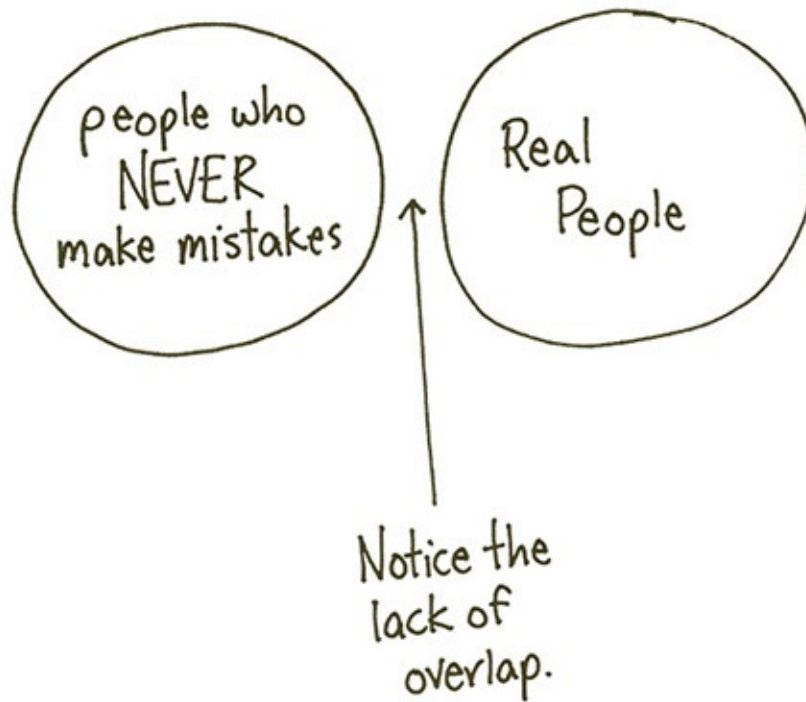


How we all got
to THIS exact
moment

Admit ~~GOOFS~~

Mistakes happen. Often. Sometimes they're your fault and sometimes they're your misfortune.

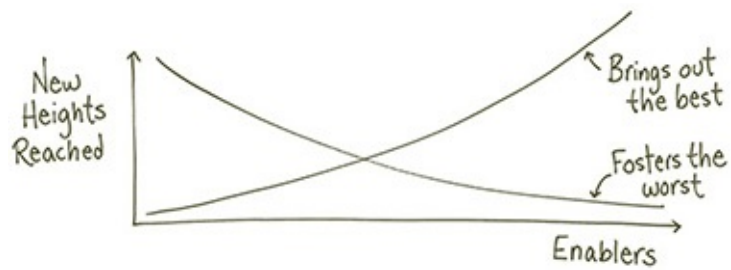
Freely admit to both kinds.



BE A SIDEKICK.

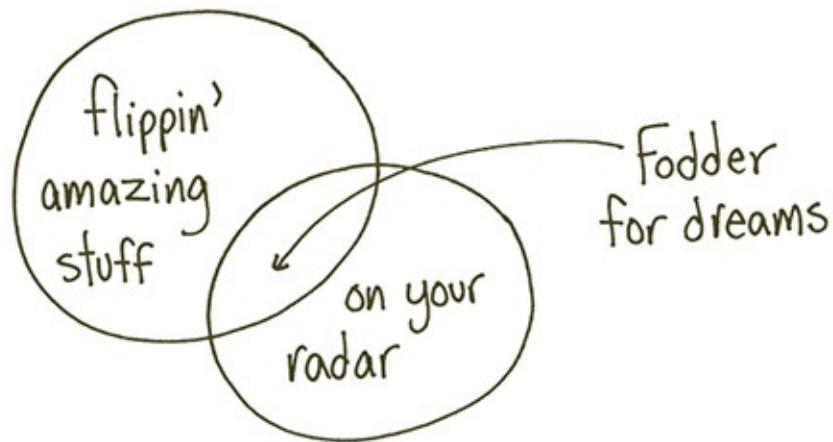
To everyone you meet. Be the helper, the adviser, the assistant the hero cannot do without.

Fame and value aren't as closely related as you think.



Be impressed
before you
try to be
IMPRESSIVE.

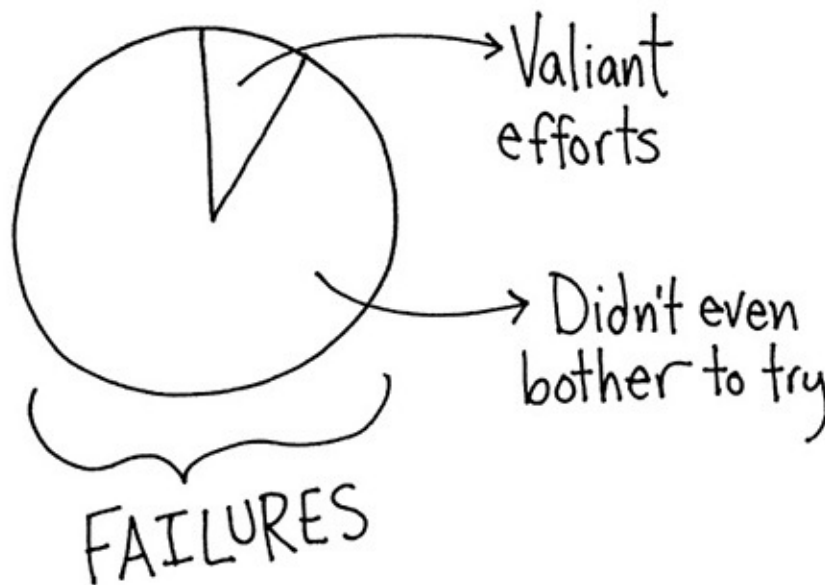
Majesty. Glory. Beauty. Balance. Wisdom. The more often you are amazed, the better your odds of being amazing. Really: How will you know how high to aim if you've never looked up?



Step 7

Give it a Shot.

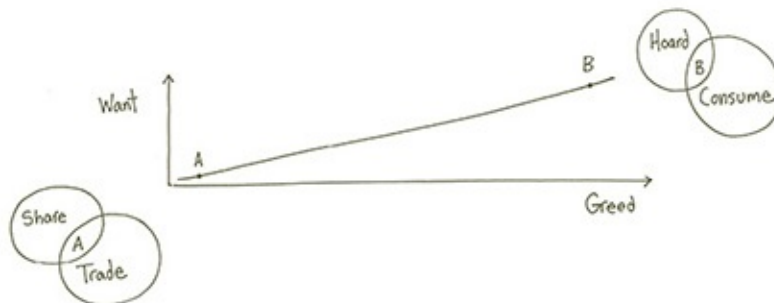
Try it out. Play around with a new idea. Do something strange.
If you never leave your comfort zone, you won't grow.



Think
abundance

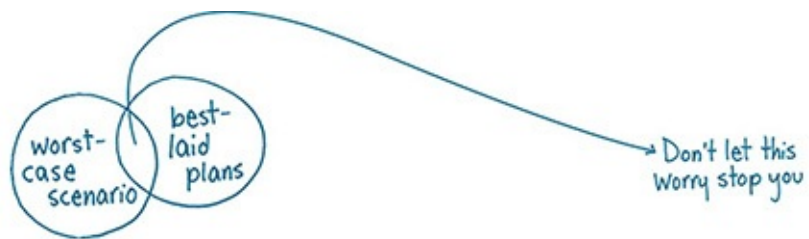
Not
Scarcity.

If you decide that there is more than enough to go around, you'll find that you're correct. The inverse is also true.



WHY NOT?

Afraid to fail? Afraid to fail and that other people might find out about it?
So what if you fail? Really: So what if you fail? Would that really be so bad?

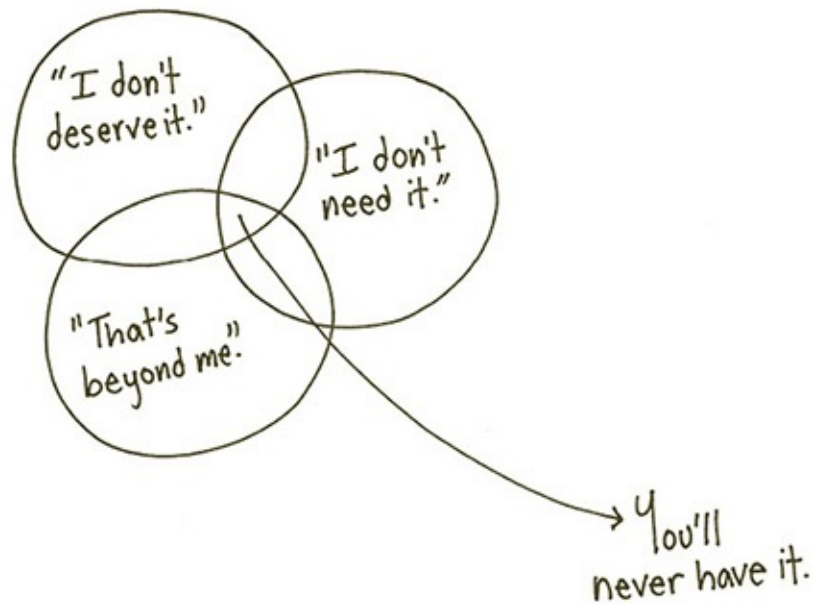


ADMIT YOU WANT TO.

