

MOSAIC THEORY

Discovering Life

Johnnie @ www.as-ideas-struck.com

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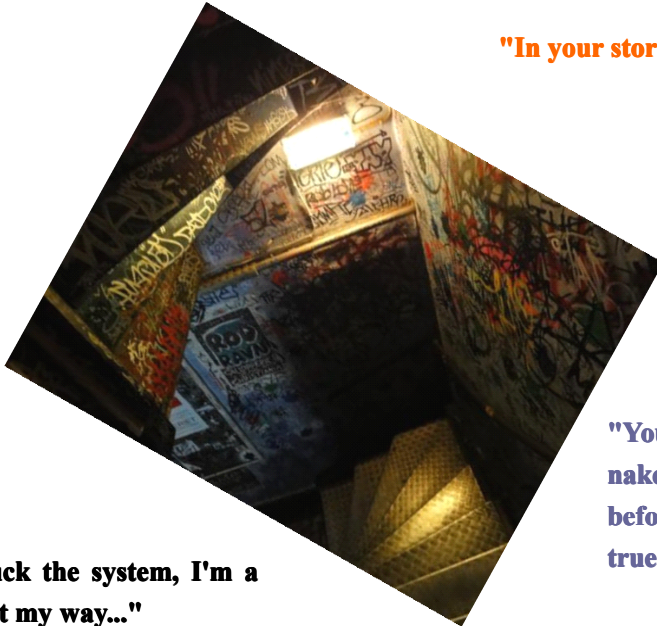
**"Thank you to those who
inspire courage and show
us new horizons..."**

"...fk you to those who
kill our imagination and
spread quiet desperation."**

"What is life?

**A truth in
a thousand lies."**

"In your stories, i see mine."



**"Pray in bad times...
Pray more in good
times..."**

**"You gotta get
naked and hurt,
before you can find
true love..."**

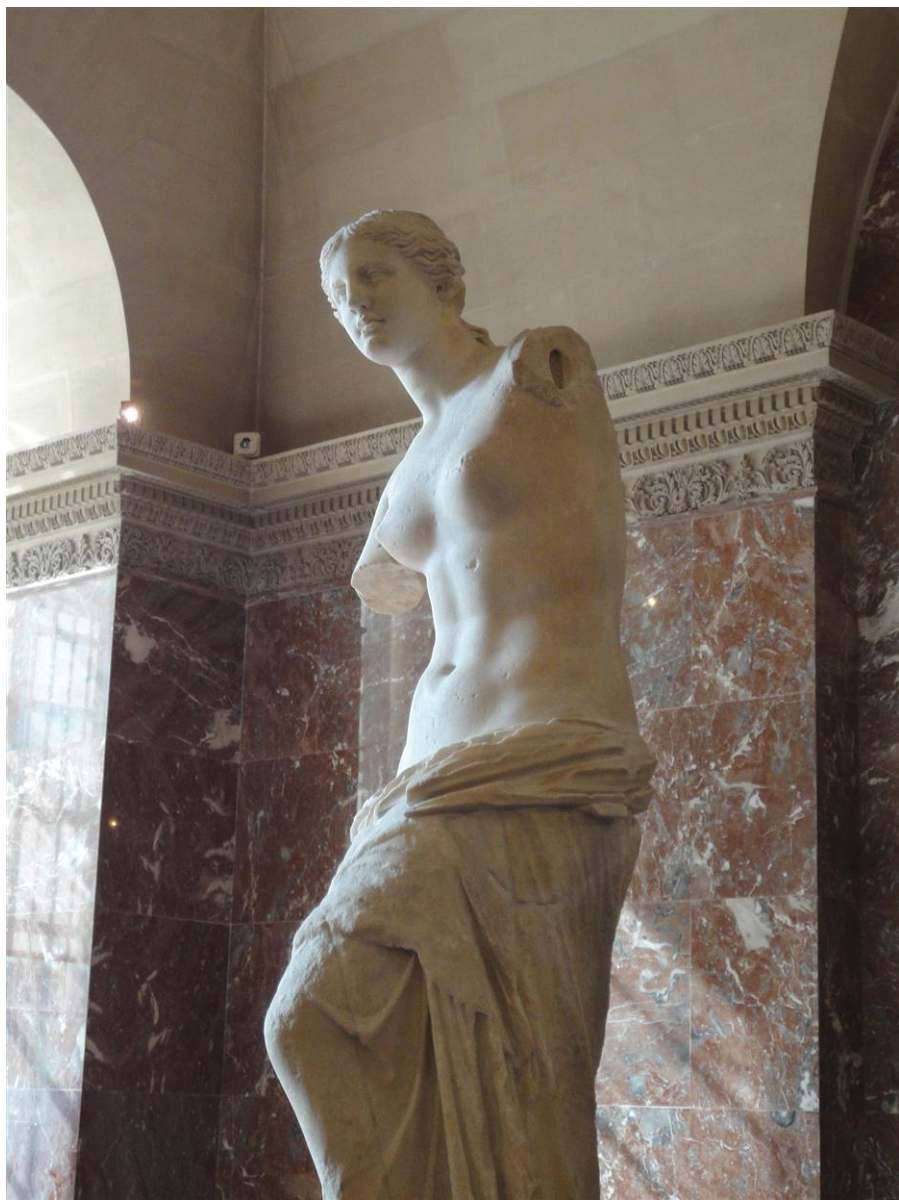
**"Fuck the system, I'm a
do it my way..."**

**"We'll never get the answers,
yet we can't stop searching... it's
just our destiny."**

"Loneliness, it's all you need to feel your existence..."

**"Make
sure
you
LIVE
before
you
die ..."**

"But the story never finished..."





1. How to Chase Your Dream?

...instead of giving up everything you got to go on a pilgrimage or adventure in pursuit of the craziest dreams & goals...how about this: consider how to leverage on your past experience (e.g. the college major "imposed" by your parents or the job you are in but hate now) while pursuing your true values & passion?

Maybe you don't have to give up everything? Maybe you don't have to choose between being a modern gypsy (& making your family suffer) and being a walking zombie (& burying your dreams)?

Maybe you don't have to leave the corporate jungle, erase business from your brain for good and go into the wild in Alaska to be a true artist? Maybe all you need to do is make your experience tangible and paint them with water color?

Again, it's a life of endless possibilities, there's no sure path or formula for success...some people stuck to their 'damned jobs' and eventually realized their calling in the least-expected, innovative way...some people gave up everything, went on a totally different journey, re-inventing their life into an equally meaningful success...

Bottom line: you don't have to copy any of these people just because you happened to hear their stories (magz, tv, blogs, etc)...you design your own path, you live your own story, you decide your own legacy...and it doesn't have to be like anyone else's...

Just make sure you do something for your calling, values, and people you care everyday.

2. What i saw in all these...

Read an interview with an "all-star networker", who said he is "not a huge fan of the word 'networking'"...he just "love people and love finding out what people do...interested in many different fields and people"...

Seth Godin had a blog entry titled "Two ways to deal with 'no'"..."You could be more gracious than if you'd won the work...And you can make it clear that you're in it for more than just a sale, and you'll be around if they ever need you."

Coach Wooden, well-known for his record 10 NCAA titles, said this in almost every interview: "my players never heard me mention winning"...he considers himself a teacher..."we're in the education business"...

.....

...what i saw in all these (and countless other examples)...are stories of Big Picturers who look beyond personal interests/vanity and go for something bigger than themselves...a higher purpose, or a bigger picture...

Paradoxically, they achieved what average people yearn for simply because they don't care about it (what average people yearn for)...they are busy pursuing something bigger...

... ..

Wondering if someone will interpret it this way: if we want the victories & glory of a "great leader" we should start showing more care to our team members? Should we strengthen personal relationships with our team members (quite the opposite of what legendary Mr. Sloan suggested)

knowing it will make them work their tails off for us?

My belief is, if we only replicate what the big picturers do, we are only degrading the natural display of genuine care into inhumane "skills"...

...what we have to do, after all, is just forget about ourselves for a moment and really CARE...

[...so even if we don't win 10 NCAA titles, even if we screw every interview up...we can still look back 30 years from now, not in guilt or regret or shame or denial, but with tons of pride...]

3. What'd you do in a **ed-up day?**

A ****ed-up day. No illustration needed, you know what it's like.

I just had two.

As a kind of outlet (somehow), I consumed more than needed, it made things worse.

I danced, it didn't really make things better.

I reluctantly turned to things that I should do (from reading/study to house chores to disciplined diet & schedule), it made things better. Somehow.

In retrospect, if you had a ****ed-up day, there's something else I suggest you do...

Tell your spouse/parent/kid/dog, your loved one, you love him/her.

Plus a hug of at least one full minute.

Do it twice.

Then you realize you didn't waste the day, then there's something memory-worthy, something you can be proud of, something your loved one appreciates...

All in a ****ed-up day.

4. What do you do when the trust is broken?

You made a promise, you constantly delivered on time...until some day for some reason you failed to keep up the promise. You failed and disappointed your people...

Damn.

What next?

What do you do when the trust is broken?

You can simply go away; or you can tell the truth in your apology and seek forgiveness; or you can tell a convincing story to cover your mistake; or you can just roll up your sleeve and start it all over...

But building trust takes time. You know that.

You know you just lost something really precious.

You know this time round it'll take much longer and it'll be harder.

You know you have much to lose and sacrifice in the process.

Worse, you know you might never gain their trust again, ever.

It might be easier to just start something new somewhere else...though in your heart you know what's the right thing to do.

Do the right thing. Ignore the noise, just go work.

Yes it's painful, it's so damn hard, it's like bracing for the bullets...

...it's also a chance to prove you really care.

5. Thoughts on humor... and more...

One thing i learnt, after slightly more than a year in a public speaking club, is anyone can be humorous. If you see people labeled "serious" or "boring" crack out witty remarks and funny jokes often enough, you'll come to this same conclusion.

Opposite to what most believe, humor is not a character trait, it's not a skill, it's a state, when you're totally relaxed and comfortable and trusting the people around you. Traditionally, we are so busy categorizing people, and *trying so hard to fit ourselves into those categories* (It's fun sometimes i must admit, but be careful, such efforts shape our reality). We then try to live up to those category descriptions, and expect others to do so.

Homo sapiens use intelligence to create beautiful, coherent, closed intellectual structures then let them shut out real-life possibilities.

Time and again when we find an engineer or lab scientist interesting, we treat her as an exception. It happens so often, and we are amused so often, yet seldom do we question the presumption itself. Why are there so many 'exceptions'? Maybe those theories of categorization and stereotypes aren't right in the first place? Maybe the reason those theories seem right is simply because we choose to aligning our action to them?

Everything exists for a reason, but not necessarily a right one.

Humor is a state, the so-called 'boring' people may just have less chance to experience it. Or they may have been told all their lives it's not something that fits their identity, that they should even try to experience...

Like many other things in life, we should stop intellectually cornering the

possibilities, and start exploring.

6. "Do what you love, and the money will follow"?

I deeply believe in this statement, with one condition though.

When you do dive in to do what you love, forget this statement.

7. What i learnt from life when i was not blogging...

There are so many things going on in life, but there's no excuse for a slack from our work on mission. I learned a lot from different people and different experiences in those days when i don't blog or write. And here's a quick sharing some ideas that may be of value to you...

1. Don't Add, unless You Subtract.

Chrisandre's note: from John Naisbitt's book Mindset. e.g. don't add any new activity (e.g. learning to dance Tango) to your daily life unless you're very sure which existing activity (e.g. daily workout at the gym) you're ready to give up. Understood as opportunity cost in Economics. It helps you focus.

2. Consistency. Consistency!

I would argue it's more important than focus or specialization (yeah i'm aware these are different concepts). Some people advocate being a specialist, others a generalist, i believe you've met them both. Personally i believe in a mix that people in IDEO call T-person.

Whether you want to focus on perfecting your trade as the world's top specialist, or synergize your diverse exposures to success as a generalist, this dichotomy choice doesn't really matter. Don't let it bother you.

What really matters is your Consistent action. Be it focused, be it loose; be it a daily effort, or a monthly one, or hourly or yearly, just make sure it happens every time it's due. If the workload is too daunting, move the deadline forward, slice and spread the tasks, just don't stop, don't give up.

Work with Consistency, eventually you'll get there.

8. When September ends...

Have you ever considered this before going to bed?

That you have just survived another day on this lonely planet(since we haven't found another with such rich diversity of lives yet) without suffering from deadly diseases, starvation, violence, torture...

If not, you may want to think a bit about it today? Before September ends?

It can be just another normal day, or you can make it special. It's your choice.

Answer it with Action.

9. Communication at individual level seems to make more sense...

Talked with an acquaintance whose hometown has been in the news headlines lately for social unrest and racial issues...i was once told by another person (from this same place) that those 2 ethnic groups never really get along and they have separate neighbourhoods...

Yet this guy has a neighbour who's from the other ethnic group, and they formed good relationship.

On individual level, it seems like we can easily connect with each other.

Collectively, however, we are more likely to fall prey to irrational dehumanization and various prejudices...

Somehow.

10. Consistency

It's the answer to the question: what's the common quality needed for living both i) a healthy life and ii) your calling?

These are not one off projects, thus it's a bit more difficult to set concrete goals for them. But they can be done.

The challenge is to consistently take care of these aspects in life. To put in the efforts, to pay the price. These are important, long term benefits, requiring you to consistently work on them without an exciting picture in mind and only occasional emotional stimulants.

So? the conclusion?

Habits.

11. Hit!

When asked: of all the things that he had learnt in public speaking clubs, what's the one that proved to be most useful in other areas of life...

This author & presenter answered without hesitation: the ability to Hit the Point Quickly.

12. We as a species...

I got a weird feeling that, with the progress of technology, evolution of culture, and breakthroughs in various medical treatments, we have been putting more and more artificial stuff into our body...from plastic surgery to metal used in operations to artificial organs to some kind of micro chip...

These are not necessarily bad things...we should not fall trap to the popular "natural" label and blindly believe everything that's natural is the best choice...

...only that we may soon reach a point where we'll need to redefine what we are, or what we believe we are...

Boy, it's gonna change everything...

13. Tony Robbins vs. those who only talk the talk...

If Tony Robbins said sth and he failed (divorced guy with a book called Perfect Marriage), many will still think he's respectable. He's not saint, he's just a human being who's not perfect, but he taught us really powerful and useful stuff...

...what if he started teaching us these powerful stuff after his divorce (but before his fame)?

Watch out, the next person who only knows to "talk the talk", whom you are very likely to frown upon, may carry exactly the same powerful stuff that Tony's got.

14. Technology technology...

Our relationships with technology is a bit like relationships with our close friends or family members, sometimes...

...when we get more and more used to each other's company in our lives, we may gradually take things for granted...when we become so (inter)dependent we can't even live on our own (whether we realize it or not), we start complaining...somehow...

Doesn't this happen to our relationship with technology too...?

15. Pain

Went to fix a long-delayed problem with my tooth...

During the process, experienced several real acute pain that lasted one and a half second...

Suddenly realized, it's been such a long time in life that I had not experienced any severe physical suffering (and those coughs and fever were nothing)...not that I'm sick enough to ask for it...

But if you have similar feeling, you know we have one more thing to appreciate.

p.s. the dentist's skills were good, without narcotics those pain was inevitable...or so i believe...