To deny a dream is to kill it in its infancy.

Don't feel guilty for taking a shot at something. Don't feel terrible for wanting something.

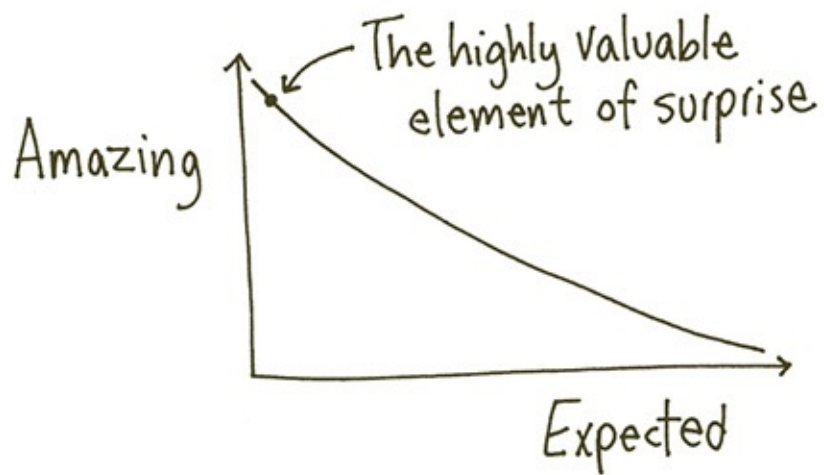
Save the guilt for never giving yourself the chance to try.



SURPRISE YOURSELF.

What's expected of you? Try something else. What's the next step? Take a different one.

Typical isn't mandatory, after all.



Stockpile anecdotes.

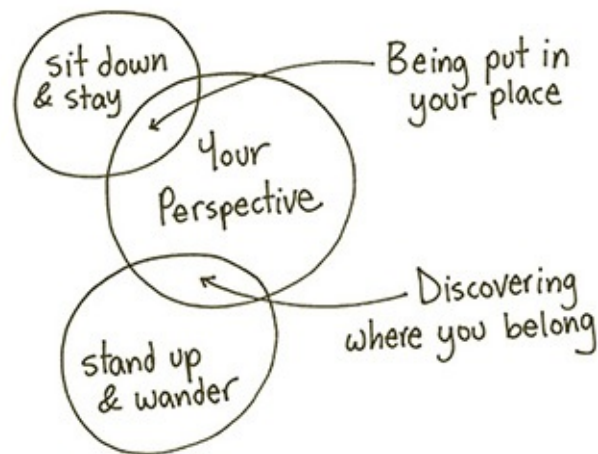
Read randomly. Overhear on purpose. Watch movies and clouds and people.

The more you absorb, the more you can exude.



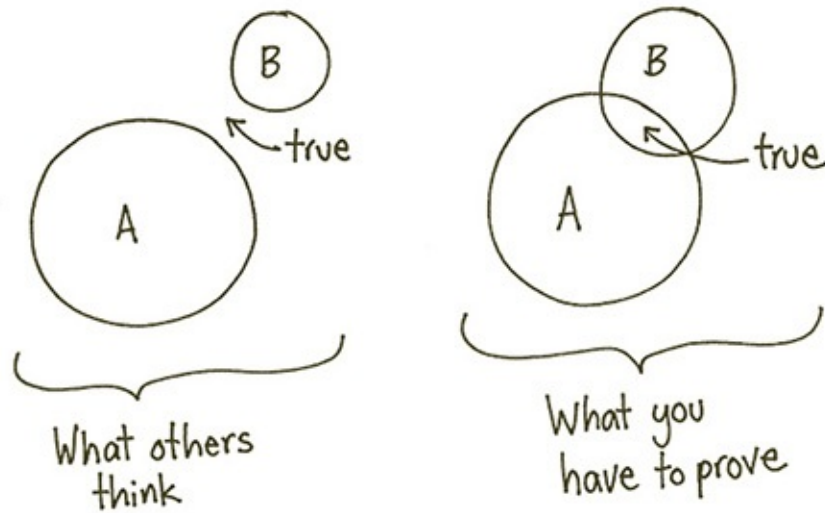
Overstep your BOUNDS.

Just because you've never been somewhere doesn't mean you don't belong. Just because it's not in your job description doesn't mean you can't do it. Only you can really decide what league you really belong in.



GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION.

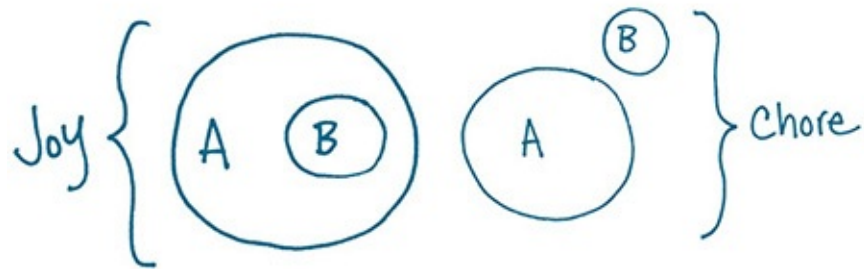
Need permission? Give it to yourself, because most of the time, nobody else will.



A = What's Possible
B = Your WILD Dream

Volunteer for the job.

Say, "Yes, I will be there for you." Show up, ready for anything. Put your heart into it. This is how people begin to fall in love with you, and you with your work.



A = The task at hand
B = Your heart

Make REAL PLANS.

Maybe tomorrow? I guess I'll start later? No, make your plans kinetic, not potential.

Procrastination leads to regret.

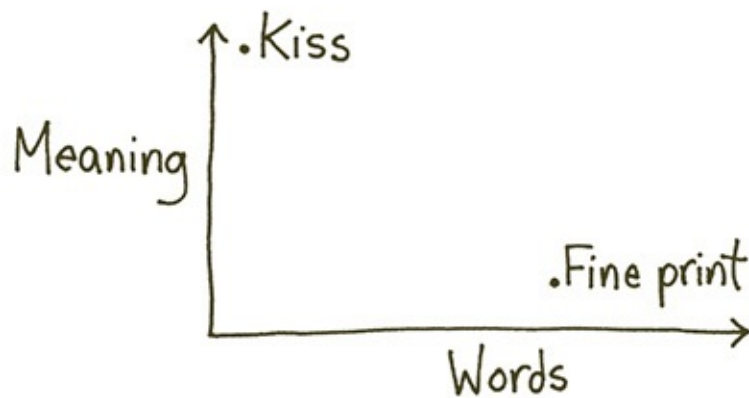


Declare
Your
Affections



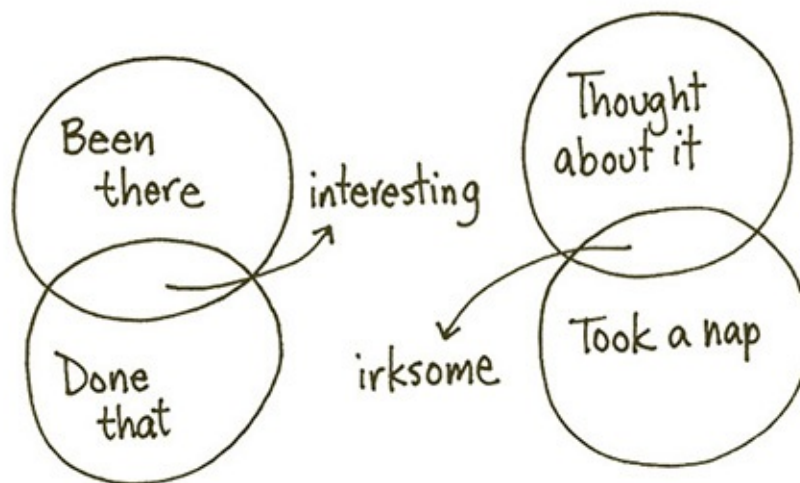
It takes a very brave person to be emotionally vulnerable. It takes a strong spirit to go weak in the knees.

Interesting people are characters in interesting love stories.



TACKLE the HARD STUFF.

Know that obstacles scare away most of the competition. And that the hardest things are the things that are the most satisfying to be done with.



Have no Shame.

Sing badly and loudly.

Skip down the street.

Go to that open mic night.

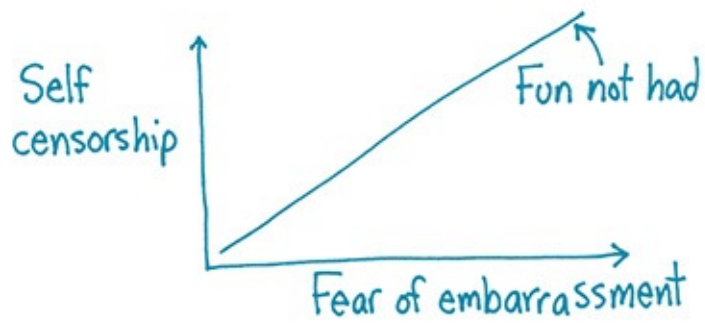
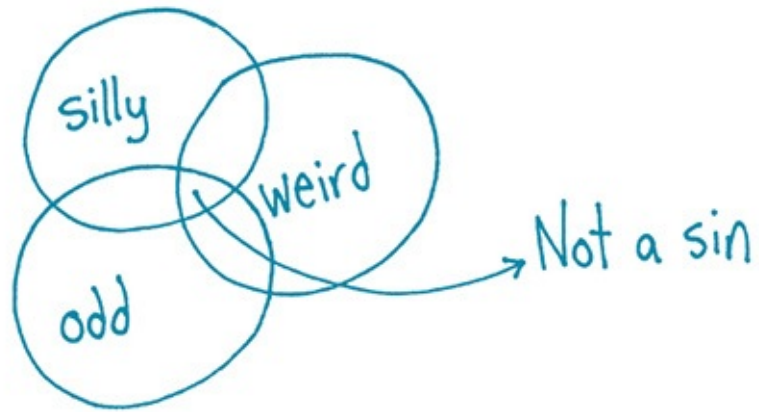
Uncensor your personality.

More people will smile

than laugh,

and if they laugh,

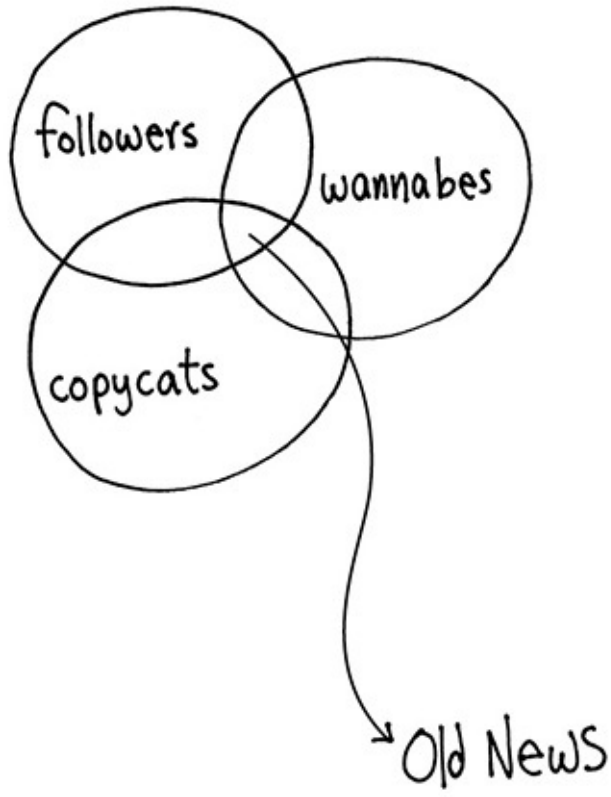
that's their sad problem.



Step 8

Hop off the
bandwagon.

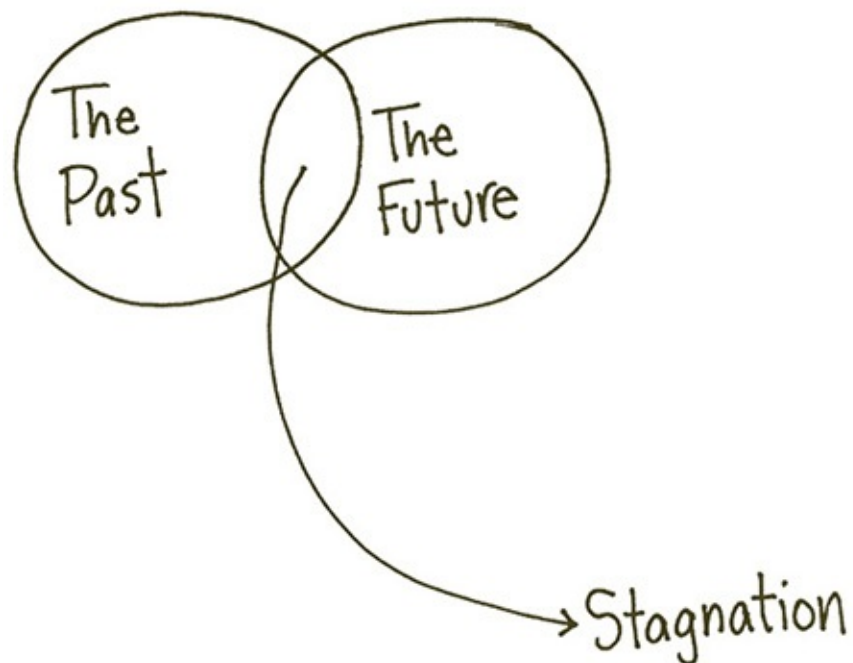
If everyone else is doing it, you're already late to the party. Do your own thing, and others will hop onto the spiffy wagon you built yourself.



Don't confuse
a tradition
with a mandate.

So that's how it's always been done? That's "just the way it is"? We just have to deal with it?

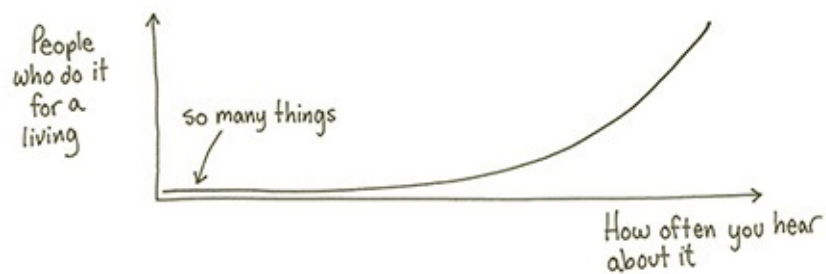
No, not anymore.



Do a VERY ODD JOB.

Ever sit in traffic and wonder what everyone else sitting in traffic does for a living? For a hobby? For fun?

There are as many answers as there are people. They're all possibilities.



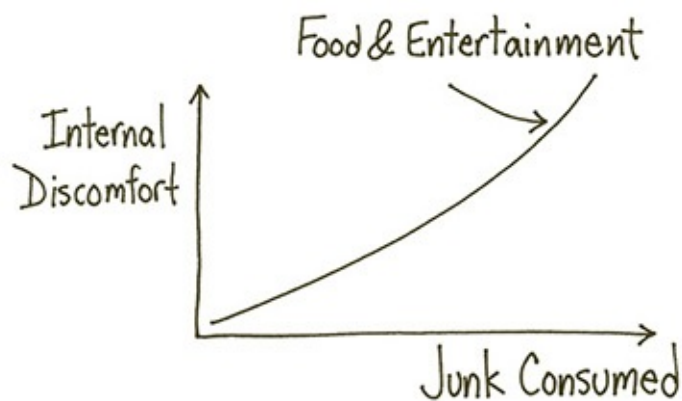
Question Ubiquity.

Just because it's everywhere doesn't mean it's good or worth participating in.



FOLLOW *your* CURIOSITY.

If you find yourself drowning in the vat of popular but boring sludge, your curiosity will be your lifeline.

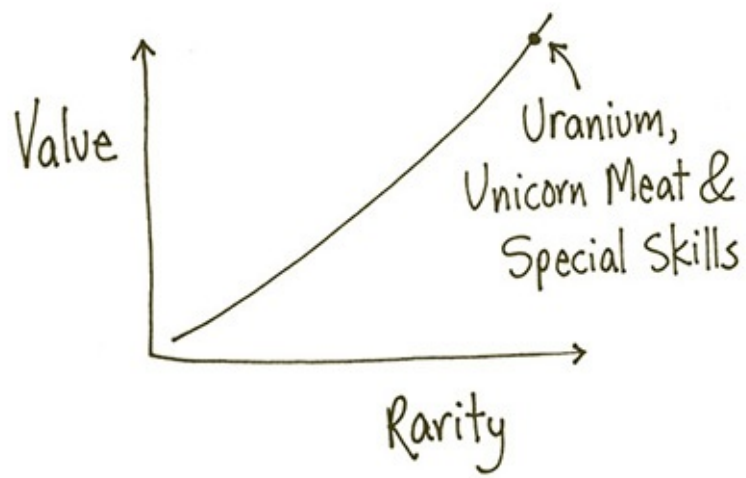


Crawl into

N
I
C
H
E
S
!

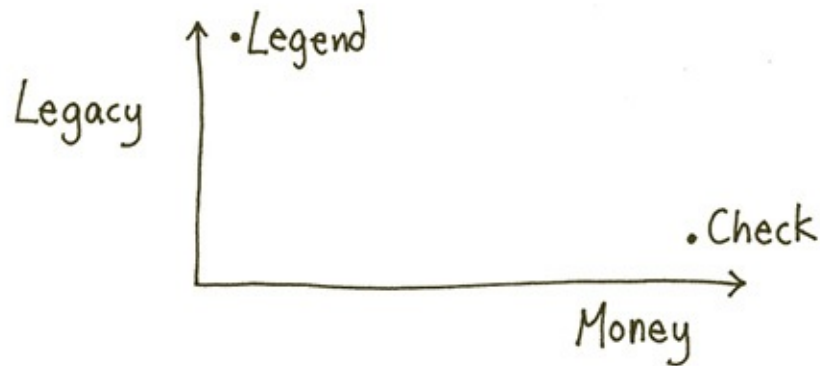
The smaller the niche, the less room there is for copycats.