16. Division of labour...

...is not just about productivity and economic well-being for everybody.

It's about trust.

Whether you are a teacher or beer brewer or banker or dentist, whenever you are chosen to provide your service, your client is giving you their trust that you won't abuse the information asymmetry...

With trust comes responsibility. Take good care of both, play your little role with the big picture in mind.

And don't forget to be proud.

Yeah somebody must have said this before, but somehow we seem to have forgotten it...

17. It's Now

Another story in another community shared by a young lady...

You got the message, it's all in the title.

Stop hoping, waiting, planning, thinking, considering...

...whatever it is, ask yourself: does it really matter?

Then make a decision.

Drop it; or Go Get It.

18. He went bankrupt when he was 25...

Went to a public speaking club several weeks ago. It was a weekend.

A young man was giving his first ever speech in the club, telling story of his first ever business venture, which went bankrupt when he was 25...

The lessons? He said,

1. Business models that worked in the past doesn't necessarily work now.
2. You should always think outside of the box.

Don't seem to be something really new or exciting or record-worthy right?

You won't think so if you Really listen to that Person telling his story, not just the ideas...

19. Don't Let a Day Slip by without Really Living It

No matter how tight a schedule you've got, how stressed-out you are, how your time is beyond your own control...be mindful of what's happening between your Self and your surrounding...

You will discover something worthy.

20. The argument in philosophy primer...

We can't really understand this world because we are part of it.

I first learnt about this idea in a novel-form philosophy primer. Then a quote by Hayek (or some social scientist I can't remember). Then in George Soros' book.

We can't really understand this world because we are part of it + our belief/understanding actually affects the reality.

It seems so obvious it should be common sense...but it never prevail in our mainstream education or decision makers' offices.

When it comes to shaping reality, too many forces are at play. Too many variables, mainly human factors.

So I have to agree with Mr Soros when he attributes the financial armageddon to the prevalence of such fundamental mistakes among elites in our society.

... ..

To simplify and inaccurately put it, collectively we as a species are stupid.

21. If your day sucked...

...why not just let it be?

It just occurred to me that we buy into the self-help culture so much we automatically think we should always be happy. Even if we are not we should try or pretend to be...we should be positive and sometimes it's even a sign of politeness...

We can say it's right generally. Often it makes things easier and our lives happier (though we don't really know why in the first place happiness should be so important to a meaningful & fulfilled life).

And we forgot certain 'negative' emotions can be a source of really meaningful efforts or beautiful art works or dogged persistence. And we forgot these can be part of those precious experiences in life through which we grow...that we may savor decades later...

So if your day sucked, instead of rushing to cheer up yourself immediately...why not just sit back and let it be...let your life happen and feel it consciously...

...the moments that are meaningfully and beautifully melancholy.

DATE

2

RESULTS

DEER

for System.



22. Urban legend by world-class gurus...

Zig Ziglar used it; Brian Tracy used it; Anthony Robbins used it.

The study has been widely cited. It tracked the achievement of Class 1953 graduates of Yale University and found that those 3% with written goals at the time of graduation subsequently did better in their lives.

The staff at Fast Company Magazine did the digging and found that the 'study' didn't exist. An urban legend.

Interesting. A study that didn't even exist has over the years spread all over the world and motivated peoples around the globe. So if my guess is right, there'll be plenty of people who are ready to defend those gurus.

Even if it's not real story, it wasn't their fault. Plus the story has value, etc, etc.

Turned out that what we want is not truth; what we want is story that sounds true and, more importantly, makes us feel better. Marketers know all these very well.

What your humble blogger here thinks?

No blaming here...but no matter how sincerely and passionately they want to help others...consciously or unconsciously, the gurus know it's business.

23. When they say "everybody has a role to play"...

...they are right, literally. Though this line is often used because of its political correctness.

Despite one giant scandal after another that blew through news headlines over the past two years, economist Dan Ariely told us the largest damage to the economy/business world comes not from a single super-greedy fraud or Ponzi scheme. It's from thousands and thousands of little "misconduct".

Same thing to the honorable & ethical efforts to change the world. Despite our hero complex, real changes are results of millions of tiny little consistent acts by thousands of seemingly insignificant people.

If you aren't those who occupy headlines all the time, it's about you and me.

24. When they say "rules are made to be broken"...

...they are right, literally.

There are many reasons we make rules. One of them: we need order and certainty. Despite the practical benefits (from order & certainty) that we have long taken for granted, it's mainly a psychological need.

In practice, in reality, there are always smart people who can spot the opportunity to break rules and take advantage from it. They take calculated risks. How about those rule-abiding people? I'll leave this to you.

In practice, in reality, we always encounter situations where rules look stupid. Really stupid. So we make exceptions, again and again, until breaking these rules seem so natural and inevitable...then we set new rules.

Yeah you get it, once new rules are set, the whole new circle runs again.

25. 9/11

The tragedy we can never forget.

As a matter of fact, I'm not quite sure... I talked about the Sentimental Moments, the period when heavy prices or extraordinary events remind us to be nice, so we treat everyone around with respect and dignity...

...but when the emotional impacts fade away with time, wouldn't we just go back to our thoughtless daily routine (or struggle for survival)? When our generations are gone, wouldn't it become just a little piece of the long & cold & lifeless history?

For those unfortunate who have been deeply hurt, everyday is the day to pray for the souls in the heaven; for people who are really determined to do something about it, everyday is the day to carry on the peace movement.

So why the hype in media coverage and austerity in thinking/conversation on this very day? Does it really make a meaningful difference?

You just never know.

We just have to do it, try to keep the painful memory afresh, with the hope that every year someone somewhere will join the great dreamers+doers trying to make a difference...

26. Theory Mending

Did you also notice this interesting phenomenon?

1.

There are tons of articles telling you different ways to find out what your target customers want (demand research & analysis). In some of them, interestingly, you may find at the end the last tip saying this: sometimes your customers don't know what they want...

It's just another way of saying: to hell with demand research & analysis and just follow your heart.

2.

In articles or books or blogs claiming the death of last century's business philosophy, and telling us how to stand out & do something really unconventional & counter-intuitive...you may eventually find something that's not so new at all: business fundamentals.

It's just another way of saying: last century's business philosophy is not dead yet.

I call this Theory Mending.

You have really brilliant ideas, ideas that really help, so you gain people's trust and support. As time goes by, however, people found your ideas don't work wonders in every situation...

It's very normal. Do you still expect human society to be logical and mechanic and running on certain universal laws?

Yet you feel obliged to mend your theory; you need to make it workable under all circumstances. Maybe it's the support you gained, the following you care, maybe it's the psychological need for consistency...for whatever reason, you mend your theory.

It's now more neutral and less mind-blowing.

Is it because of the rationality that we human beings uniquely possess? We put So Much emphasis on the beautiful consistency & harmony of theories (despite the fact that it takes us further away from understanding dynamic human societies), while sometimes even in a lengthy thesis, it's actually those sporadic sparks of inspirations that really make a difference for us...

Do we need conclusion? If so...

i) let's face it, we are mortals, we are not here to give the answers. We spark possibilities, that's it. Even your most loyal fans shouldn't believe in and rely on you 100%. They get inspirations from different sources and create their own philosophies.

ii) I'm not saying we should quit scientific approach or logical thinking in social sciences and humanities. Just that when you're done, take a break, step back, and take a look at the big picture. We both know the most beautiful theory doesn't reflect the robustly chaotic world we build...

27. Overwhelmed by life...

Somewhere on the journey, something drew you in. Like an ancient cave hidden by the road less traveled.

Then like an awe-inspiring giant fresco, the impact on your mind and senses were so rich and intense and inevitable you could not move or breathe.

It was like forever. The air swirls and freezes and you just can't breathe.

...the sunlight sets in...yet before you got a chance to step back and make sense of it all, another whirlpool rolls you in...

It was like forever.

Embrace it, then. Immerse yourself in it. The flows of life. Dive in.

Before you know it, you'll be lying on a beach savoring sunrise from a brand new horizon.

But now, Dive In.

28. What do you do with new ideas...?

when you get new info/knowledge/ideas...what do you do with it?

1. try to figure out whether it makes sense with critical thinking first? to see if needs modification? Maybe then you can try to integrate it into your practice and see what happens...

or

2. treat it as a truth first? To put it into practice right away, and change your existing practice if necessary...and see what happens (and then you may modify & adjust along the way)...

Which one is better and more efficient? I'm afraid most people won't be able to give you a clear-cut answer.

We only know the answer lies in trials and experiments. Sometimes you really need to roll up your sleeves and make mistakes before eventually figuring out what works for you.

Not for 'them', for You.

29. A few things about goals...

1. You don't always need them...

....especially in arts, or in things that you love and enjoy doing, things that make you stay up working until 5am...in fact, you should not set goals in these things. Goals may limit your craziness and potential for superb breakthroughs and innovations.

2. The single most important thing to remember is the Price (despite what they all say)

Whether or not you have a goal, if you want to create or achieve something, you need to i) Decide the price you're willing to pay and ii) Go Pay it. Deciding the price means you make up your mind to give up something else in advance. So you can get distracted less and put in efforts consistently. If you're doing goal setting and planning, when you add one thing to the daily to-do list, considering deleting one item from you daily activity list. That's the price.

If you decided it's best not to have a goal in your poem writing, you still need to pay the price. You don't need to force yourself to churn out how many lines per day but you better regularly set aside some time to put together your thoughts and feelings.

3. Visualization

Yeah you already know that...so what's the smell of in the air and what's the color of your socks?

30. Ruined by mass appeal...

When I say I can see beauty & meaning in anything, I mean it.

I thought it over, and I'm serious about it.

When I say we can learn something from almost anybody, I mean it.

If you don't really believe so, don't act like you agree.

Please.

Sometimes, political correctness ruins ideas and sincere perspectives.

31. You heart will sense it

Some people enjoy impressing others; some enjoy connecting with others.

Some admire people who impress; some admire people who connect.

Some people play all the roles in their lives; some lost themselves in between.

Whichever type of people you are with, be yourself. Be what your heart wants you to be.

If you meet someone who's worth a real relationship, you heart will sense it.

32. Idea evangelism, wordless...

Why does spreading ideas have to do with words? Why must it be in the form of speeches or writings or blogging or lyrics or conversations?

It doesn't. If you aren't a person who loves dealing with words, no point forcing it, just follow the guidance from your inner being.

The colours, the melodies, the shapes & patterns, the numbers & formulas, the real-world movies... all are perfect vehicles for idea spreading.

It may even go beyond ideas.

Then what you pass on, is a life-changing spirit.

33. Music, unconsciously...

Music can change our lives.

Music that touches our souls; music with stories that move our hearts.

Music that unlock our unconscious minds; music that makes us cry.

Somehow. We just listen, and things happen.

Somehow. When we trust what we got inside, we live the freedom.

34. You wish...?

It was after an important exam, or contest, which you thought you totally screwed up. You wish you had put in a lot more efforts, you wish luck hadn't turned its back on you, you wish you could pass...

But you knew the chance was 0.01%.

Did you just let go and move on with your life? Had you been so disappointed with yourself you didn't even bother to check the results?

Chances are, you did check the results. And you might have passed.

Your brain, your rational judgment told you you wouldn't pass. But deep in your heart you didn't give up. When you said you wish, despite what other people think, despite what you yourself told others, your heart knew there was still chance... It could still happen, it was possible...

Your heart told you not to give up.

So when you started the sentence "I wish..." today, did you do that simply to feed the lunch conversation with interesting imagination or wild dreams? Deep in your heart you know the answer.

The question is, are you ready to pay the price?

35. What's your story?

A friend who's known for her seriousness just won a humourous speech contest.

Total surprise!

It's remarkable. It is the kind of story that people love to hear and love to tell and it's gonna be around for a while...

Doesn't it sound familiar? Hasn't something similar happened to your community or someone in your life? Or has it already happened to you?

If not, why don't just go create one?

36. Financial wisdom (maybe not that financial)...

"You are most likely to exceed the budget when you have none,"

37. i repeat, Dive In

Take your time to really figure out your Blueprint in life...don't rush, be patient, keep thinking, imagining...

When you're done, Dive In. It's how you get to know if you'll ever need any adjustment...

Learn to ignore the constant interruptions in this noisy world...with enough practice you can be really good at it...

...and allow me to keep repeating this...

Don't think, just Dive In.

38. Confession of a bankerartist...

"I'm not proud nor passionate about my work. I didn't quit (and do arts full-time) because I still have something to contribute and I'm still learning. Plus I need to eat. Financial pressure will make my family and creativity suffer. The need to make money out of painting will pollute my originality. I compromise my time, my days in life, so that I won't have to compromise my arts..."

39. now, hang on a little longer...

You made the efforts to sketch your blueprint, now trust it...at least a bit longer...

Doing the things that you love, that you are truly passionate about, that you are born to do, may involve dealing with things that you don't like.

So you need lots of discipline to bring you where you want to go.

Over the months/years, you did the soul searching, you did the gap analysis, you identified your goals and determined the prices to pay, you made and revised the Master Blueprint of Life with detailed plans...then you plunge in to pay your dues day in & day out swimming towards your destination.

It's a tough run, it's not for everybody. You know what it takes.

Some days into the journey, things happen. They always do. It can be as trivial as a terrible mood after a bad day; or it can be someone or something that storms into your life story with the burning twister so authoritative it burns through your mind and turns your beliefs & plans upside down.

You feel like giving up.

It's like you're just enlightened/awaken to see all the flaws and stupidity and unnecessary plans that are just not going to make your dreams come true. The scheduled marathon training seems downright absurd given your calling as a physician...

There may be moments when you really believe your original Master Blueprint of Life is torn & crashed & destroyed and that it was wrong & worthless...

Not matter what or who they are, Don't let them do this to you.

Don't let them break your plan and discipline and hard-earned momentum just like this.

Just set aside some time in the weekend, or go to bed 30mins later each day for one month, or even take a vacation, to really scrutinize your Blueprint and your mind. Eventually you'll find the adjustments that your original Blueprint might need are no big deal.

And you'll be glad you did discipline yourself to still go run the marathons.

40. LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD!!!

I've probably said this many times already, allow me to shout it out again: LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD!!!

On the path to making dreams come true, we refer to successful people as references. When we see people who made it big have background, or character, or beliefs, or choices made that are similar to ours, we felt so much more confident and convinced about our odds of getting there.

On the path to making dreams come true, we refer to successful people as models. We try to figure out what they believed, how they acted, so we can copy and get the same results.

But sometimes you just can't fit in and align with those role models that you studied. Over the years you explored and figured out and adjusted your values, your character, your models, your strengths, your goals & ultimate missions in life... and they simply don't jive with what you got from those proven people.

You're so unlike anyone of them. It's so frustrating, it's so unfair...

It's not. It simply means you have to stop copying those authorities and beat out your own path. It simply means you're destined to be a leading pioneer who opens up a whole new panorama for others. It means you've got to stop looking back, stop finding comfort and confidence from other people's stories; you just have to trust your guts and charge forward.

Nobody can tell you what's like out there, nobody can show you a neatly sketched road map, not a single billionaire life coach can tell how far you can go...

You're on your own, you got to paint your vision from scratch, you got to LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD, then try & experiment & find your own route, 'cause you are the chosen one. No one's ever been there.