If you want to be interesting, work with specifics, not generics.



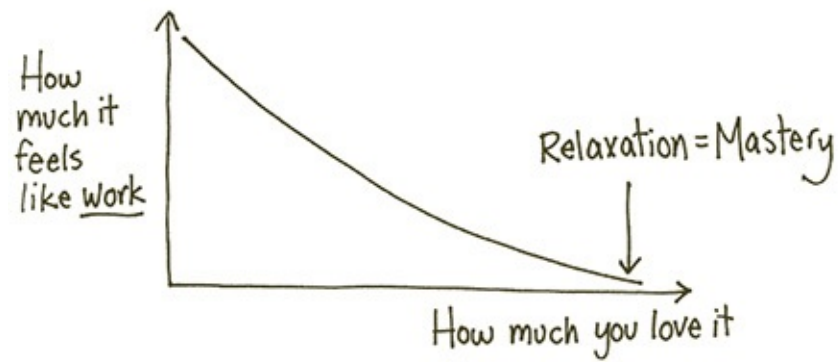
Be the next
whatever-sized
thing.

You don't have to be world famous or filthy rich to be successful.
You simply have to do what you do best.

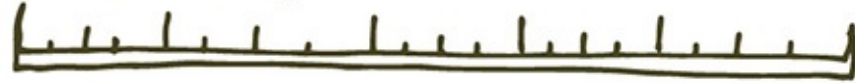


relax

Unlink stress and success. Find the work that satisfies you, and you might just avoid a heart attack or three.



CHANGE



MEASUREMENTS.

Square footage? Horsepower?

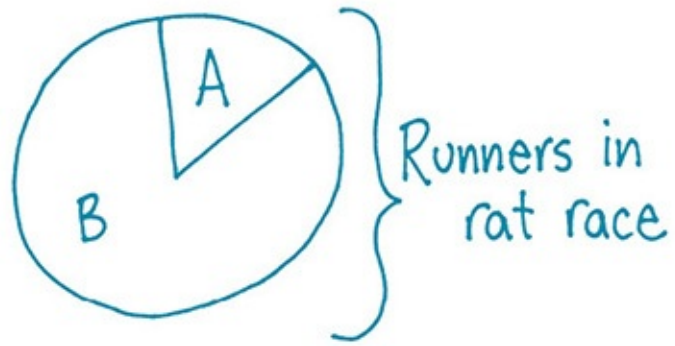
Millions in the bank?

People in your fan club?

Days you wake up happy?

Look at what you're

measuring and consider
alternative units.



A = Slightly ahead

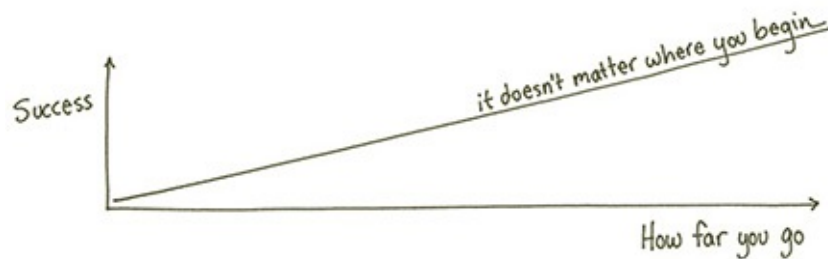
B = Far behind

C = Winners



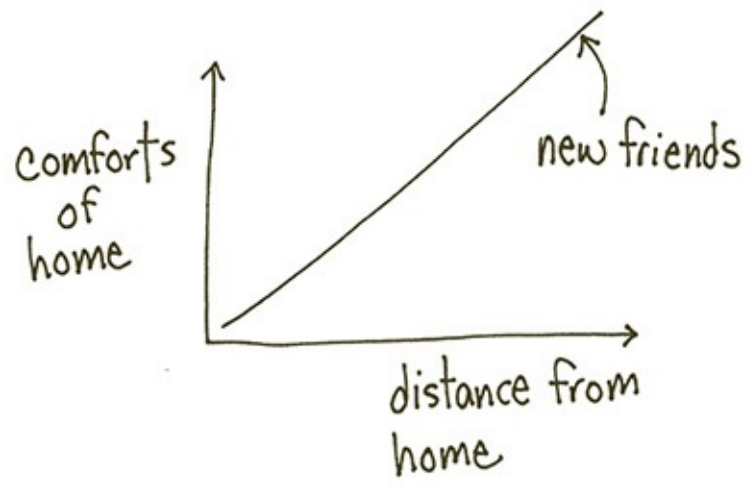
Start your own craze.

Every cultural phenomenon starts as an idea. When you have one, do what you can to take it from the corner of your mind to the public. The whole world just might embrace it.



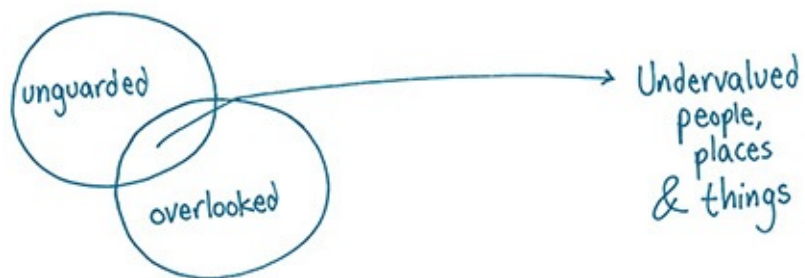
Leave
the
Safety of
Home.

You grew up with certain people who did certain things in certain places.
Leave home to see how unique and universal your childhood was.



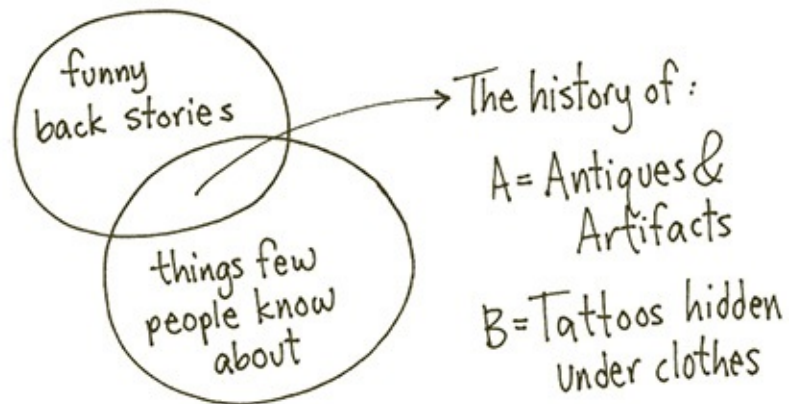
Take over unclaimed Spaces.

When the powers that be overlook something, you can take that something over and become a power that is.



INVESTIGATE the OBSCURE.

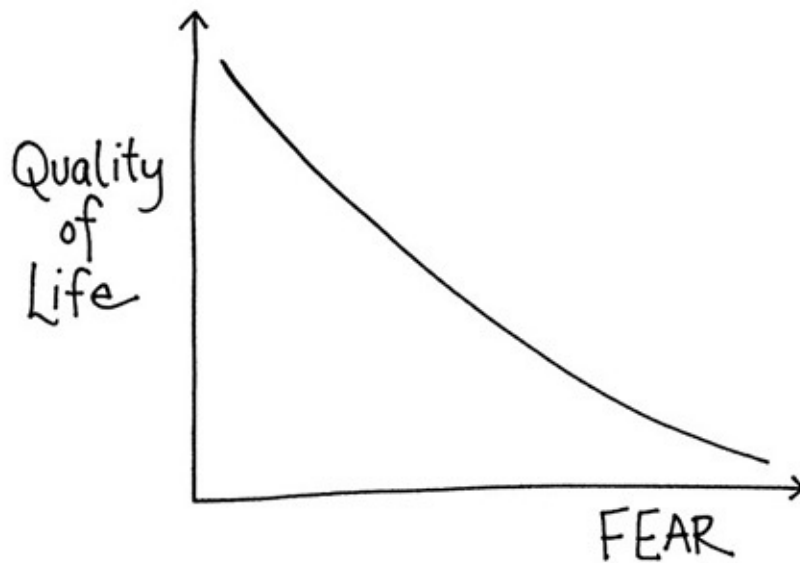
Revive forgotten stories. Read old books. Dust off forgotten trends. Listen to rare music. You might find your favorite thing hiding in the woodwork.