You Are.

41. 5-min Tango drill...

This post is about Focus and Consistency.

It's better to do a mere 5-min Tango practice for 3650 days in a row, then to participate in a one-week intensive workshop and put it away after 3 months of enthusiastic dancing.

If you're not living in an island alone, there're way too many things that can distract you from your plan, whatever it is. And these distractions make you feel busy and less guilty about giving up on your scheduled practice/study/whatever...

Then just make it a stressless 5-min daily practice, make yourself comfortable with the notion of effortless "daily commitment", watch the momentum built up by your consistency (and enjoy the sense of accomplishment)...

You will become unstoppable.

42. Think about africa...

Seriously. It's not a damn sarcastic joke.

When someone really got on your nerve, when you had a sh***y day, when you got the 1003th rejections or setbacks...think about Africa.

Think about those children who were born into rain of bullets and made child soldiers, think about innocent people that were raped and killed, think about people who destroy themselves and the innocent without really knowing the reason...

And think about people who profit from the civil wars.

Think about how easily we can choose to ignore the horrible things happening around the world...

43. Why were you so into it...?

...have you ever been into something, some projects (like a performance, a competition, etc), that haunt you 24 hrs a day, sucking out all your energy, distracting you from all other things in life, making you excited and scared alternatively...until everything's done and finished...

...then you feel relieved and happy with what you've accomplished. Or you feel upset if things didn't work out. Or you regret all the sacrifices as the project literally turned your life and relationships upside down...

Either way, it captured your passion. It should have (at least) touched upon what you really really want out of life. Don't rush to shovel the experience out of your memory in your new-found relaxed days; carefully review it...

Why were you so into it?

What did it reveal about what you *really* want in life...?

Think hard.

44. We can all change, it's just the nostalgia...

...of the old days.

Nowadays there are all sorts of techniques out there that can help you change. There are lots of success stories too, about how a shy introvert was turned into a charismatic superstar, etc, etc...

It definitely makes things easier for us, compared with our ancestors who needed superior will power and lots of struggle in order to be what they aspired to be. On the flip side, it can also help us get over emotions like guilt, which we might actually deserve sometimes.

The guilt that can make us better persons, that makes us really go Earn what we've got.

But that's another story, I digressed. What I wanted to tell is the story of an introvert who successfully changed himself into an extrovert, and let's call this guy You. You made more friends and contacts, went to more parties and made more money and 'had more fun' in life...

Only that at some point of the journey, when you feel everything is great and finally you are enjoying the success & popularity that always seem so elusive when you were quiet and contemplative, something or someone triggers a nostalgia that makes you miss the old days when you paint alone in the room richly filled with winter sunlight and tranquility, or those moments when you learnt about human nature by being a quiet observer...

The nostalgia bites.

Then you wonder if it's possible to really change one's personality. Then you

wonder if the sacrifices were all worth it. Then you wonder why you thought being an introvert or extrovert really have anything to do with your success and fulfillment in life...

No right, no wrong. It's just the nostalgia. It might never emerge in your life, or it might catch you by surprise. And it bites.

Advice? Before committing yourself to any major "personality change", make sure you know what you're getting yourself into.

45. Why profit seeking prevails...

Against what or whom is your prejudice?

Women? Gay? Muslims? Quants?

Prostitution? Gambling? Politics?

Traditionally, if we go learn about the stories, talk and connect with those people, get a behind-the-scene view of what they do, and why they do it, we'll have a good chance of changing our original perspectives.

With the advance of neuroscience (or the techniques of tweaking our minds?) changing our views & beliefs becomes much easier than ever before. If we care to spend time and energy, we can change our views on almost anything, anybody, without having to learn their stories first-hand. You know what I mean.

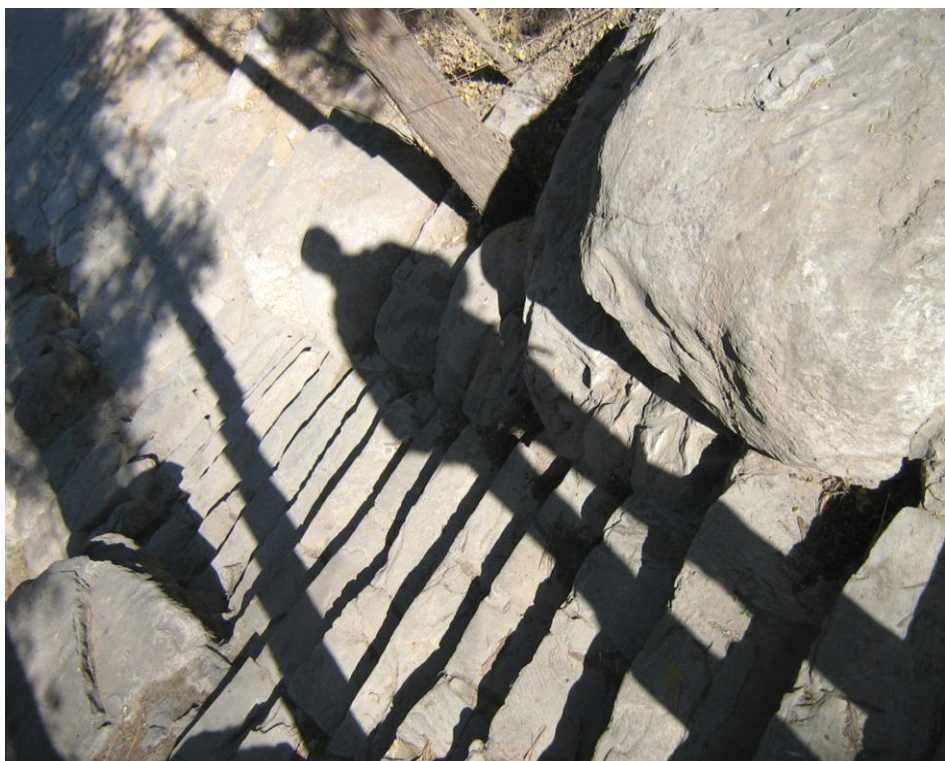
Which means we have the ability to Decide what we believe is 'right', whatever it is. It's no longer about figuring out what is right; it's about deciding what is right, then figuring out how to make ourselves believe it.

This can be a powerful tool. A powerful tool can be a destructive weapon.

Since we can make ourselves believe anything we want, whatever we do we're able to make ourselves believe it's right. When right or wrong is no longer a question, what drives our decision and action?

How about material benefits?





46. the Rockers in the concert...

The rockers are the leaders.

They make music, their fans listen; they sell records, their fans buy 'em; they hold concerts, their fans gather; they rock on stage, their fans join them down the stage; they tell a story in the song...

Their 20,000 fans tell 20,000 different stories when they sing along.

47. Don't judge a book by its cover...

Who doesn't know this?

Only that in practice, interestingly, we tend to ignore golden advices from great respectable figures.

This again proves that: Ideas are Worthless, Action is King.

This may also imply that we all have to realize, no matter what we think we are, we're often subject to weaknesses of the mass mediocre.

It's hard not to judge, it's hard not to have an opinion. And when opinions come, so are those stereotyped associations. What do you expect from people who are gross and sloppy and simply can't stop boasting?

You never know.

Until you take the efforts, despite the prejudice or preconceptions, to find out more about their stories.

48. It can be just another wild guess but it's important...

...the end of elite-led mechanism design/social reform or experiment, dawn of the Great Co-Coreation (now every human being is a synergizer of his own experiences in life and a co-creator of the System...the social structure/order is formed not by a large group of experts, not by numerous groups of communities..but everyone in it..)

then what's the role of those experts? what's the role of everyone of us? does the new order reward people whose synergization contributes more to the System? how are we going to distribute the rewards & resources? would there be a new kind of minority? would there be a totally new definition of competitive advantage and radically different definition of rich and poor?

when every unique individual contributes her/his unique tweak to the new System, contributes to the constantly-evolving new world order, how do we (or the System?) decide who gets more of the merit, money, respect..? what'd help us survive & what'd bankrupt us?

i feel scared, with slight excitement, when i'm writing down these questions (i'm afraid they'd slip away from my mind)...this seems like total chaos...yet we know you're more likely to be right when you feel scared...and unpredictable chaos is exactly what we should expect & embrace in this era...

the era of crowds, heading steadily to The Great Co-creation. Welcome.

49. A war in silence (heretics beware)

World-changing innovation does not come from a miraculous night when you are struck by a voice from heaven and turned into a genius. At least not for most people. It comes from consistent hard work and numerous failures, day in day out, that people don't notice (or refuse to take seriously), for a long long time. Till finally you got enough momentum to make visible impact, they line up against you, trying to crush you and restore the status quo.

We all know this too well. Truthful visionaries punished just because they're too ahead of their contemporaries.

There's something more dangerous: you quit long before your stuff is visible enough to challenge the status quo, even when it's rotten. You gave up on your calling and you are not aware of it.

Your success is built piece by piece, it depends on years of consistent hard work.

So are your opponents'.

Everyday they try to convert you. Piece by piece, signal by signal, through words and actions and design, implicitly or explicitly, everything in the system is just so conveniently organized, so they can show your efforts are stupid and worthless and you're all alone. It's not violent, it doesn't make headlines, it never stirs the public's emotions. It's a war in silence.

And it's way more dangerous. Beware.

When they attempts something radical and inhuman to trump your challenge to the status quo, it means they failed to convert you. You won the first battle, the most crucial one.

Now March On.

50. Have trouble finding a market for your passion?

...maybe you should not have assumed there's a market in the first place. even if there is, it probably won't present itself to you when you're still hesitating whether or not to put in the 10,000 hours and create something meaningful...

Don't think too much, don't force yourself to come up with some good reason or justification that your passion has a place in the market. Just do it. Have the time of your life. If you need to provide labour in return for survival in the society, if the only thing available to you right now is a nasty job, so be it. Don't imagine and take for granted your 'entitlement' to make a living doing what you love.

Learn from life, learn from the nasty work you are doing, as well as your passion and your consistent selfless contribution to the world. Don't overthink, don't try to cash up on your pure simple/noble passion.

Never give up, though. Just go working, living, meeting people, listen, learn from them, learn from life, do at least as much as you think/plan. And for sure you'll see your market somewhere down the road...

Get busy; be patient. You'll be there.

51. Unplanned adventure

Make yourself a blueprint of life, with clear plans and tasks plus crystal-clear visualization.

These are the right things to do, no doubt. They make your goals and vision so real they build inside your mind a sense of inevitability and resilience. Seriously it's something we should take time to do and practice...

But always leave some room for your creativity.

Everyday is an adventure, everyday you've got something to learn, everyday there's a possibility that someone something out there would turn your outlook on life upside down. And often, life changing moments originate from unexpected sources.

Travel with you map, focus on the big picture. Just don't simply rule out every path that happened to escape your imagination.

52. On Specialization II

My other guesses...

Specialization is meant for technical stuff, and technical stuff only. Somehow because of the economic structure (division of labour) or some other reason, we are made to believe we also need specialists (or experts) in arts...a field where measure of excellence is so subjective and unpredictable...

...then we have specialists constructing a system of rules & standards telling us how to determine whether a piece of art work is beautiful...so we can "learn" how to appreciate arts...then base our valuation or appreciation of a painting on specialists' opinions...

Every once in a while some rule breaking genius would create a turmoil in this system, we would marvel for 3 seconds then move on like nothing has happened. It's like, "what are we to doubt the rules & standards? they were created by those experts...they've been around for centuries..."

Maybe it's exactly the reason we should question the system.

53. On Specialization

It seems to me people take specialization really seriously. Yeah specialize, it's where the money is. Generally it's how you can efficiently make it as a participant in economic activity nowadays. And if your personal identity hinges heavily on your economic role, specialization can mean a lot more than making a living.

But is it really a must for you to make a life?

Specialization is just a rule (or rather, a popular & less risky strategy) of the game. If you are creative and imaginative and innovative, or lucky, enough to bypass this rule and get to the hilltop that you're aiming, why not? Fix your sight on the hilltop, always, look for different paths, and be careful not to be blinded or cajoled or intimidated by what people think you should agree on.

54. Another reason to be really opinionated (or not)

Being really stubborn and opinionated can either make you or break you. We can never easily come to a conclusive agreement as there're too many other variables at play.

One thing you might be interested to know, though, is that strongly opinionated people like you (yeah i make lots of wild guesses & assumptions in this blog) are less likely to be the targeted candidates of terrorists' recruiters. It'd take them way too much resources to convert you.

Which means you get a bit less distraction when building your career with an extremist's fervor.

55. Sheepishly, innocently, or gracefully (should I include proudly)?

Wrong statements or wrong timing or wrong action that make you feel and look stupid? We all experienced that, it happens. Inevitably.

But wait, were you really "wrong"? Perhaps it's just some stupid customs that shouldn't have existed at all? Or maybe those folks were just too 19th century to grasp your ideas? Or too scared to embrace your bold vision? Or too narrow-minded to appreciate your perception of beauty?

Well there's also a good chance that you did screw up. In fact, it doesn't really matter at all.

The question is, how do you deal with it?

Very often people just smile. Depending on how seriously they take the "mistake", they give you a smile sheepishly or innocently or gracefully.

Which category are you in (I hope it's Proudly)? Are you responding like you are "supposed to"? Are you showing the world your invincible confidence? When these stupid moments inevitably come, how exactly do you deal with it?

I hope you dance to celebrate like no one else's looking.

56. Price, little wishes, casually

It's easy and harmless to casually talk about what we want or what we wish to be. Without commitment or accountability, there's no risk. In fact it's so easy it almost becomes a conversational habit for some people. They casually think and talk and sigh about their little wishes, without considering the price and taking 'em seriously.

That's why they never got there.

The first thing to do is realize that there's a price, an opportunity cost, for any goal or dream or wish, small or big. Be realistic about it.

Be conscious of the price you need to pay.

Take time to think it through, make a decision.

Be conscious of the price you decided to pay.

Don't regret.

57. Price, little wishes, scarcity

There's a price for everything. Not always in coins-and-notes sense though.

Just think about little wishes like being elegant in your words and behaviour, or having a respectable character. (not to mention those visible goals like being better public speakers or dancers, etc.) There's a price to pay for all these.

Let's just take a closer look at those little wishes.

Typically they require more of your physical and mental energy. They want you to go an extra mile on daily basis but never prize you with a candy on the way. They make you exhausted for something that no one seems to care...

That means you need to create the motivation yourself.

Sometimes the desired outcome is like reputation. It takes a long long time to build but can easily be ruined. It's as invisible as oxygen but as fragile as crystal. It's frustrating. That's why most people don't bother to take these little goals seriously...

...so when you do, you are special; when you take time and efforts to get there, you create scarcity. This doesn't pay right away, it doesn't always pay in notes-and-coins sense, but it pays.

58. The stage ethics (or is it?)

A speaker is more relevant if she had first-hand experience of her topic. She's more likely to know what she's talking about.

A mere theory disseminator risks jokes or mean responses. Or the sin of misleading her audience.

This creates a little bit of problem for unproven speakers. Does it mean you have to keep what's in your mind until you got the experience or age or title to qualify for people's attention? So that you will be more credible and your chance of making mistakes lower?

You know the answer. Go for it.

But be humble.

No matter how convinced you are about your theories/ideas, no matter many stories supported them, no matter how many people (other than yourself) already proved that you are right, no matter how much credit you've got...you never really know.

Remember you never really did it. Be humble.

And for the audience, don't look down on these theory people. Try to get whatever morsels of value from what they say. The most dramatic inspirations come from the least expected place. Like your cousin's five-year-old, for example.

It's not the answers. It's possibilities.

It's about exploring & testing & cocreating with people you are lucky (or unlucky) enough to meet in your life. Outside the professional seminar hall, there's always a whole lot more to learn, from life itself. You create your own story, after all.

If you think you already got, or some guru already granted you, the final answer, you almost always find yourself wrong afterwards.

Or am I?

We never know till we try.

59. Hang out with the best people...?

There's one saying:

"Put yourself into the most competitive environment, work with the best people, then you will see yourself improve fastest..."

Pretty much truth, I guess, only that you should also bear in mind this: this tip works best for skills, and skills only. Not life.

Many people are so obsessed in the race to the top environment they forgot why they're in the race at all. Or they're made to believe it's the only thing that matters.

They missed so much beautiful things in life.

Try your best to get into the best environment, be relentless if necessary, but always remember why. No matter what your boss or your coach tells you, it's just the trade/skills that you are striving to perfect, not your life. You've got to decide how much price you are willing to pay for it.

If you decide it's worth your life, fine.

However if living a meaningful life happens to matter to you, it can be achieved more easily than most people choose to believe. A bit more mindfulness can go a long way in saving you unnecessary price and sacrifice.

And maybe, less people unnecessarily hurt.

60. Factor in the price & benefits

Budget your time like you budget your money.

Really, count the cents and pennies. Be realistic. Then you see the roadmap in hi-fidelity. The reason to believe and the sacrifice to make.

A frequently neglected factor in goal-setting practices is the real Price you're ready to pay.

The opportunity cost. The things you really really love but come second in importance.

A frequently ignored element in change exercises is the benefits you've been enjoying for staying where you are.

Things you always want and enjoy and take for granted. The satellite TV that you want to bring along when climbing the Everest.

Dream vs reality. They'll look so alike if you choose to be honest when you begin.

61. Two things we should stop saying and start doing

Ideas are always easier said than done. Among millions of ideas in this universe, two stand out because they are more and more widely acknowledged and communicated now.

1. Don't be afraid to make mistakes. Go make more of them, it leads you to success.
2. You can learn something from everyone you meet. Anyone, everyone.

They also stand out because they are so enthusiastically believed in words, yet so casually ignored in action.

-- Go make mistakes, you get laughs (if not sth worse). More mistakes, more laughs (if not sth horrible).

Doesn't look like what you get when people know you are on the path to success. That's why the youth orchestra that literally celebrates every mistake makes a terrific story. Idea and action align.

-- We are all snobs/prejudiced in one way or another. Some utterly ugly (your position? your income?), some more implicit (your taste? your education?). Alain de Botton had a good take on this. Instead of striving to live up to idea 2 here, seems like we prefer making use of such snobbery for our own benefits. Dress up, gear up, speed up the race...

We need everybody.

Be the only one to live up to these ideas while others don't, you look either stupid or naive. Or rebellious or idealistic. It's a dangerous thing to do, esp. when it's hard making a living.

The good news is, you are already making a life. Many people have the guts to do it only after becoming millionaires. Be Proud.

Plus: The game is changing fast nowadays, your remarkable bravery may be rewarded at the least expected moment...

62. Follow Your Heart?

Follow Your Heart.

A significant remark, some time somewhere, brought to life by battered souls, distilled by dogged quest and struggle, through confusion and sleepless nights, and a long long journey within. It carries much more weight and meaning than we usually realize.

So don't abuse it. Don't make it a cliché. Don't manipulate it for any worldly purpose. Don't pollute it. Please.

Think about the famous quote. I think, therefore I am. Then go read Descartes' biography, study his thoughts. When you're done, you will know what I mean.

Follow Your Heart.

63. Just "Do What You Love?"

There's much noise out there, appealing to our dreams and fears and boredom and hopes. Yesterday is tumbling, we kind of feel it, and tomorrow is too vague and chaotic we don't even bother to give a damn guess. Today, the only thing we know, we are still stuck in the comfort zone with our dreams squeezed.

There's much noise out there, telling us who feel stuck to go ahead and do what we love. And they offer tips. See, these people made it, why not you? Go do it, here's the way, do what you love, and you can be one of them...all you need is courage and action...

Some of them are right, some not quite.

Do what you love, with all your passion and creativity and bravery and hard work, then you too will make it big. Simple, attractive logic. Too bad our lives, the universe, and the unknown space in between, is much more complex than this...

Fortunately it means there are a hell lot more of hidden possibilities too.

To make long story short, let's just say this life-turning adventure, this all-out pursuit of your passion that people talk about, is not for people who are stuck. If you're stuck, get yourself unstuck before you go.

The best time to leave is when you're flying high and doing great.

(The second best time to leave? When you're still learning everyday from whatever nastiness you're facing and be grateful of your daily growth...)

You are not trying to escape; you are not blinded by complacency; you keep

learning everyday and be appreciative. And you're going because you see how your calling fit in to our future. Never mind the footprints, never mind the wind. You dig deeper, you look further.

It takes vision, insights, and guts, when you're the king at your turf, served with fine wine and fresh fruit and all the chant and glory, to leave it all behind and go conquer the Himalaya.

That's how your destination becomes our future.

64. Professional Layman and Public Intellectuals

Professional Layman used to be a nick/definition I gave myself when first tried blogging a few years back (the blog failed, by the way). One who learns a bit about everything out of curiosity and to deal with life, one who suffers in the mechanic categorization of trades, who has a view on everything as an outsider, a layman, yet the urge to express and share his non-expert views.

Thus spoke the Professional Layman: I specialize in generalization.

What a good story! what a cool self-positioning! Even if it doesn't win you a high-pay job or the mortals' respect for experts, I thought, at least I was being creative & original...

I wasn't (just discovered in this article on Public Intellectuals).

"What do you specialize in?, Daniel Bell was once asked. Generalizations, he replied."

Ha! Somebody already beautifully summed it up long long time ago, you ignorant...

Good try though, a lesson learnt. And some joy to share...

Why tell the world you are not original? Why so happy about it?

Cast aside the vanity & self-branding gimmick of being the uniquely first, you realized something more important...

You are not alone.

65. The Idea Evangelist

The Idea Evangelist believes there is no "right" idea.

Ideas don't really matter, anyway (except for the moments of euphoria when they blow your mind). It's what you Do.

Great & breath-taking ideas crushed and bankrupt young entrepreneurs; stupid and naive ideas made millionaires. It's what you Do.

The Idea Evangelist, however, commits to spread brilliant, mind-blowing ideas & stories to the world. Not that these ideas can change the world...

It's the Possibilities.

There is no right idea, there's no idea that surely works. But there are ideas that open up horizon and possibilities. Ideas that expand your reference frame. You make your judgment, develop your own ideas, enrich your own philosophy, and create a different story.

The Idea Evangelist knows very clear that the ideas he chooses to spend his life spreading don't really matter at all. He never thinks he's really got the answers. Plus in the end, the first and the last key to a meaningful life is what you Do.

Somehow the Idea Evangelist has no intention to quit, even if the demand or need don't seem to be there. Even though he himself realized how small a role he picked. It's important.

Just trust your guts, roll up your sleeves, persist.

When it comes to life mission, or calling, it's what you Do.





66. Last week's musings...

* talent (or efforts?) arbitrage? ...we all know some people (many) are overpaid for what they do...and we all know often talents are underutilized...so what can we do about it?

* how to measure the immeasurable? (when the immeasurables are actually the most critical factors for huge success)? maybe it's justifiable to make big bets? ...anyway it's a life of randomness...

* it's about giving, a bit of sacrifice maybe, but certainly not taking. And certainly not blaming. It's love.

67. HI = Honorably Invincible

It's not about "be yourself";
It's about Be the Best You Can Be...

Be Your Honorable Self.

We all heard the stories, about good people being punished financially or socially for doing the right thing, and the "trade-off" between material interests/peer recognition and values/moral principles...we saw people we know & love (even ourselves) stuck & struggling in those choices...

Bite the bullet. Be Your Honorable Self.

...it's always easier said than done...it always seems like nothing more than idealistic stupidity...but it's exactly what we have to do: forget that windfall, that promotion, that acknowledgment, even that ticket to a dream job/career simply for what we believe is right...

Because we will come out Stronger.

...DO the right thing..we'll see how big we can be and how far we can go...we'll realize nothing and no one can stop us and we deserve every right to dream on, and carry on the revolution...

It's not about "confidence", given by anybody or any incident, or what we wear; it's the Hard-earned sense of Honor, Pride & Self-Respect, that enable us to Stand up Proud & Tough to any adversity, threat & intimidation.

Be Your Honorable Self, that way you become Invincible.

68. Include or exclude, don't be indifferent III - party stranger

Say you're talking with your friend Jake in a party, someone approached & showed interest to join, what'd you do if it doesn't please you to have a third person in the conversation? You may include her/him reluctantly, or you may politely tell her/him that you wish to keep the conversation between you & Jake. Interestingly I notice quite some people who tend to do neither of these.

To many people it isn't easy to say to a well-intentioned stranger "sorry but we would like to keep the conversation between ourselves now, could we catch up with you later?"; while they aren't interested in talking to that person either.

So they choose to do nothing. They'd continue their talk, giving little heed to that person, pretending that person doesn't exist, and hoping that person will go away herself/himself...not knowing it isn't cool and it's rude.

Try put yourself into that person's shoes. What do you feel?

Be honest & polite, don't be a rude coward.

Never ever pretend that person doesn't exist. You know she/he's there.

Bottom line: Include, or Exclude, don't be an insensitive & indifferent jerk playing hero solo.

69. Include or exclude, don't be indifferent II - Heroes & Outsiders

There are only 2 kinds of people in a team: Heroes, or Outsiders.
(There's no "average team members")

Heroes care, heroes think & take action & take risks all the time.
Outsiders don't care, outsiders do the minimum & play it safe.

Sometimes we become heroes because we are made to do so: people give us their trust and count on us; sometimes we become heroes because We enjoy the action, we enjoy feeling important, we enjoy being on the front line putting out the fire...

We just enjoy playing the hero. Just another kind of vanity.

Sometimes we become outsiders because we don't believe in the team's mission/values (we are in only for the paycheck or the title); sometimes we become outsiders simply because we feel like outsiders ...so we stop giving a damn...

We just don't see why the heck should we put the team's interests before ours.

.....

If you're the team leader, and you spot outsiders in your team, what'd you do?

The answer, I guess, lies in another question: who in your team is(are) playing the hero(es)?

Those who are not heroes are all outsiders (Hopefully you are not the only hero in your team).

Great things are done by a team of dedicated heroES, not a single hero (despite what the movies show)...if your team is not made up completely of heroes busy attacking or building...somewhere in someone an outsider is in the making...

Avoid one-man show (or two-men, for that matter).

If your project is too small to accommodate too many heroes, assign them to another project, give 'em day off, send 'em to training or volunteer work for charity, let them start their own projects...Or better yet, let them go, help them shine elsewhere.

Don't make them sit there watch you playing hero.

It's not leadership, but a selfish display of vanity.

side note: if you (or your team/org) got a mission, Live it, or dump it.

70. Include or exclude, don't be indifferent - (don't believe this title)

At work, what's worse than a day full of emergencies, fire to put off here and there, one thing comes up after another in hectic pace, pushing you to navigate through meetings & negotiations with departments and suppliers and customers...Murphy's Law comes into play (yes everything just goes wrong) while people tactfully shunning responsibilities...you alone shoulder all the downside risks...what can be worse?

Having no place in it (or, being an outsider inside a team).

When you end the day exhausted, battered (or even fired)...licking your wound in hard-won victory (or total fiasco)...you know you tried your best, you know you learnt something. You gave your heart, you tasted (the sweetness and) the pain. you lived.

The outsider didn't. The outsider feels numb & empty. And safe, probably.

You lived. Isn't it something to be proud of, soldier?

[if you think this post is irrelevant to the title, you are right...sometimes things just flow beyond our plan & control...check out the more relevant content in next post...]

71. What'd we do to a modern-day Martin Luther?

"You should read history and look at ostracism, persecution, martyrdom, and that kind of thing. They always happen to the best men, you know." -- George Eliot

...all these great figures in history...somehow...we tend to have them suffered, tortured, estranged and executed...then time passes...we at some point realize these are exactly the people we need and should look up to...finally we give them due credit long after their lives ruined & sacrificed...the respect & love we give they no longer can feel & see...is this the best we can do to the great souls in fellow human beings?

Simply look at what often happens to whistle blowers and you know history repeats itself.

Are we not going to do something about it?

When we see a modern-day Martin Luther in the news, or at work, what'd we do?

72. Martin Luther

Originally from one of Chris Guillebeau's blog entry, it's worth your most precious 1 minute of the day...

...Remember Martin Luther, the original one, when he was on trial for his life in the year 1520. Luther was asked if he would recant his unconventional writing. He took the question seriously and asked for a day to think about it. The next day he returned to the stand. His famous response, before being sentenced to death, made it clear that he wouldn't back down:

"I can and will not retract, for it is neither safe nor wise to do anything against conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me."

73. Fill in the blank..

"Our business is the only _____ that _____"

"We are the best _____ in the world"

74. A couple of definitions on Entrepreneur/Entrepreneurship

By Peter Drucker...

“Entrepreneurs innovate,”

--> *“Innovation is the specific instrument of entrepreneurship.”*

...the entrepreneur as somebody who *“upsets and disorganises”*

By William Baumol...

...the entrepreneur as *“the bold and imaginative deviator from established business patterns and practices”*

By Howard Stevenson...

...entrepreneurship as *“the pursuit of opportunity beyond the resources you currently control”*

[Update: John Doerr said something like (not exact words though),
“entrepreneurs are people who create more than what others think possible with less than what others think is possible”]

75. "Dramatic Leadership" to "mobilize the board..."

Summarized below useful points by an interesting McKinsey Qtrly article "*The crisis: Mobilizing Boards for Change*"

- * Expect major change. Conduct fundamental review of strategy. [John: Reinvent]
- * Disrupt the rhythm
- * Force New Conversations/ Create Confidence to Express "Stupid" Opinions
- * Follow-through: where's the plan & budget?
- * First-hand Frontline (Visceral) Experience
- * Dramatic Leadership to Shake Things Up

Well for those of you who read Tom Peters'(and the like), these are nothing new...

..."The hottest U.S. investor" (covered by Fortune some months ago) once said "I don't wait for Morgan Stanley to tell me where the market is moving..." (or something like this, just recall from memory)

Yes I'm simultaneously quoting a valuable McK Qtrly's article and telling you we can't count on big guys like McK for truly inspirational world-changing ideas...

76. The Wrestler II

About the movie, again. The backstage scenes reminded me of what a Fortune article on Meredith Whitney (the Wall Street Analyst who made her name for correctly predicting the banks' losses & writedowns early in the crisis and wife of a professional wrestler) said...

Her insider's view has given her great respect for pro wrestlers' work ethic and their willingness to lay everything on the line as performers, athletes, and stuntmen...