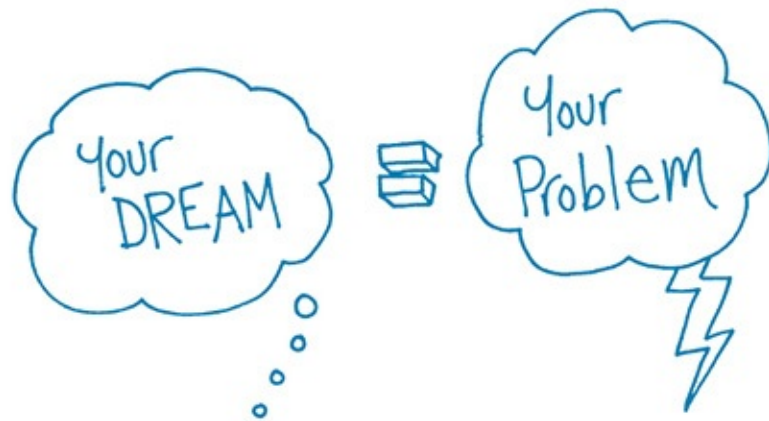


Step 9

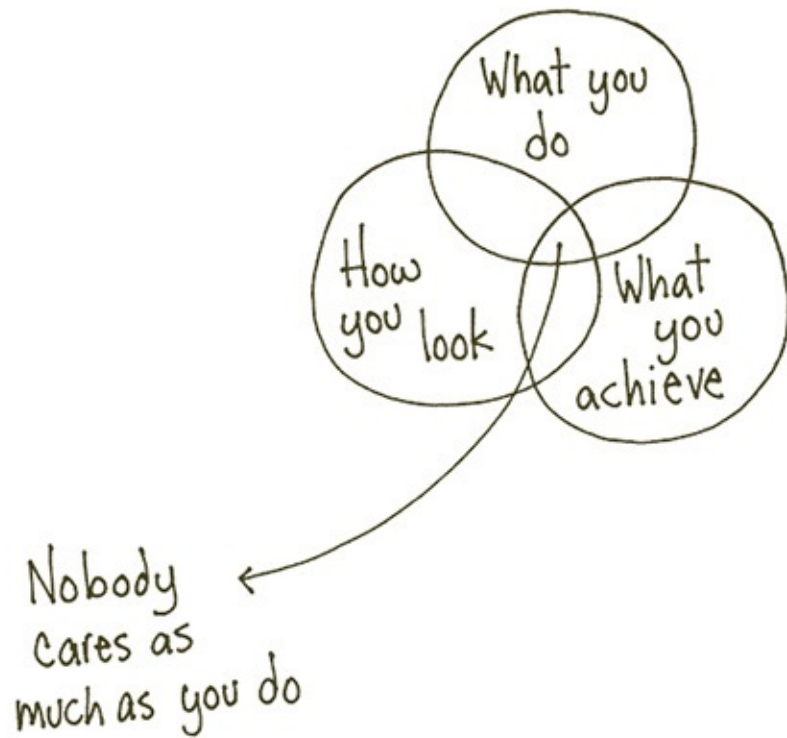
Grow a pair.

Bravery is needed to have contrary opinions and to take unexpected paths. If you're not courageous, you're going to be hanging around the water-cooler, talking about the guy who actually is.



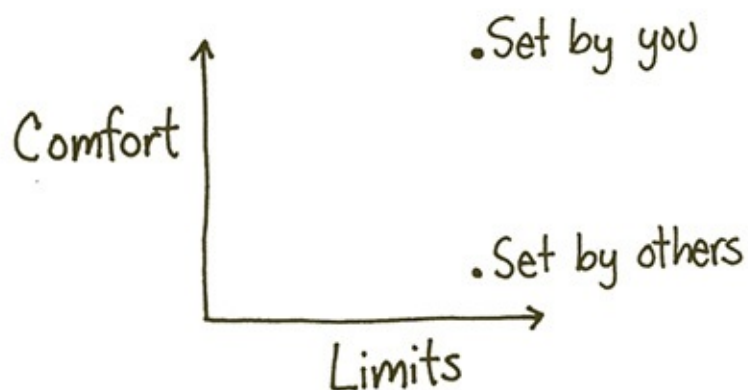


If you have a personal dream or a wish or a desire, know that you're the only one who gives enough damns to see it realized.



Lead the MUTINY.

If you find yourself working for something that feels pointless or fruitless, stop. Don't fight for anything you don't see value in. You'll be surprised how many others join you in the protest.

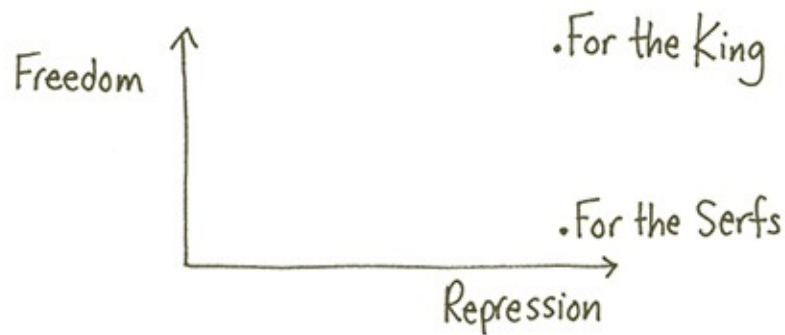
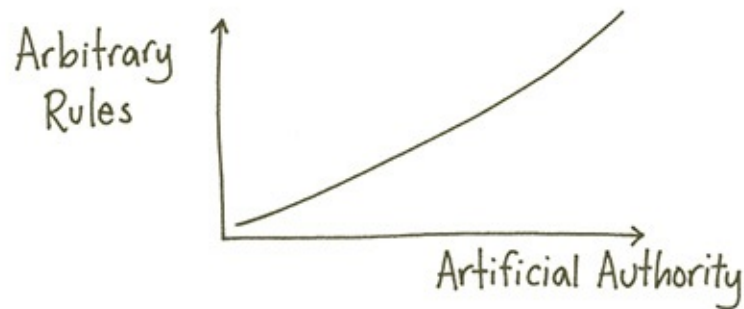


Avoid AUTHORITY.

In order to do interesting things, you need to have the freedom to explore, experiment, and innovate.

Authorities mainly work to confine, contain, and limit such behavior.

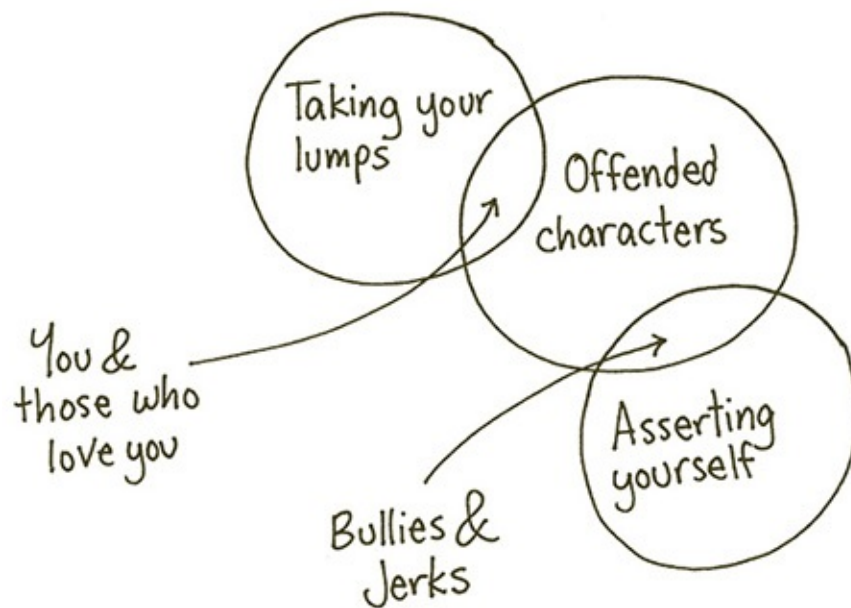
Work around that as much as possible.



ACCEPT

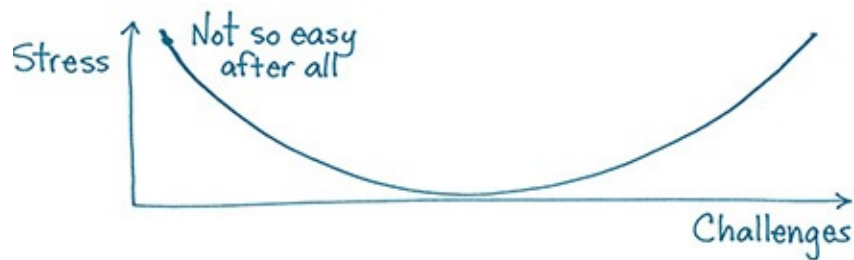
Friction

You don't want to impose. You may shy away from making waves. You may feel like you couldn't dare to ask for what you need. You need to get over that.