Another eye opener for Whitney has been how gracious most wrestlers are - at least when the cameras aren't rolling - in comparison with the viper-pit culture on Wall Street. It sounds absurd - the world of high finance being less collegial than an industry in which employees belt each other in the face. But based on the time I spent backstage before the Great American Bash, Whitney has a point.

77. The Wrestler

Watched a movie called The Wrestler. Felt sad. Being the so-called most intelligent creature on earth, somehow, we keep creating within The System/Civilization things that destroy ourselves & our fellows...

I have been talking about "you never know who's going to change your life; & you never know whose life you are going to change"...same thing...we never know how the occasional disrespect & mean attitude we show (out of bad mood or our mean self) may impact others' lives...

"Treat all people with dignity and respect" thus spoke Coach Wooden.
He said this for a reason.

78. David Kelley

This guy really is an inspiration, even if you are only reading a 3rd-party written article (by Fast Company) about him...

...we moved from thinking of ourselves as designers to thinking of ourselves as design thinkers...

...creative confidence that, when given a difficult problem, we have a methodology that enables us to come up with a solution that nobody has before.

On how thinking about his daughter helped him pull through his fight against cancer...

"At first, you think, 'I don't want to miss her growing up.' That's motivating, but not that motivating," When you think, I don't want her not to have a father -- then you want to stay alive."

"I really do believe I was put on the planet to help people have creative confidence,"

"I don't have 27 agendas. I'm not the sustainability guy, or the developing-world guy. My contribution is to teach as many people as I can to use both sides of their brain..."

"If the goal is to change the world, the business part changes the world faster."

"Our dent in the universe doesn't mean we have to do all the digging," ... "We empower our clients. We teach them to fish."

Ideo's largesse is in sync with Kelley's mission -- and with his confidence in his own company's ability to reinvent itself.

"I can give our methodology away," he says at a staff meeting on Ideo's future, "because I know we can come up with a better idea tomorrow."

79. Lessons: the power of grassroots...

1.

Into its 3rd year, we just witnessed the influence of Earth Hour spread far & wide...this year it was sponsored by WWF...my understanding: it grew big enough to gain the interest of mainstream org. like WWF...

2.

There is a high-school-student-founded NPO in Guangzhou City (southern China) that I respect a lot...initiated by no ex-director/manager of any mainstream NGO or large companies with network of powerful contacts...just a bunch of enthusiastic students who want to make changes happen with their own hands...(allow me to skip the details, i just remember they had a site 'privatebbs'...)...to me these young kids dwarfed many other NGOs that I knew about...those founded by experienced people & with lots of corporate sponsors & sophisticated marketing influence but essentially, very few individuals who are ready to contribute their efforts on the front line...

By the way, they grew influential enough that Asian Animal Fund teamed up with them...

80. Defined identity: what kind of music you like?

Your favourite genre? Your favourite type? Often I see people trying to figure out the answers; often I see other people who say "no favourite, I listen to everything" or "too many".

As much as we would like to give a clear-cut answer to define our taste and our identity, the fact is most of us connect to totally different music genres in different context/mood...

We need different kind of music to suit different mood/experience in life...even self-proclaimed "techno-haters" like me may fall in love with techno music after meeting some new people & sharing with them a new story...

Yes you may deny what I just said, you may continue to tell people you only listen to Jazz or Rock or New-age or Classical (just to be in line with your defined identity)...but if I'm allowed to give any advice, Go Try Something Else...be open to every possibility...listen to different people's stories...

Simple categorization is for music stores, not an individual with an unique personality like you...

81. ...High school acquaintance...boyz II men...history teacher...and possibly your impact on my life...

Years after graduation, without any kind of contact, a high school acquaintance suddenly appeared in my dream several weeks ago...

...when contemplating the meaning & practice of prayers on the way to work...My Father's Eyes...a song by Boyz II Men...suddenly rang in my head...the last time I listened to this song was nearly 10 years ago (and it never entered my top 20 favourite list)...

...somehow recalled what a history teacher in junior high (a guy who went back to teach high school students because he couldn't stand the hypocrisy in business...) once said, there are many things & many people in life, that you met and you forgot...you can't recall & list them down...or even be sure if they existed...until something somehow trigger some hidden corner of your memory...

What triggered my memory in these strange days? I have no idea.

All I know, I believe in this more than ever: At any given moment, any step in this journey of life, you may just leave a trace and make a change in another person's life...and you may never be aware of it...so just be the best you can be...put your heart into everything you do...and no matter how people & the environment changes...you can always be proud of yourself...

Yes, you can. You should.

82. Empower & Trust - Jacqueline Novogratz's example

In this TED talk she told a story of, instead of just having charities shipping and distributing mosquito nets to regions inflicted by malaria in Africa, Empowering local African entrepreneurs to produce the nets more cheaply...

Then again, Empower local entrepreneurs to take care of the distribution.

How do you sell mosquito nets to the local?

They found a young local entrepreneur and it's how she did it: she marketed the nets by telling her local fellows the nets make their house beautiful & comfortable...and the nets show they care about their children...and then, came last the rationale we care so much: malaria. It worked.

You've got to Trust them.

83. Empower & Trust - local ideas conference

Attended a local TED-like conference. Met people who were there for business opportunities as well as people who really are utilizing their passion & talents to make the world better. To be fair, they both made this conference possible.

The most enjoyable parts were those Q&A sessions. Thought-provoking questions & ideas & discussion. After all, Who the hell around you will have the mood to explore or debate these big ideas (or things beyond self interest) in everyday's hustle?

In one way or another during the conference, the key to sustainable changes emerged: Empower & Trust. It's no longer about us helping them, being super-smart heroes or super-generous organizations. Empower People, Trust Them, they'll show you they can make the changes for themselves and for our earth.

afterthought:

With the launch of TEDx, it'll be easier and cheaper to organize similar gatherings (of 10 or 10 thousand people) around the world...world changers meet to share & explore & co-create ideas...to inspire and motivate each other...to set foundations for world-changing movements...

It'll be a lot of fun, if we take action to make them happen.

84. Improvising Tango Argentino

Argentine Tango is all about improvisation. Well, at least traditionally so.

Improvisation means no fixed rules & no fixed steps; on the other hand, you can't simply move your body on the dance floor and say you're improvising Tango...You've got to get the right "feel".

So how do we "learn" improvisation?

- 1) pick up existing steps;
- 2) watch people dance;
- 3) try & experiment & practice.

You can't miss any of the above. And the reason we do all these (instead of just jump in and improvise) is to, through different dimensions, capture the "feel" of Argentine Tango...so we will be able to play it out when improvising...

Just another example of intangibles captured in tangible form.

Update:

May it also serve as a reminder: don't get too obsessed with the tangible form itself. What we are after, after all, is the intangibles.

85. What I see in Michael Lewis & Japanese Dramas...

They are examples of successful story telling.

Michael Lewis tells "inside stories". Michael Lewis makes things simple. Michael Lewis shows us the least expected reality.

Japanese Dramas? They make you laugh, they make you cry, or they make you laugh and cry at the same time.

86. Our Leadership (or Heroes) Complex...

We grew up being taught to idolize heroes and demonize villains...and to admire great leaders...

What's common among heroes, villains, & leaders?

They are individuals that we choose to perceive as "another breed of creature"...

When time changes, our minds haven't. We choose to use the same concept to understand a brand new world.

When we realize the influence from individual heroes/villains/leaders is just one of the reasons we take collective action (When New Yorkers became kind & nice to strangers on the street after 9/11, was it because of the then Mayor or President?);

when co-creation revolutionizes our era;

when we finally realize the power of these idolized individuals is overrated...

We broaden the definition of "heroes/leaders" to include everybody. We just don't want to admit, sometimes the heroes, the leaders, these "different type of" individuals are not the main reasons we can create a different tomorrow...

It's us, the creative & innovative nobody's, the "average followers", that make their dreams reality. And we don't need to, just because of this, crown ourselves with those historically glorious words like "heroes" or "leaders"...

Time has changed. It's no longer about leading or following. It's about people with the same passion getting together to make changes happen. Nobody leads, nobody follows. Towards the same direction, we push, we hang on to, take care of, watch out for each other...

I don't mean to be arrogant, but if you're waiting for another individual hero or leader to make a real difference; if you still think it's the villains on the press that created the largest mess in our world...I'm sorry, but your view belongs to last century.

87. when does A Change begin? an example.

Having too many choices is not a blessing.

Having too many choices makes life more difficult & unhappy.

We all knew this; we all experienced it.

We just didn't put this into words and speak it out loud.

It's especially disrespectful & ungrateful to say this in a world with so many underprivileged fellow human beings...

Until Malcolm Gladwell mentioned it in his book; until Barry Schwartz mentioned it in his TED talk.

We read it, we watched it, we nodded, we identified with it.

Suddenly we are able to speak it out loud; Suddenly we become the idea evangelists.

Eventually we all realize we should do something about it.

That's when a change's about to begin...

88. End of Nazis Hunt: a story & many questions...

A story about a French couple who dedicated their lives to bring former Nazis to justice...

"I knew I had to go wherever the people were suffering," Mrs Klarsfeld said. "Sure, it could be dangerous. But if you really want to do something with your life, you have to do more than just speak."

in fact I was not quite sure if those individuals who happened to be Nazis during that historical period should bear all the responsibilities, or deserve in jail...in their retirement age...before their lives end...until...

He didn't hate them.

"After all, they were people like us. We spoke with some of them. They like animals, we like animals, for example."

"But we never met anyone who had changed, never met a former Nazi who showed remorse. They were only interested in their own situation and that of their family..".

Is it the people they slaughtered or their lack of penitence? I really really am not quite sure...

"We tried to do quite a lot. We acted very often illegally, but our illegality is nothing compared with the people we had in front of us."

Justice achieved through illegal action...where on earth does the problem lie? isn't it sad?

89. What makes a good day? What makes a bad day?

What makes you take this question so seriously?

it could be just a slice of sunshine in your coffee,
it could be the antelopes across the prairie at dawn
it could be a long trail over the ice land
it could be an espresso of living spirits in the subway train...

All we need to do is simply close our eyes and really Feel The Air...

...at any given moment, we may just find our voice...

90. "Maturity" does not abandon Infinity

Maturity does not abandon the memories of infinity.

In our juvenile quest to grasp our lives & the world, we had our first glimpse of infinity. In our struggle to fit in the disillusioned society, the euphoria & memories are often dumped like teenage idealism.

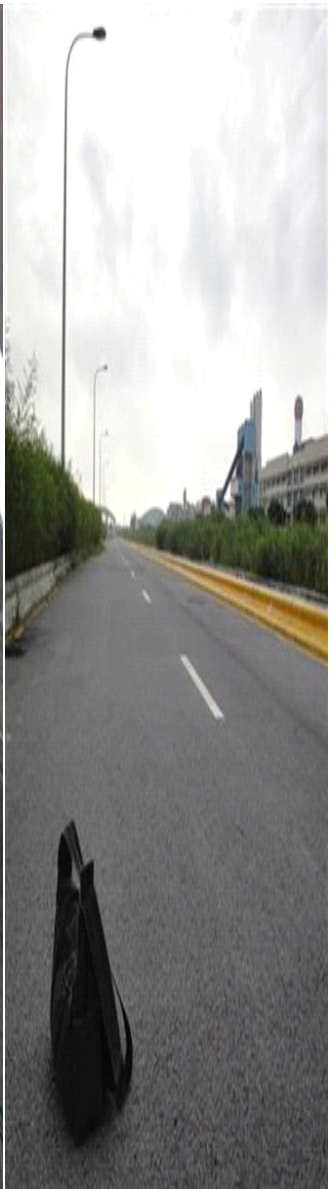
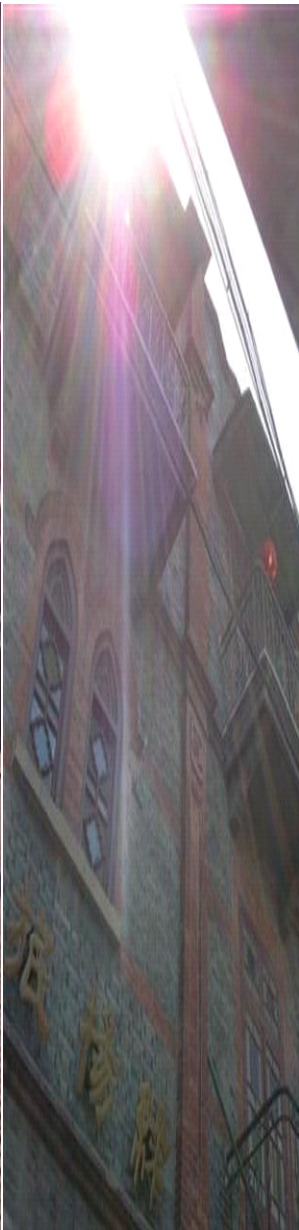
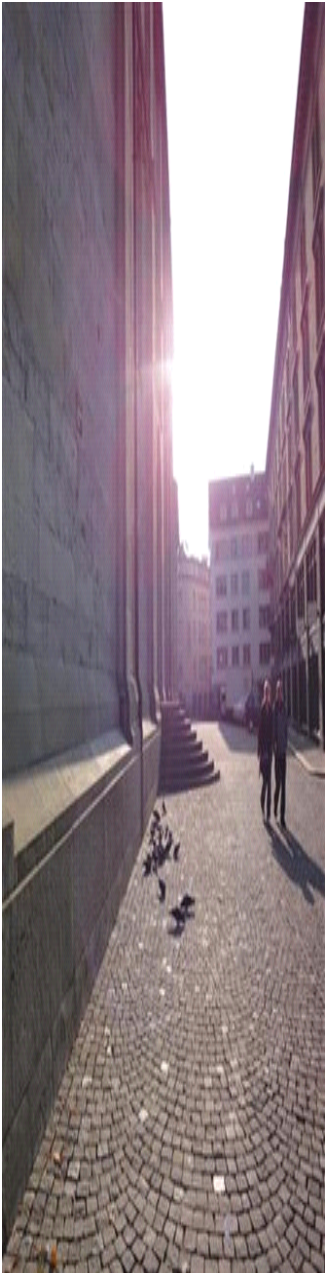
It's not maturity.

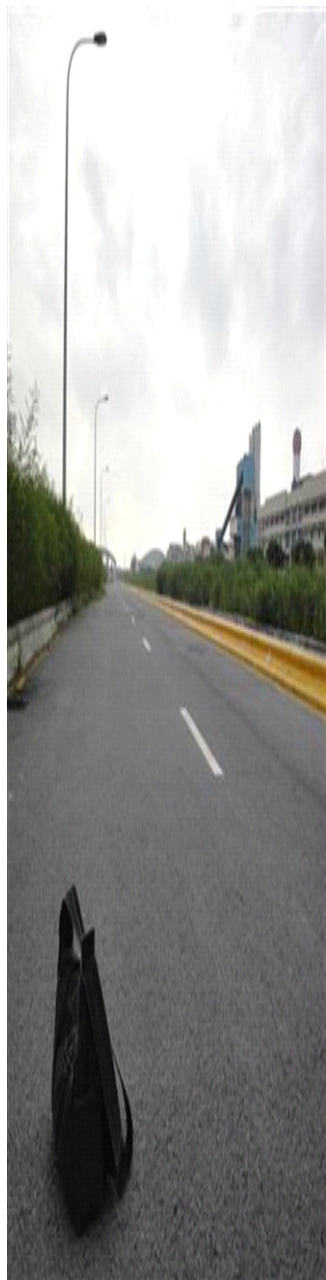
Maturity has infinity captured in a mortal story.

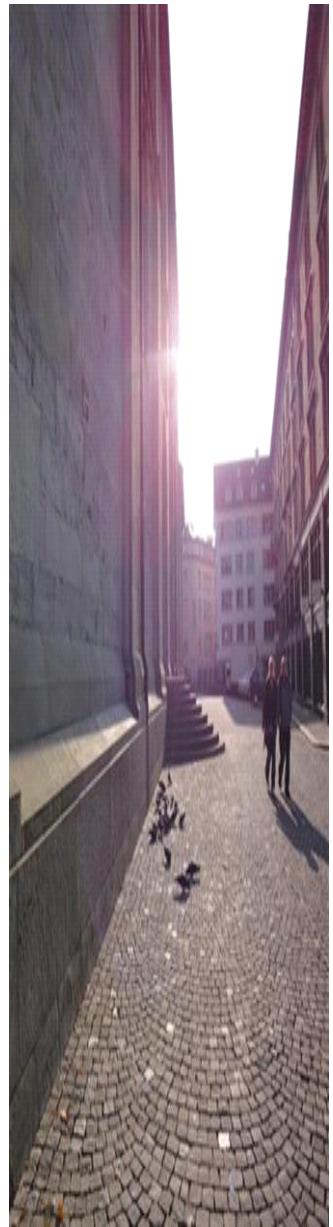
The way we were taught what 'green' color is by looking at the trees.

The way novelists reveal truths of life in made-up stories.

Maturity drives us to continue the enthusiastic and idealistic pursuit, albeit in a more concrete, down-to-earth manner.









91. a big picturer on her way home...

i walked through a facet of life
feeling the cold, smooth currents of time

the rich the poor, the locals the migrants
the fresh the chic, the rugged the sloppy
the sensual fragrance, the cynical odor
the finest boutiques, the darkest alleys...

a tiny facet of the universe.

i couldn't frown, curse, exalt, rejoice, or cry
as I saw myself in the map of life

and the map is always in my mind...

92. While speakers (or life) don't function the way we expected...

An old song by Elton John
in broken timbre echoing weird tones
somehow it felt just right & nice

a fresh experience for over-time hours of a non-paid volunteer
somehow you don't need perfect tone to connect to the souls of music

"Make Each Day Your Masterpiece", thus spoke Coach Wooden.
And often, the imperfections make uniqueness.

93. Blog to change the world?

Read Seth Godin's 3000th post (in a row); see what change he's made to our world.

isn't this an inspiration?

Start a blog, revive your blog, start another blog. Make meaning.

We too, can make a difference.

People like to think "Change the World" statements only belong to politicians or people like Bill Gates or Ralph Nader or Seth Godin or Jacqueline Novogratz, or 7-year-old kids.

Damned the convenient prejudice.

Having the guts to make a "Change the World" statement (at least to yourself) shows you are ready to commit. Or ready to push yourself to do so.

Damned the cowards & snobs.

At least we dare to try.

Don't balk, ignore the naysayers, push forward, persevere.

94. Physics formulas & stereotypes ("Convenient Prejudice")...

We are all prejudiced in some ways...one of the reasons is, we dehumanize fellow human beings into categories...Asians/Africans, artists/engineers, christians/muslims, smart/stupid...

The way we look at 'them' (people we don't really know), is just like formulas we learnt in junior high physics, with lots of simplifying assumptions....

It's a sad thing, but it's not too hard to find someone who's never talked to a Muslim in her/his life to declare "they are all terrorists".

...When we moved on to high school, to college, to graduate school...when we dived deeper into the world of Physics...our teachers gradually took out those assumptions and we got closer to reality...

In getting to know fellow human beings (both those around us & those we've never met)...have we ever got the chance to dive deeper into their world...? Who's responsible to help us take out those simplifying assumptions?

95. Michael Lewis' moral incentives...

A simple yet enlightening illustration of Iceland's fin. mess, by Michael Lewis:

You have a dog, and I have a cat. We agree that they are each worth a billion dollars. You sell me the dog for a billion, and I sell you the cat for a billion. Now we are no longer pet owners, but Icelandic banks, with a billion dollars in new assets.

His first bestseller Liar's Poker was a good read. Though When I read about his leaving Saloman Brothers because he felt there was something wrong about the business (my understanding), I was kind of skeptical. It's the Homo Economicus assumption, you know.

Until I realized the weight of Moral Incentive in our decision making (thanks to Barry Schwartz & TED). Moral incentive, our desire to do something that may go against our material interest but in line with moral values/virtues, just to make ourselves feel good.

Moral Incentive it is. Moral incentive it has always been.

The question: is your emphasis on "Moral", or "Incentive"?

96. The beauty of telling a story...

"...In most cases, it is virtually impossible to grasp a truth in its original form and depict it accurately..." --- Haruki Murakami

The beauty of telling a story, instead of straight presentation/lecture, is you never know who's going to learn what from it.

That's also why many people don't like telling stories.

A reader of Einstein's biography might only remember that he was a violinist. Who knows?

Who cares?

So what if people got different, unexpected takeaways from your story? what if they "don't get your point"? what if they don't think the way you want 'em to?

But dude, why should we act according to your plan?

It's about new ideas & possibilities, not brainwashing.

97. which side stands Mr. Murakami?

"Always on the side of the egg", Murakami's speech, a great one, courtesy of a fellow blogger. Highlights below:

"...that by telling skillful lies - which is to say, by making up fictions that appear to be true - the novelist can bring a truth out to a new location and shine a new light on it. In most cases, it is virtually impossible to grasp a truth in its original form and depict it accurately. This is why we try to grab its tail by luring the truth from its hiding place, transferring it to a fictional location, and replacing it with a fictional form..."

"Take a moment to think about this. Each of us possesses a tangible, living soul. The System has no such thing. We must not allow The System to exploit us. We must not allow The System to take on a life of its own. The System did not make us: We made The System"

For whom it may concern: you don't need to be a fan of Rage Against The Machine to realize The System Sucks.

Thank you, Mr.Murakami.

98. Keep scribbling on the bullets...

Give it a shot, even if you are not ready.

You never are, you never will.

The moment you look back, it's already gone.

The arsenal, the ammunition, all swallowed by gloomy shadow.

...and we have to move on.

Beautiful moments easily crash and burn...flash into ashes...eventually gone
with
our mortal existence...

Even if you gotta bite the bullet, even if you got only 0.28 seconds to scribble
on it...

Give it a shot. Fire it into unknown eternity.

99. Hard-core A Capella

"when the music dies, we will keep on singing..."

Keep on singigng.

100. What next for these philosophers..?

..most philosophers formed the foundation of their main thoughts in their 20's...and ignited an innovative bomb to break through the status quo of intellectual territory (though these breakthroughs are often recognized only later in their lives)...then what? It seemed like most of them spent the rest of their lives refining & articulating their theories and responding to others' arguments...trying to make their theories perfectly logically sound...and less innovative progress...no more innovative bombs. They're on defense now.

Is it a pity? Are those latter works less valuable? Who knows?

Some bright young kid may be inspired by the summary or after thoughts in their memoirs instead of those "important works" introduced by mainstream textbooks...and that's the "time value" of ideas...

So what after the first bomb? Continue to attack & conquer the innovative front or solidify your fortress?

It doesn't matter as long as you keep your sincerity and someone out there gets inspired.

101. Bright Young Talents & banking giants...

An acquaintance who used to work for a world renowned commercial bank once told me his knock-off time was usually 10pm, because he chose to read through the tiny words on all the documents (including internal control manuals) he signed. It was impossible to do that if you want to knock off at 7.

Thanks to such over-prudence he saved himself from many troubles that befell his colleagues. The price? Pretty obvious.

He was a middle-level manager, and I wonder if his boss knew anything about that. Saying “talent is our best asset” is one thing (an easy one), saving them from systematic burn-out and utilizing them wisely is another.

102. Are problem solvers really what you are looking for?

When you join the crowd to condemn quants who engineered complex financial toxic they themselves did not understand...when you follow the continuous unfolding of this financial Armageddon and acknowledge the wisdom of those who voiced early cautions...

Imagine yourself in their boss's shoes 5 years back.

Who were the real problem solvers that we all like, admire, and encourage our kids to become?

Who were the real problem solvers that helped you realize the company's "vision & growth" and "create value for shareholders*"? (honestly, to this day I don't understand what this means)

Who were the arrogant dudes that always threw cold water on your grandeur ambitions?

Who were the arrogant dudes that always got in the way when you were playing target-crashing hero?

Are problem solvers really what you are looking for?

Or, do you know what kind of problems you've got at all?

103. What if you were right?

...if you wonder why everybody else is thinking and acting stupid, while your own ideas are also regarded by 'them' as utterly stupid...don't balk...chances are you are right...though people will torture you with unprincipled share of pressure & prejudice & discrimination & inequality...until the system blows up...only then will we see more people come out and tell how they felt the same way as you did but thought they're wrong (or they're afraid of peer pressure) & keep quiet...lesson: we are all easily blinded by the given existing 'right' (so we were told) system and bury our common sense...

what if we had all voiced our doubts...? will we do that in future? will our voices be taken seriously?

No matter what Our answer is, it'll be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

104. Capitalism 3.0? My guess...

Dani Rodrik's article on the coming Capitalism 3.0 (Capitalism 1.0 be Smith's "minimal capitalism" & 2.0, Keynes' "mixed economy") was a good read. My understanding is, in face of the current crisis and an uncertain future for capitalism, he suggested 'national-global' dimension an important one to consider while fixing Capitalism, so as to adapt to new landscape of globalization, and to achieve a better balance between state and free markets.

But I just have doubt with the word 'balance'.

Are we going to solve a new problem with the old way of thinking? Is it still the 'balancing' of state intervention and free markets in the economy(ies)? Is there a 'right equilibrium' for this?

We need more imagination and experiments.

My guess is, a government will become less and less like a government as we know it. So will business. So will NGOs. The underlying reality & assumptions have been shifting for a long time without our conscious & open acknowledgment. It's no longer 'state provides infrastructure and rules the businesses', 'only businesses are market players', 'NGOs do not make money' that kind of things. There will be any imaginable kind of partnership and even eventual integration of these organizations when there are common benefits at stake.

And we will eventually get used to it.

105. How theoretical physicists affect the way we look at the financial crisis

Despite my great respect for the intelligence and imagination of many theoretical physicists, I'm not able to believe in one assumption (as far as I know) common among them: there's one universal law/principle/theory that can explain anything & Everything in this universe.

The respectable intellectual souls' quest for "The 1" over decades and centuries makes beautiful and mind-blowing theories, hypotheses, and stories. I'm just afraid 'de assumption' is flawed.

Let's look at a popular belief at this moment: a better/ comprehensive/ global regulatory framework can save us from the current mess for good. For politicians, promoting such belief may just be some political expediency; for us average citizens, if you believe in this, the root may trace back to Sir Isaac Newton, no matter how critical you are of the academia.

update: well, maybe we owe this old assumption to some ancient philosopher...

106. Big Picture Thinking: another interpretation

What if there are only 23 seconds of the game left and you are 40 points behind?
What if there are 1600 pages not yet read just one day before your certification exam? What if you still got 5 analysis reports to do just 1 hour before the meeting?

Don't give up.

Don't expect a miracle either.

Enjoy every single second left on the court, still give 100% to your passing & shooting & rebounding, Play the game like it's your last.

Just sit down and read, one point at a time, and Learn the stuff.

Start with your first report, do Think and analyze when you put together those graphs & data.

There's so much more to life than winning games, passing exams, and pleasing your bosses. Instead of freaking out and rushing mindlessly in such situation, why not actually put your Heart into it and just Do the thing (and Learn something from it)? Often then the path becomes clear, and if you are lucky, you begin to see the making of a miracle.

107. "People want to Be Allowed to be Virtuous"

The first mind-blower, from Barry Schwartz's '09 TED talk, after AIS's latest "soul-searching" (the more precise missions of this weblog as well as the new layout have just been finalized).

Quotes:

"a wise person knows...when and how to make the exception to every rule...when and how to improvise...how to use these moral skills in pursuit (service) of the right aims...to serve, not manipulate the people..."

"...moral skill is chipped away by overreliance on rules...prices are the opportunity to improvise and learn from our improvisation...moral will is undermined by an incessant appeal to incentives that destroy our desire to do the right thing..."

"...(on scripted curricula) scripts like these are insurance policies against disaster; and they prevent disaster; but what they assure is in place is mediocrity"

"...there isn't a formula to tell you how to get the people behind you, because different people in different communities organize their lives in different way..."

John here, same logic, Great Leaders are not about "skills" or formulas...they're about Hearts that really care and reach their people...

"people want to be allowed to be virtuous"

Why Barry's video got 450+ 5-star rating on youtube? Because he spoke our minds out loud (yeah speak our minds & justify our wondering out loud! This

is exactly the reason Tom Peters and Seth Godin rock...)! We all(or many of us) know this system sucks and there are other ways that make more sense...yet we're still stuck in this system because...before the message is articulated and shot through the stifling air...before we unite and start a movement...as individuals we often have to take care of our own a** first (and now times are tough,man)...

"People want to Be Allowed to be Virtuous"...my interpretation based on real-life experience: we want to do moral things,sometimes it means sacrificing personal interests for noble reasons, we want to do it and then stand up proud & feel good about ourselves...while in reality (well i said this system sucks), moral choice often means being accused of rule-breaking, or financially punished, or misunderstood as hypocrites...

...and I'd call this "moral incentive"...

All these while I've believed the solutions to our world's challenges are incremental adjustments (through bold experiments) to build up more incentive-compatible mechanisms...I still do...great thanks to Barry's talk that shed light on the importance of Moral Incentives...

108. Be Yourself?

How do you know if you are being "who you are"?

Can you give a Really Precise answer and/or reply with a Sketch and/or simply
Act it out right here right now?

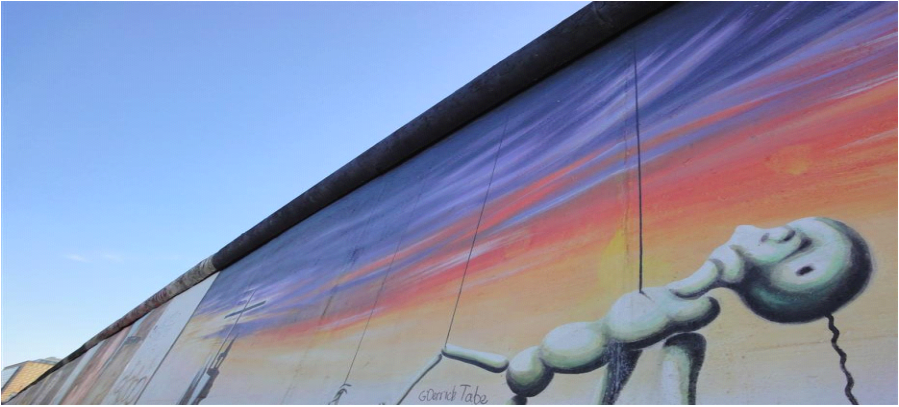
109. Before imagination & creativity...