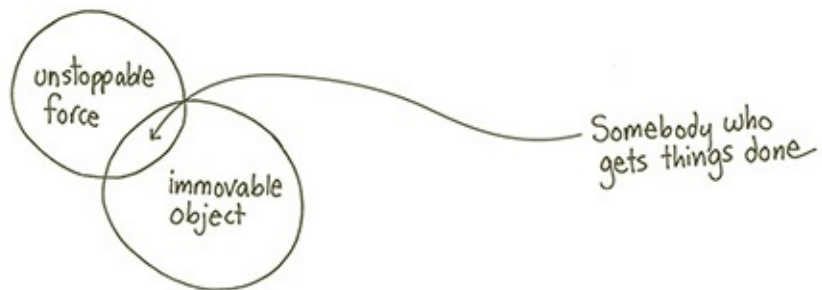
Safe
is often
DANGEROUS.

An easy life is like quicksand: Before you know it, you're trapped and can't move, can't breathe, can't get to where you really wanted to go. Don't coast unless you're rolling downhill on a bicycle.



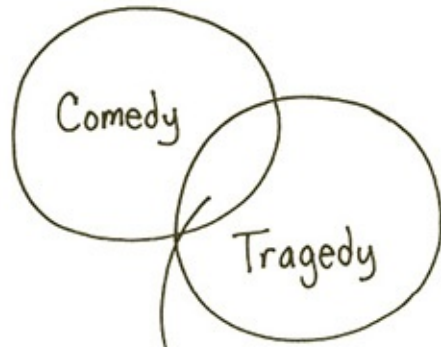
GET STUBBORN.

Giving up is boring. Getting frustrated and plowing ahead despite it all requires the power that only a truly interesting person possesses.



Lobotomize
culturally
INSANE
practices.

Society has been known to burn witches. Slavery was legal once, too.
What else is going on that needs to be put right? And what are you going
to do about it?



→ We make jokes
so we don't cry.

SET YOUR OWN BOUNDARIES.

On time. On attention.

On money. On love.

And defend your territory
from those who want to
knock down the walls
that keep you sane.



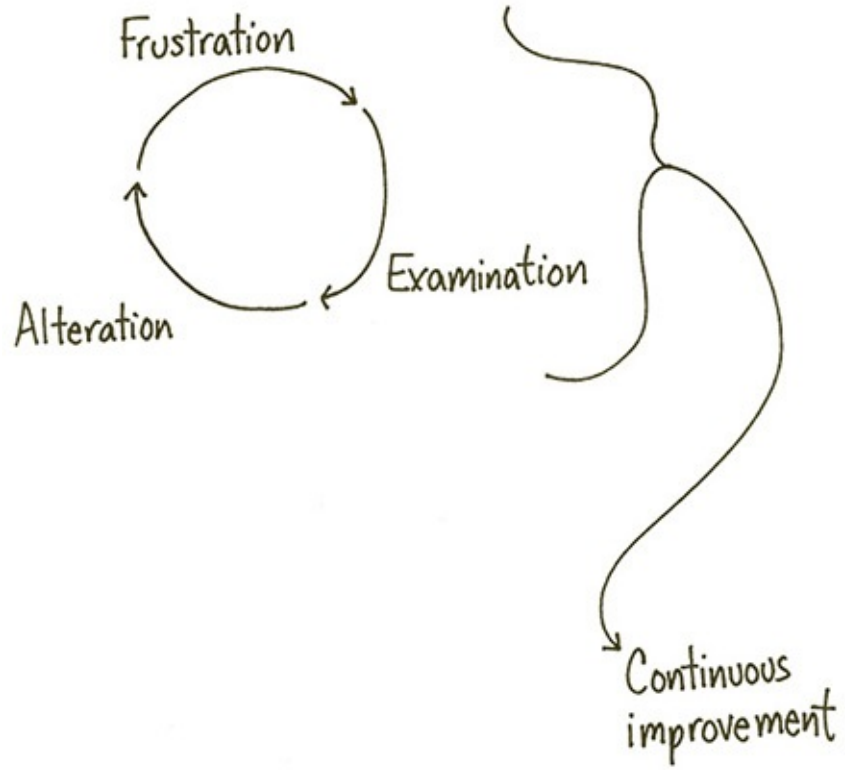
Get ~~REJECTED~~ A LOT

When you put yourself out there, a lot of people will reject, dismiss, or ignore you. But a few will embrace and champion you. While the nos may sting, only the yeses matter.



MAKE
A
Mess.

Rearrange furniture, elements, ideas, and opportunities. Then put the pieces back into a different and better order. It's time to put the creativity back into creative destruction.

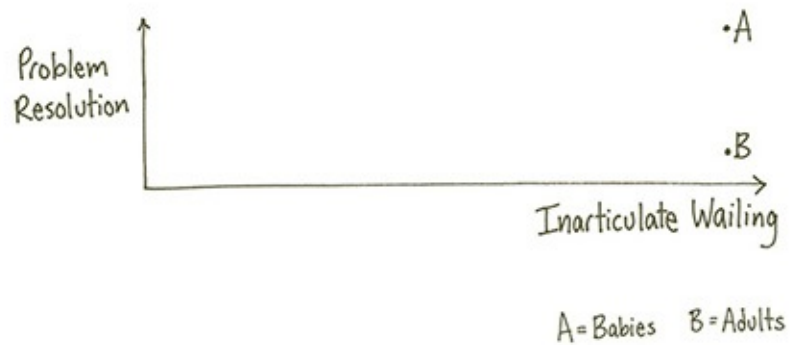


Whine Productively.

If things are unsatisfactory:

1. Document them.
2. Change them.

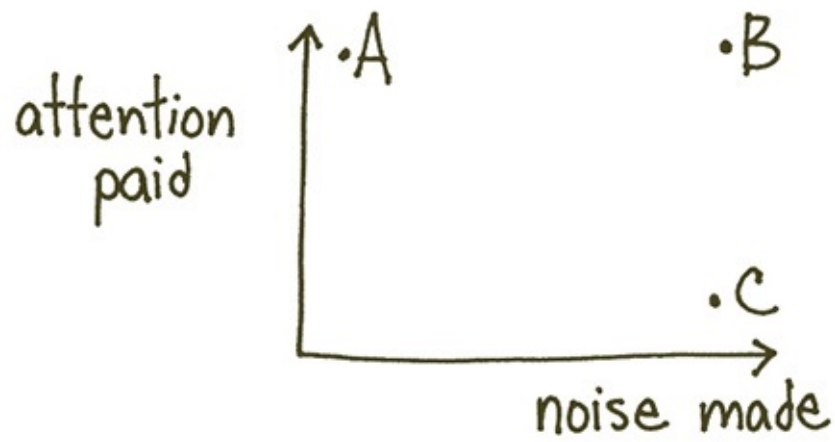
Few people ever bother with that second bit.



WIELD
SHARP
WORDS.

“Your tongue is a weapon kept sharp with use.” —An anonymous smart person

Choose your words wisely.

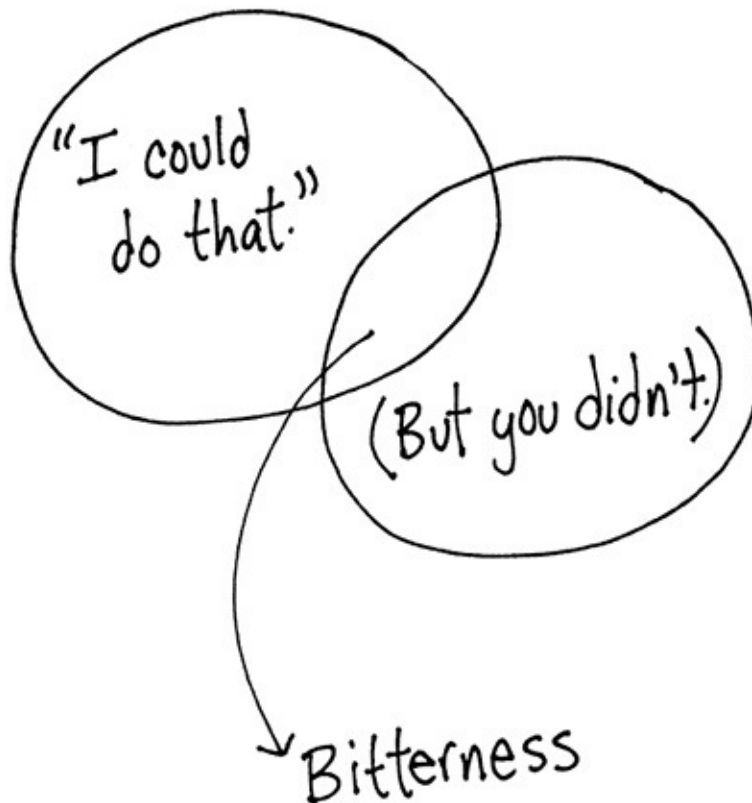


A = Compelling argument
B = Sirens & Bombs
C = Ranting

Step 10

Ignore the Scolds.

Boring is safe, and you will be told to behave yourself. The scolds could have, would have, should have. But they didn't. And they resent you for your adventures.