The most unbelievably amazing and memorable moments in a trip are usually those out-of-plan surprises not originally planned on the itinerary...

...the unknown path may lead you to a culture's origin...the flight delay may send you a lifelong partner...a whimsical midnight hike in late winter may turn out to be a life-changing experience...etc etc...

Realizing this...sometimes people can go too far in search of such experiences...planning a trip (or a life)with only wild crazy imagination and lots of creativity but no realistic plans & projections...unaware that out-of-plan events can happen only when there's a plan in the first place...

A plan and a pre-determined destination is usually not where we want and will settle in the end, as we travelers as well as the situation constantly change on the journey. However we need the plan and a tentative 'destination' to kick start our bold journey. For some people, it may help to start with something (e.g. a blue print for life) somewhat modest and realistic, then...while learning and exploring on the way...gradually enriching & extending & distorting & coloring & 3D-ing that blueprint with new ideas & imagination & random impromptu bold moves...



110. It's not about Obama, though

Read a criticism on Mr. Obama...

"...He came in with a huge amount of political capital, with the freedom to propose bold moves that might take control of events. And yet he is clearly letting events take control of him..."

...maybe as a politician he's got his difficulty...for those of us who aren't politicians...think about this: everyday, do we take control of events around us or are we letting the events around us control our lives?

Nothing new. Enough people talked about this already. Just another cliché reminder just in case you need it...

Live a purposeful life, squeeze at least 5 mins a day to clear and calm our minds, and listen to the compass within us...reach out to it...follow it...every move a component of a purposeful life...and take control of the events around us...

Bonus quote:

"Every moment is another chance" - from movie '8 mile'

111. Who & What & Ally McBeal

You Never Know Who's Gonna Change Your Life; and You Never Know Whose Life You Are Gonna Change.

...it could be just a casual sentence, it could be an one-line scribble, it could be a show, it could be a true story, it could be a narrative, it could be silent melodies, it could be a moment of tranquility in ruthless hectic, it could be an unexpected harshness...it could be a shared song or a shared donut, or simply a special angle to look at your kid's pencil...

...any given day, any location, any moment, anyone, ANYONE, might make a difference in your life. Difference, big or small. A reminder at critical moment, a life-changing mind-blower, a recall of forgotten dreams or missions, or simply a recollection of happiness...

A variation: You Never Know What's Gonna Change Your Life...
...maybe an old comedy drama called Ally McBeal?

This scene came to my mind, somehow, in this really cold night (when I could not sleep because of zero blog entry). It was the end of an episode, in a New Year (or X'mas, who cares) party, a conversation between Ally & her colleague...(not exact wording but the content's roughly there)

"...my grandma used to tell me...if you look back on the year...and there was nothing that makes you cry...you have wasted it..."

112. "General" questions

forewarning: There is a roughly 97.8% probability that this entry is not for you (will show you the calculation some time later).

“Are you having fun?”

“Well...hmm...I think so...”

“Then think harder”

- a classic remark, that started a quest, a discovery, and a blog entry.

"How are you?", "Do you like this city?", "Are you enjoying this party?", "How do you find working here?"...

What are your replies to these "general" questions? ...while there's not enough excitement built up to justify a confirmed "yes", yet insufficient negativity to uphold a confirmed "no"...you see feel smell appreciate both the beauty & the imperfections...and you're thankful for this experience...yet unable to decide on a simple yes/no summary...

"I'm not sure."

It's not a polite answer. It's not the answer you expected. It's not a good way to continue the small talk...yet I can't lie. Or at least in a way that won't make me hate myself later on.

Somehow such a casual question became a struggle each and every time...

Yeah it doesn't really matter how I answer, it doesn't matter whatsoever. But I just can't lie, I just have to figure out what I really feel, before I could give you my answer(or does it matter?)...I just can't help feeling it deserves a sincere reply. And I just need a little bit more time to figure it out...

Forgive me, stranger, you must be bored, please feel free to go talk to the pretty lady at the other side.

113. if you have been a star all your life...

If you have been a star all your life, from a naughty kid through your adulthood...the class & club presidents, the lead singer or dancer or actress, the rookie of the year award holder, the team & project leader, the founder of experience design department, the youngest in the top management, etc, etc...

Beware.

Chances are, being the lead actor/actress under the spotlight all your life, you never ever knew, felt, experienced, understood and identified with the feelings of your teammates who wear funny costumes and play 'tree roles' off the limelight...or exhausting themselves arranging wardrobe/props/drinks for you behind the scene...or watching you having lots of fun from a dark corner feeling like outsiders...

Chances are, you may never discover that the best comrades you can find are often among these people, people who Can and Will change the world together with you...

(Note: with you, not for you)

When the corporate world realized it could no longer expect the employees to commit one decade or two (or 3 or 4) to corporate ladder climbing, it invented management trainee programs. What are management trainee programs for? To help future managers, we all know, understand the company and its business better, faster.

But is that all? Really?

Assigning ambitious college graduates to work as underwear promoters for 3 or 6 months just to know the "business" of a department store chain? Really?

Think about it. Especially if you have been a star all your life.

114. “What’d you do if you have only one year left?”– my take

Don’t spend too much time trying to find the answer. Don’t discuss with your friends. Don’t make it an ice breaker. Don’t press your loved ones for too serious a quest. Don’t even try to come up with a ‘good’ answer. Don’t make it a writing exercise. Don’t put your answer neatly on a paper and lock it away. Don’t prioritize or make a plan for it, be it a 12-mth plan or 50-yr plan. Don’t.

Change the question to: “what’d you do if your life ends when the sun goes down tomorrow?”

Don’t write your answer down (as you always do), and don’t struggle with choices. Trust your instinct, whatever that comes to your mind now, just Do it.

115. 3 superb quotes that deserve 3 individual posts

#3

If you want to build a ship, don't Wgather people together to collect wood, and don't assign them tasks and work, but instead teach them to long for the sea.

-- Antoine de Saint-Exupery (Le Petit Prince)

#2

Don't get stuck in the middle. It's painful.

--Seth Godin

#1

Trying stuff.

Screwing stuff up.

Fast

--Tom Peters

116. Big Picturers

I myself have a little trouble practicing the Move-on idea. There's something so tenaciously lingering in my mind, so let me get it over with right here right now (and I won't go back to search through those 'drafts'...)

Seth Godin posted a great blog about "how to deal with 'No'" a while back. Great. You can read it here, because you most likely won't be satisfied with my one-line summary below:

Focus on the BIG Picture (it's not just about you).

It's just that easy. All we have to do is forget ourselves for a moment and think from the Big-picture perspective. Think not of the big paycheck or sense of accomplishments or praise or envy from others, but of the future of the company. By the way, would you give a damn, truly give a damn, if you are not trying to get in?

Easy principles are often the hardest to practice. However, for true big picturers, such 'against-selfish-human-nature', hard-to-implement advice/action is just natural reflection of their big-picture thinking (because they give a damn and it's not just them!).

The sad thing, the thing that worries me, is the whole culture that's skewed towards the obsession with 'skills' that 'gets you in'. People are encouraged/enticed to learn, practice, sharpen (and pay for) the 'skills' that make you look like a perfect match for whichever company you're trying to get in. it doesn't matter if you really are passionate or suitable, you just have to look like it. So you pay for the skills to make yourselves look really passionate and 'qualified'.

Seth's advices in the blog post, originally a display of big picturers' natural action, could i) become a catalyst to re-invent the culture, or they could ii) be squeezed into the category of "latest skills" that "get you in". We'll see.

If ii) would be the result, unfortunately, those advices would be like obsolete technology that loses competitive advantage in a few years time (or shorter). And sadly, it might even crowd out some real big picturers in certain markets.

Or, by then, with all the passion & care & infinite innovativeness, you big picturers may have already developed some even more brilliant next-generation best-practices that blow our minds (including Seth's) away.

117. Move On

Do it today, or just forget it and Move On.

Move on. It's more important than ever today, while the highly connected system (called modern civilization) is flooding your mind with tons of flashes & noises...

Share that quote, tidy up that shelf, read that book, publish that post, write that mail, send that postcard, deliver that thank-you note, give that hug, say De 4-letter word (I mean 'love') to those you care about, and another for those who deserve it, reach out & connect & asking for no returns...TODAY.

Sunset, sunrise, another day in the life. Move On.

118. Some more Ammunition: Scribbles on A Bullet

a. “Mean”

Why people can be so mean to each other? Is it sth we are born with or sth we learn? Why people want to be mean? How do we deal with mean people? How a society creates mean people? Why some environment creates less mean people?

Maybe, something mean and ugly may look pretty & thrilling & exciting from another perspective...It doesn't matter we learnt it or we were born with it. It's just there. It does matter, however, what & how we are gonna do with it...

b. Conflicting emotions

Conflicting emotions: emotions that make people tough & successful v.s. emotions that make people soft & amicable. Economic territory v.s. social territory. How do we deal with it? Instant switching is 'ugly', but seems like survival skills very often are ugly. What should we do? What can we do? Or should we ask this question in the first place?

c. Game

The endless 'games' between regulators & financiers...at the end, rules are simply something people try to circumvent...what we need then, could be better mechanism designs for the systems, in which following the rules is beneficial to participants (both psychologically and materially)...

* Note: there is no single perfect mechanism in any given case, we can achieve better mechanism only through continual small-scale experiments that consistently brace for failures and crack comfort zones.

119. Thus Spoke the Restless Wandering Souls

Having realized we could not provide any answer to anybody, we decided instead to throw about our wild crazy guesses to make you dudes think...

120. Why?

...why do we expect those so-called leaders (politicians or whoever), to possess nobler personalities (or we say or argue or write so)? Haven't we in this system already implicitly agreed that it's acceptable for them to work for their self-interests as long as that doesn't cause serious harm to all of us? The trick is, behaviour that may create catastrophe to all of us doesn't seem dangerous at the beginning, especially to those 'corrupt' beneficiaries...so let's drop the false expectations & ideals, stop unrealistic assumptions & arguments & education that often lead to subsequent disappointment & resentment...and focus our energy on the efforts to innovate & re-invent the system into a more incentive-compatible one...

121. One more thing to leave behind

Password to your mailbox (not business mailbox, but the one that you connect and interact with friends and important people in life) can be a precious bequest to your posterity. It may be a key for your grandson's grandson to see your genuine insights & wit & sincerity & spontaneous humor & creativity. It may be a piece of gem that inspires people for generations to come. If possible, consider it.

122. "Put Your Life into The Speech"

I don't know from whom this line originally is; I don't know how many people really noticed or believe in it, but it struck my mind when a fellow public speaking club member mentioned it. He quoted this when giving suggestions to another fellow member. This sentence pretty much summed up what I believe a great speech preparation/execution should be.

Speech. Greatness. It's not about awards; not about showcase of skills. It's about something from your heart & soul. It could be your life.

And greatest lessons come often not from known prominent figures, but 'average' people (precisely, people whose passion & potential not yet fully discovered & displayed) who care and give a damn.

Thank you, Ger.

Again, You never know who's going to change your life; and you never know whose life you are going to change.

123. Mission: Attack!

Now, launch an Attack on your mission.

For many, mission is nothing but dead dull statement (with unnecessary twists & turns for accuracy/embellishment) lying lifeless in 'formal' documents.

And many organizations (and people) are doing pretty good with it. But if your goal (or the goal of your org) is beyond 'doing ok' and 'pretty comfortable', you've got to do something about your mission.

You either live it, or you dump it.

For a real-life example of living the mission, read the story of Middelfart Sparekasse at Mavericks at Work blog.

If an organization can do 'pretty ok' with a lifeless mission statement (which no employee, including the managers, take seriously), it may even do better with no mission at all.

Erase the lifeless mission statement; clear some space for today's exploration and soul searching, for a true mission that matters. For a mission of today and tomorrow that gets your team excited, that makes your team proud, that makes you larger than yourself (ves).

You may not even know what it is yet, but before you do, clear the lifeless corpse. At least you may save some paper for the mother earth, or some space for the growing internet community.

What do you do with your mission? Attack!

124. Some More Ammunition...

A. 2 Ideas abt Innovation

Include to Innovate

Does this require explanation? No. We all know people often can surprise us with what they can do while given an opportunity. This cliché requires lots of practices, labor to weed out our ego and vanity.

cognitive diversity

What is diversity? Different skin colors different background different nationality? How about people in the same neighborhood in the same company but spending weekends reading different stuff & interacting with different people behind computer screens? Internet is changing everything (yeah another cliché), including the definition of diversity. Think about it.

B. Why changes just don't happen in our world?

1. People are lazy;
2. People think others ("they" or "??? NGO") will/should take care of the world for them;
3. People are willing to give 150% & sacrifice Only for things they have strong emotional connections to.

Forget about 1 & 2, it's 3 that makes a difference.

C. Another perspective on "How to maximize efficient usage of talents (to change our world)?"

Do Not burden Devoted Baby Seal Rescuers with Guilt and Obligation to save war victims.

D. In search of ideas on Next-generation Markets

Selling ideas like selling peanuts just won't work anymore, but we human beings are good at dragging...delaying changes...we make do with status quo until we have to innovate or die...

Why people can make a living selling ideas? Because they attach ideas to tangible things like books or CDs (whose markets are as tangible as markets for peanuts). Because they attach ideas to "live" experience (confined by time & space) like a concert or seminar. However it's not news that we no longer need to pay for the copyright to read about your brilliant ideas, we no longer have to buy the tickets to see you from 150 meters to get motivated...

Copyright laws just increase social costs, especially in an era of the Web. It's not incentive compatible (many things are not, by the way), how long into the future can it work?

We human beings have been buying and selling intangibles using the market concept based on tangible goods for a long long time...can we do it for another century or will we be thrown into total confusion in 10 years and forced to innovate + create a Next-generation Market for ideas?

There's no answer yet at this moment, but we do have a box to jump and think out of...

Will you be part of the innovation?

125. Stuff I should have posted long time ago

Stuff I should have posted long time ago...are they related? I forgot.

1. Let's admit, we are all arrogant farts, we are all racists (google Implicit Association Test, try it, and find out why)...so if we want to continue to fake it (till we make it, hopefully), there's work to do and things to bear in mind...

2. Read John Kay's article Kudos for The Contrarian here

highlight:

...when people said, "We really want you to challenge our ideas," they mostly did not. They wanted instead to be congratulated on their wisdom. Similarly, when they ask, "What is going to happen?" they seek reaffirmation and reassurance rather than insight into the future.

...people preferred to be told they were right than to be told what would happen.

...a good story is more compelling than the search for truth. The American political scientist, Philip Tetlock, has studied the prognostications of pundits over several decades. He finds that the better known the forecaster, the less accurate the forecast...

...Business people, politicians and journalists value clarity and certainty of view more highly than acknowledgement of the uncertainty of a complex world. But it is mostly people who appreciate that complexity who have worthwhile things to say about the future.

3. Do you remember?

The last time you felt humiliated because one person insensitively harshly

sarcastically pointed out your stupidity or the hole on your integrity? Write a note to thank him/her. Now.

4. There was a quote...by Friedrich Hayek if my memory's right (but couldn't find it anymore)...roughly means: "...the problem with social sciences...is that human beings who propose theories also have the ability to change the reality/results..." It seems to me then, there's no right or wrong theory, only theories that are made reality and those that are not.