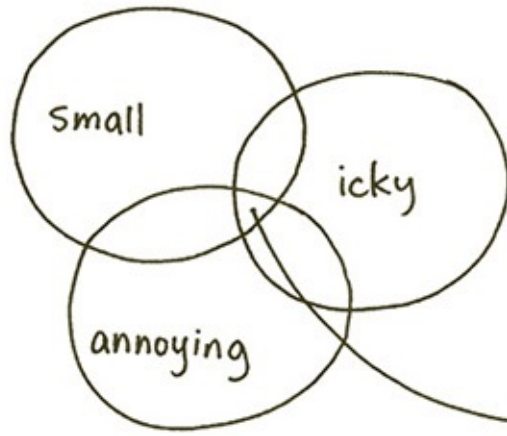
JETTISON
TOXIC
CARGO

If you've got bad memories attached to places, things, and even people:
Let them go. You will feel lighter almost immediately.



Avoid people
who make
you feel
CRAPPY.

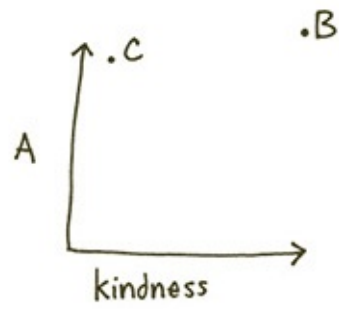
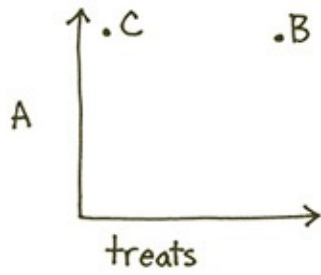
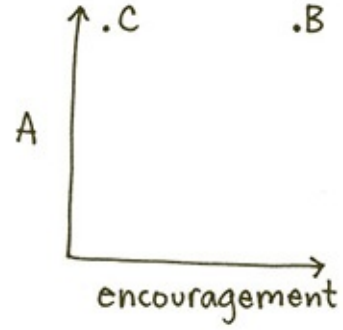
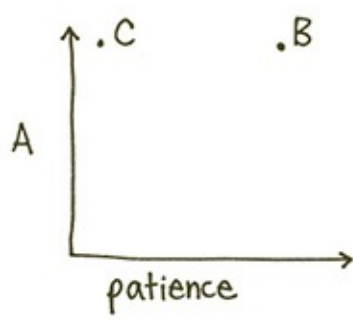
Don't return their calls or take their antagonistic bait. The only way to win their game is to quit playing along. Besides, no one is fascinated by your constant irritation.



→ Household
pests
&
the people they
remind you of

Don't be
MEAN
to yourself.

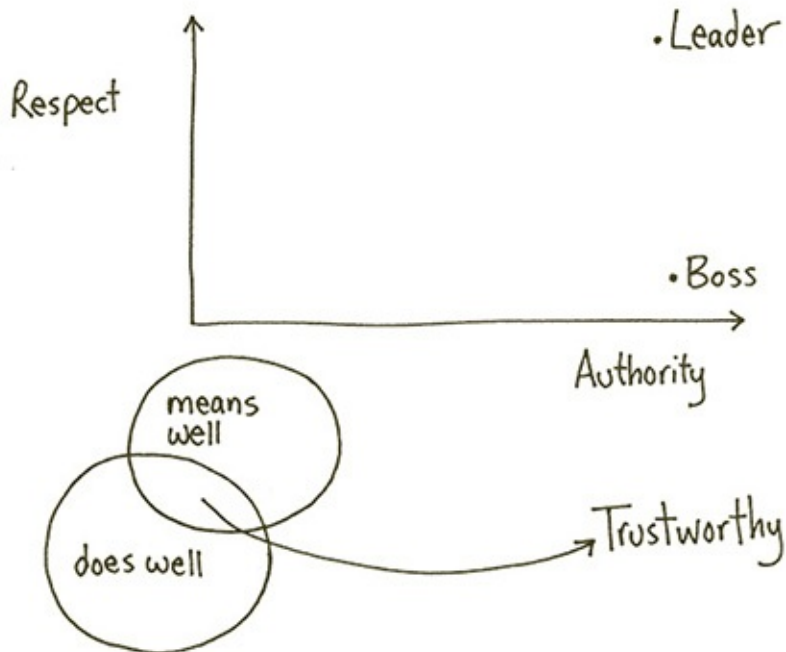
The heinous little voice inside your head that puts you down and wears you out? Shut it up with actions that prove it wrong. Caution: This may take years.



A=What you deserve B=True C=False

Don't TAKE
ADVICE
From people you
Don't RESPECT.

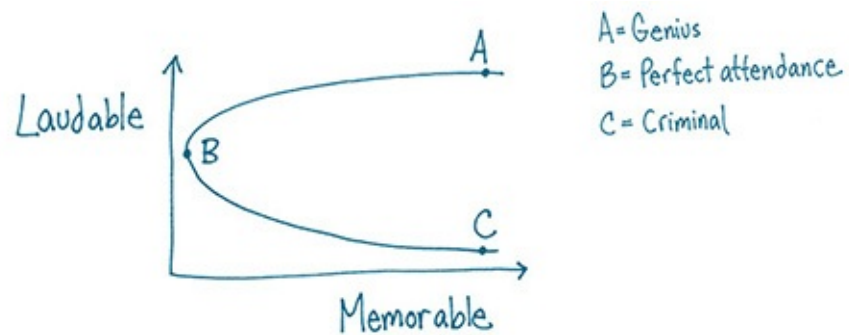
Unless you want to turn out like them. Which you obviously don't.



Learn from ALL examples.

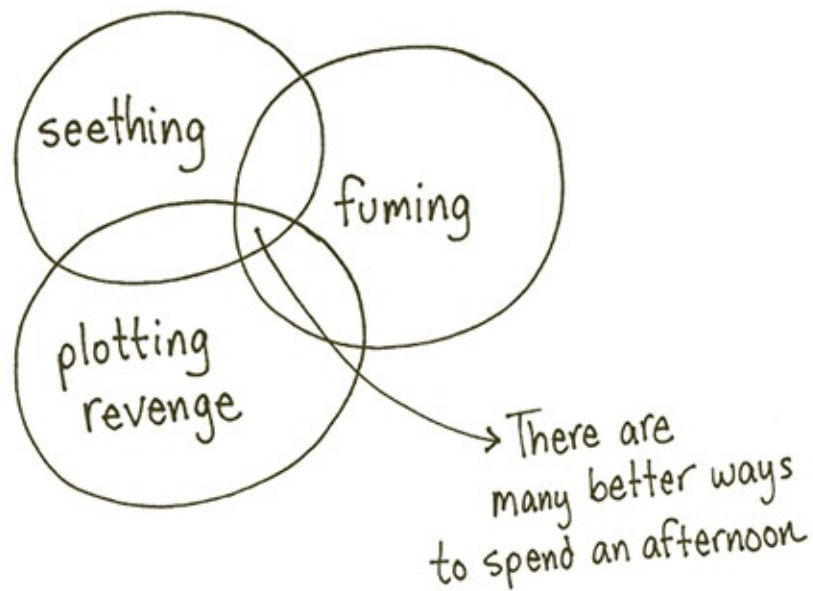
You can learn how not to live by occasionally interacting with jerks. You can learn how to live from paying attention to people you admire.

Think of it as behavioral research.



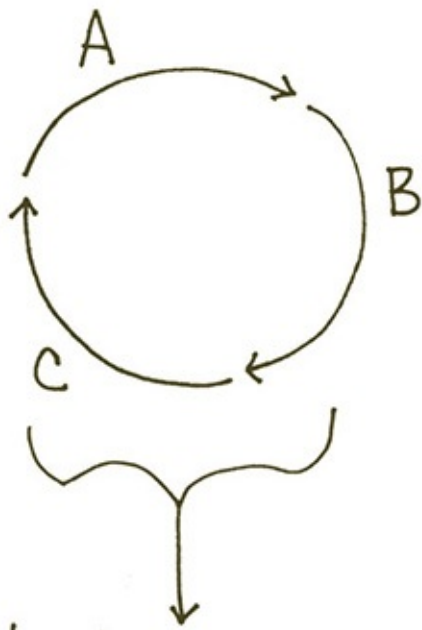
Forgive

Most people, even the nasty ones, are doing the best they can. They may not deserve your love and admiration, but your scorn burns the both of you.



Fear the
WRONG
DESTINY.

Waiting around for a sign? Sorry, you have to paint your own.



How to ensure you
do not accomplish anything

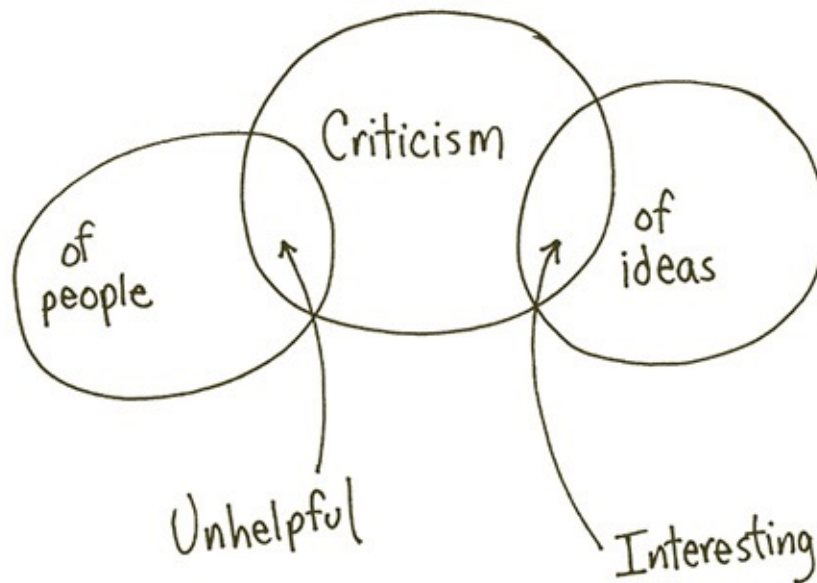
A = Wish for something to happen

B = Wait for someone else to bring it to you

C = Curse the darkness

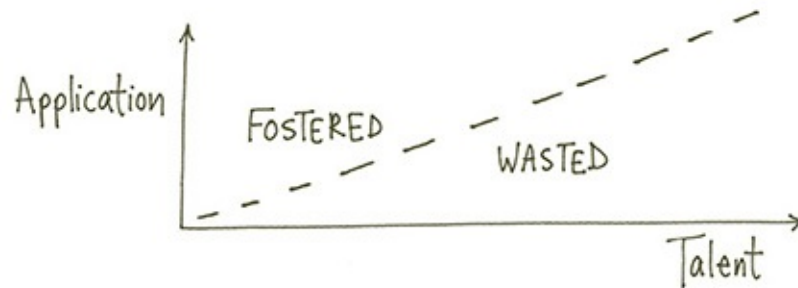
Don't
confuse
taunts
with
critiques.

It's only constructive if you can use it to get better.



TRUST YOUR TALENTS.

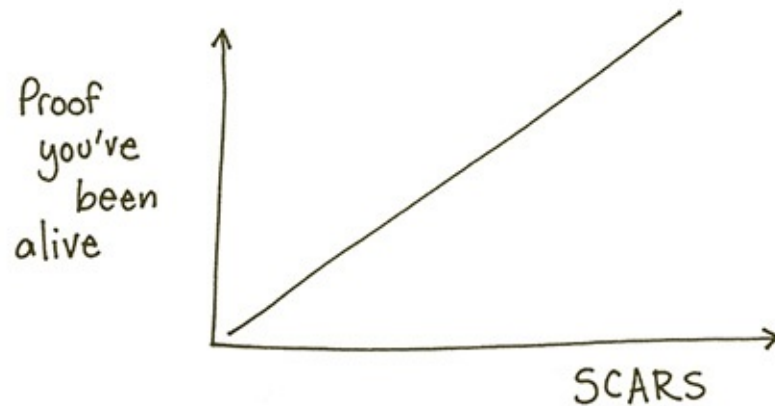
Whoever said you just weren't (_____) enough was an ass. And they were wrong.



Belligerently ADVANCE.

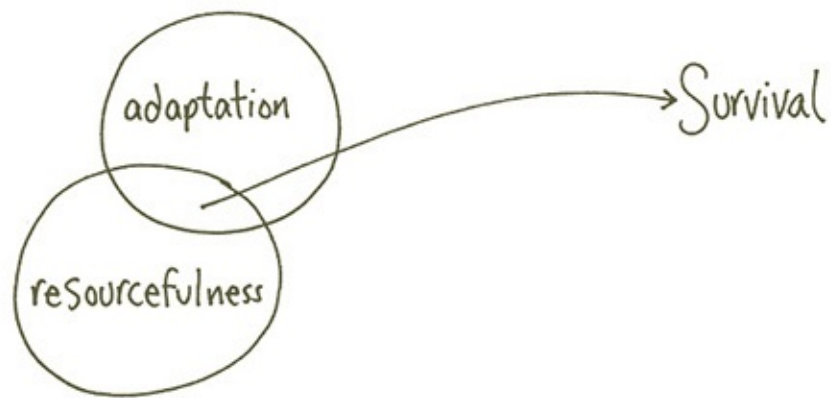
Maybe your past isn't perfect. Maybe it was brutal. Maybe you were brutal. Maybe you've got more scars than you thought one skin could hold. You can't linger on those thoughts. You will drown in them.

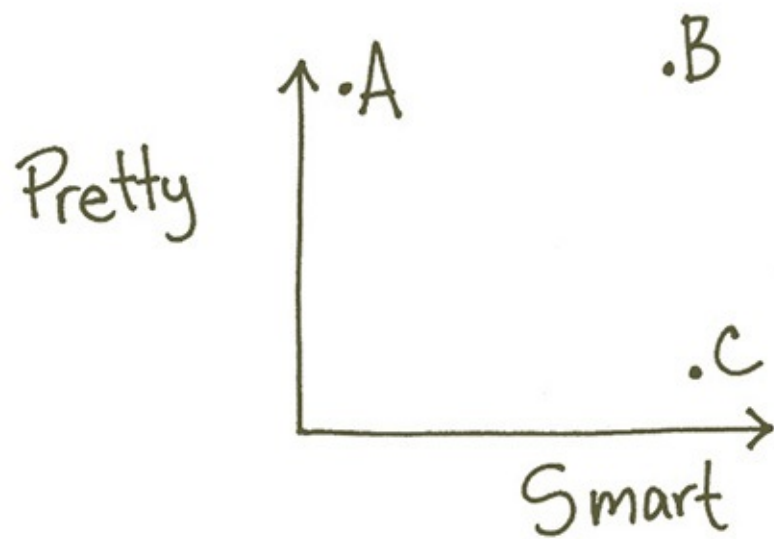
After all, it's only an interesting backstory if you can get past it.



Ponder *the* Platypus.

The platypus is a beast cobbled from seemingly leftover parts. Yet it thrives and it's amazingly unique. Don't be afraid to cobble together your own functional set of interesting assets.





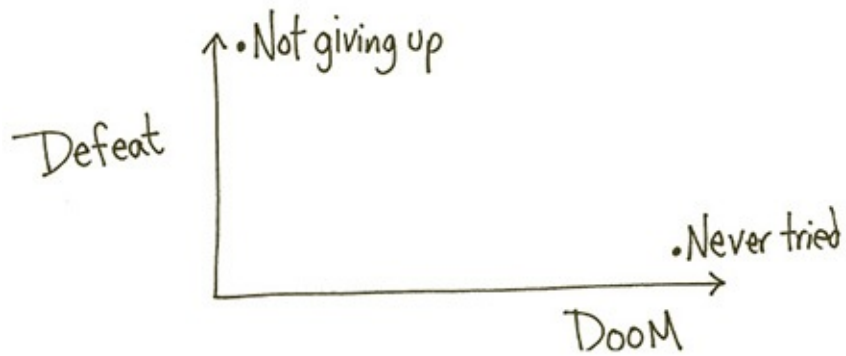
A = Eaten by predators

B = More girls than you think

C = Heimlich Maneuver

Give Extra Chances —
ESPECIALLY
to yourself

If you're not dead, you can still change things.



Epilogue: In Summary

IN SUMMARY:

Adventurous

Generous

Active

Strange

Caring

Humble

Daring

Original

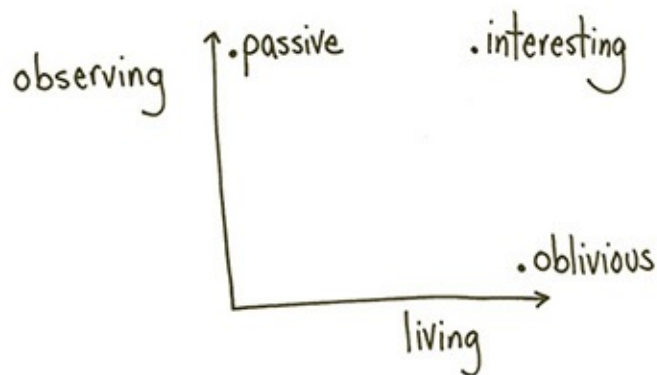
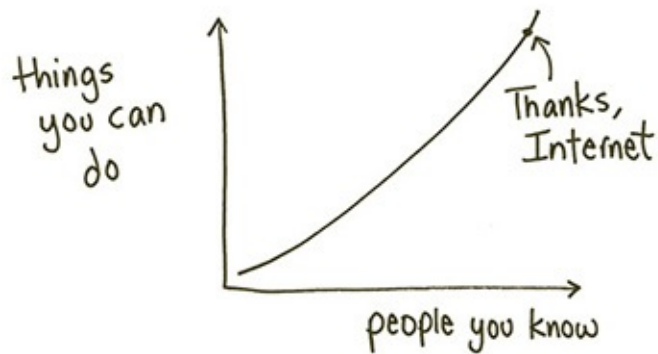
Brave

+ Self-Assured

Interesting

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About the Author



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JESSICA HAGY is best known for her Webby Award–winning blog *Indexed*. Her cartoons regularly appear in the *New York Times*, and she writes an online column for *Forbes*. Ms. Hagy lives with her family in Seattle. Visit jessicahagy.info for more on Jessica.

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