126. Said Mr. Drucker...

Peter Drucker said (something like) Corporations as they are will die in 25 years (couldn't recall the exact wording, if you got the original quote pls share with us here, thanks!).

He said it in year 2000.

So where are we now?

127. Genuine Authenticity?

It's been uplifting seeing the trend for authenticity in modern business thinking; yet worrying while many people wired with 'skills' (+zero-sum game) mind-set are so keen with learning & using this new 'skills'...

It's kind of funny being genuine & authentic now becomes something we have to pay to learn..

...and in the worst case scenario, it could turn out to be something like what we've seen in movies for years, skilled & charming jerks cheating young innocent virgins...

128.

Highlight of a recent FT article:

Comedian Stephen Colbert coined the term “truthiness” to describe the authenticity that Americans yearned for. Truthiness was not, he explained, the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, but rather “something that seems like the truth – the truth we want to exist”.

Revealing. At least to naive people like me.

So the convergence of material/commercial benefits and virtue is not yet under way. It's just development in the field of strategy & tactics.

Reality shows, I realized, are still shows.

It brings back the question: what's the role of ethics in our society? Does it matter? Does it Really matter? Anymore?

Update: Just a guess

Ethics/morality/virtue, could just be a tool for social elite. Needless to say, it's to facilitate their governing/leading/managing you and me (are we really free?).

129. Blaze away your ammunition...Now!

I bet many of you dudes/bloggers/dreamers out there have behind your head an arsenal full of ammunition. I mean a ton of ideas that overload your head. And for some reason you haven't yet turn it into a concrete blog post...

If one of your reasons is, 'I'm still not quite ready', 'I'm still not quite sure how to present it in the right way', 'I may as well wait for a while', 'I may need a bit more time to figure it out' etc... read point 8 & 9 of this post by Seth Godin.

8. Show up. Not writing is not a useful way of expressing your ideas. Waiting for perfect is a lousy strategy.

9. Say it. Don't hide, don't embellish. (Read the post [here](#))

Don't worry about grammatical mistakes or imperfect analogy or messy reasoning or inaccurate quotes or possible stupidity, in Seth's words, you can, and should, always "edit yourself ruthlessly"; in John Wooden's words, "he who makes the most mistakes wins."

Blaze away your ammunition...Now!

130. Christmas Launch: "Change the World with Ideas"

What causes changes in our world? A lot. It starts with ideas. PLUS: tons of action, experiments, failures & persistence. Ideas, however overrated or underrated nowadays, are not enough.

"...ideas are easy, try to do it - that's the test..."

--Guy Kawasaki

Not enough, not deciding, yet absolutely necessary. Inspirational ideas are the origin (see related post) of all great changes. And we can all contribute to this and be part of the changes.

"Change the World with Ideas" is not just a grand yet empty statement, it's not just the business of so-called gurus or innovators. It's something we can practice every single day and yes, it's Our Business. We all have a role in it, if we give a damn.

We develop or refine or improve ideas ('Think'); we experiment new ideas and put 'em into practice ('Innovate'); we share brilliant ideas and encourage innovative practices ('Spread').

We don't have to be thinkers with superb ideas or innovators with hyper elastic minds to do our part. The easiest way for us to contribute and "Change the World with Ideas" (and what this blog attempts to do), is to spread those brilliant ideas & practices, value-add a bit if possible, and pray for someone with great potential out there to get inspired, then go on to create something and change our world for the better.....and that someone, ladies and gentlemen, may very well be You.

Wish You A Merry & Meaningful Christmas!

131. Einstein Quote, Rocker Buddy, Thanksgiving

* "Every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving" -- Albert Einstein

An Einstein quote*.

A documentary on de Band.

A song dedicated to John Lennon.

A night of living inspirations, swirled and shredded with wild hearts, moonlight proudly carved.

24. A promise unfulfilled, yet never expire.

there are moments in life when you just want to drop a few lines for someone, without expecting any reply. She/he can be your buddy, or sb. you befriended 28 mins ago. Just go do it, write your heart, slip your signature into his/her life, and expect nothing in return.

It's beautiful, knowing there's someone out there who cares.

And this one is for you my Rocker Buddy, specimens for the moments we reached to our souls. I'm just grateful.

It's tremendously motivating and meaningful, knowing there's someone out there on the same quest, same mission, same struggle.

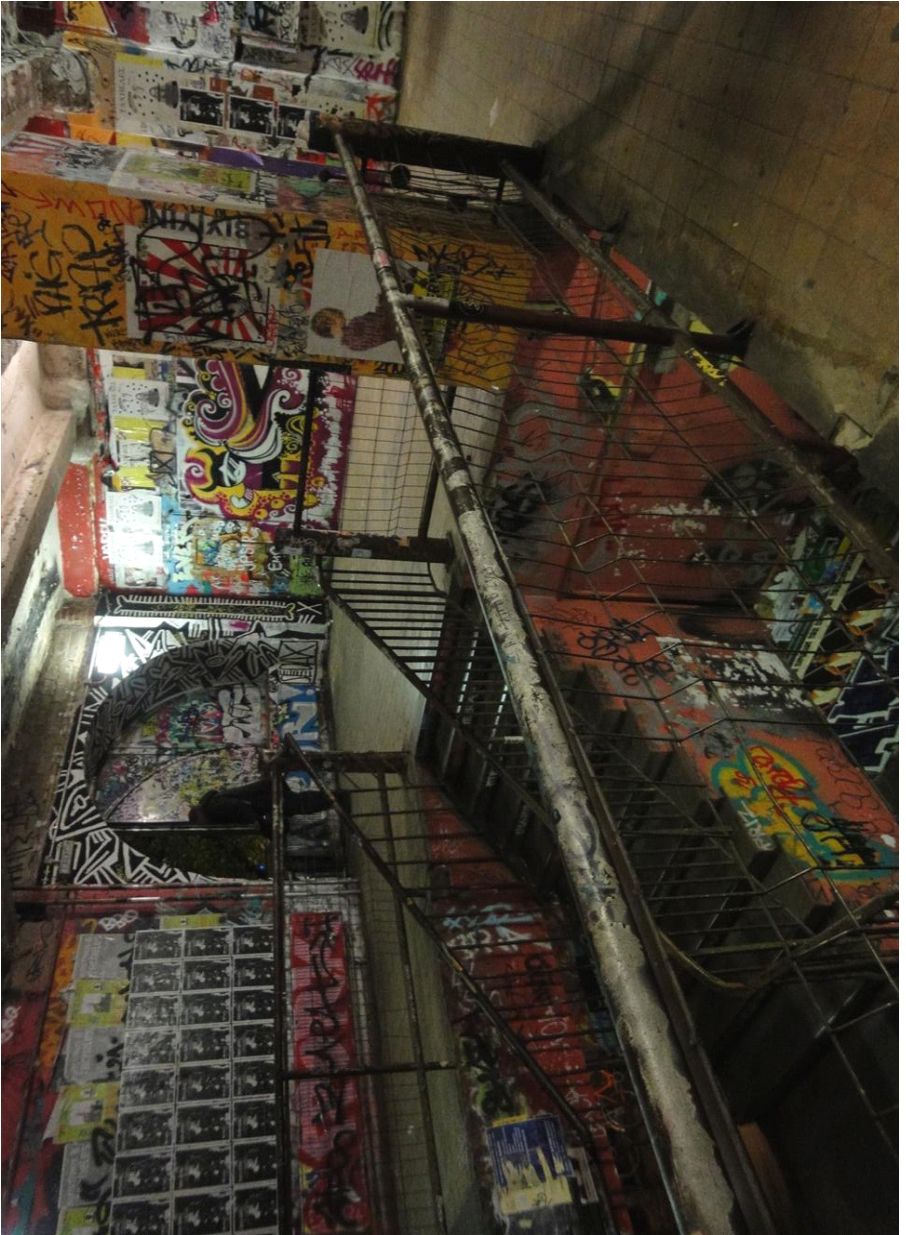
what could be the worst?

A lifetime of pain, for evanescent yet huge, aesthetic, soul-moving moments.

year after year, life rolling on.
man, now i'm pretty sure we are never gonna change.

So Keep on Rocking...





132. How Ideas Change the World?

Rough generalization of my guess:

I. Blow Minds

=> people get inspired, determined and committed

II. Innovate

=> inspired people engage themselves into tons of action, experiments, failures, more trials & experiments, insights, discoveries, design, practice => innovation
[yes Innovation is about Doing instead of thinking!]

III. Spread the Practice

=> people share, communicate and market resulting practices of innovation, until they gain enough acceptance to scale into the main stream.

By the way, modern/scientific corp. management practices took nearly 100 years to scale (And if we are lucky the next-generation practices will take substantially less time to replace it).

133. Mr. Maeda, you never knew...

John Maeda, some computer scientist in MIT who wrote some book that caught Tom Peters' attention and was interviewed by tompeters.com a couple of years ago (you can read the interview [here](#)). What I can really remember about him, however, is (20mins ago I couldn't even remember what his book was about)...

- He got an MBA simply because he wanted to know more about business
- He considered studying Law (i have no idea if he did) simply because he wanted to know more about the subject
- He reads a book every week (yes, just this simple!)

I was thrilled by these just as i was thrilled by the fact that Bill Gates reads insatiably simply out of curiosity... (as opposed to "i'm reading this book to learn these skills to enable me to increase my 'value' and income...", anyone?)

what I want to say is...

Ladies and gentlemen, you never know what you've said or done is in what way making what kind of influence/impact on others' lives.

So say it, do it, and live, with your heart.

Update:

John Maeda is now the President of RISD (Rhode Island School of Design) and his appointment was a surprise to many, read [Fast Company's](#) report [here](#). His latest blog [here](#).

134. What do I know about Denmark?

Not much. At least nothing worthy enough for your precious time.

But I read about a Danish today who happened to be the chief of Carlsberg (by the way the founder named the brand Carlsberg because of his beloved son Carl) who said something worth sharing:

1. The Most Important Thing for Leadership - Be Yourself

As simple as this. Many people look up to great leaders or superstars in business and imitate, and just fail.

2. On Success (?) - Be Yourself and No Regret for What You've Done

If you have to do it all over again, you'd still make the same choice.

3. "Say What You Think"

A Danish trait (or he said so). Pretty admirable in any case.

135. What do you know about Bill? Steve? Pete?

If a relative from Mars pays you a visit and he/she/it knows nothing about Bill Gates, would you care to do some story-telling? If yes, how?

Below is my take:

...he believes with enough IQ any problem in the world can be solved...

...he grew up reading encyclopedia and got insatiable thirst for knowledge + mega sized curiosity...

...he was sighted reading while driving on freeway...

...he never read business/management literature but biographies...(I heard but never verified)

did i miss anything?

Oh he happened to be the founder of a huge company entangled in anti-trust cases...

Update 1

How about Steve Jobs?

Beat me.

The only thing I know: He regards himself an aesthete.

Update 2

How about Peter Drucker?

...he regards himself a writer, a 'loner'...

...he taught religion in university...

...he said what managers really should read is proses and poetry...

136. Words of The Day (again): Incentive Compatibility

Incentive Compatibility...the corner stone of Mechanism Design...the magic behind a great human invention, Markets...I can go on and on and on on this, with messy sentence structure shallow opinions untested guesses and incoherent logic. So I won't.

Just think about it, in the context of financial regulation, activists' causes...
For anyone who wants to make lasting changes, consider it the priority.

137. Word of The Day: INDEFINABLE

If you can't find a slot in the market to fit in, if you aren't quite happy with the label you're given, if you have trouble finding the 'proper' description of what you can do in your CV, if you're having problem with the 'right' category of your personality... chances are...

you are INDEFINABLE (or what you are born to do is so far INDEFINABLE).

Congratulations!!!! (the extra exclamation marks are to smash the shadow imposed by 'them' on your uniqueness)

In a society where people were busy doing categorization, simple labeling, standardization, etc to give things order keep cost lower make life easier, being Indefinable was a sin.

No longer. Welcome to a world where any spot on the Long Tail got its place.

If you find yourself indefinable, you are one of a kind. If you find yourself indefinable, it's up to you to figure out what you can do with your uniqueness. If you find yourself indefinable, embrace the ambiguity, charge forward, leverage the ambiguity for infinite creativity & possibilities.

If you can't find the answer among choices A,B,C,D, it's because people haven't yet discovered possibility E. And you stand a good chance to be the first one to discover it. Better yet, be the innovator to bring it onto the table.

Or you can squeeze yourself between B and C until someone else discover and bring us the E.

* If you find yourself Indefinable, Stand Proud, Walk On, You are Not Alone.

138. Idea of The Day: Spectrum

Originally from an interview of Tim Brown by McKinsey Quarterly.

IIIIIIII II III II I I il it & CAN happen...

"...and you can't just pick a spot on the spectrum, you've got to move around..."

139. Aficionado (The Quote)

Talk is cheap, ACTION is EVERYTHING.

Quote from an 'extremist' friend who did something really cool that I regret I didn't do (which was to drop out of college that does not really teach you much).

Thanks dude, that was a great one, charged through my mind and made my day.

It's not just about being aggressive, impatient, or hyper-enthusiastic, man, it's not for everyone and no one should just imitate, to me it's more about standing for your own belief, genuinely living your own values, and being true to yourself...

Another quote I remember, not quite my cup of tea but some readers may like it...

Sniper Mindset: Winners Focus, Losers Spray.

140. de Zone

Vincent was there, W. AXL Rose was there, who else?

Elation and Pain.

'cos they reached to their souls, 'cos they gave a damn.

Who else?

141. Life-mission Entrepreneurs

We got entrepreneurs who sets up businesses...

We got social entrepreneurs who sets up schools, hospitals...etc

And if you can't find a place or passion in the categories above (or you found fitting yourself into either category kills your creativity...), try this:

Life-mission Entrepreneurs...

Figure out & Do what you TRULY care (it may happen to be what you do best and/or have fun doing), Do what gives your life Meaning.

You do this not for profits, not for acknowledgment from others (yes it's hard), but to make your life TRULY meaningful. And you can do it part-time.

Don't ever think about profits or to please anybody or your 'social responsibility/obligation', you're doing it for your own life (and life's Not a rehearsal). You may meet people who appreciate your work along the way, or you may not.

But when u look back fifty years from now, you'll be glad you have not been blinded by the mist around you today, and you didn't fail your life and let yourself down.

I repeat: Life Is Not A Rehearsal.

142. Push & Pull

Came across this Leading Philosophy, Push & Pull.

It made me think, and with all due respect, share my view below:

You push, you pull, and you don't do no back-slapping.

People love you, or people hate you, that's it.

Nothing in between.

If you 'succeeded' in making everybody 'like' you, you may no longer deserve the love from people who love you.

143. The Same Old Saying(for a fellow speaker): Be Yourself

"instead of trying to improve by 'imitating' others, why not bring the best out of yourself? "

"...if you feel comfortable standing still, then forget abt those stage trotters & surely you will figure out how to make a superbly amazing inspirational passionate sincere brilliantly elegant speech with you feet on the same spot for 15 freaking mins..."

On the other hand, you may want to

"...try a bit of something, new techniques old techniques...try anything...comfortable or not, go try em all... ...just remember to ask yourself, 'is it me?', 'does it reflect my personality?', 'could i feel my soul and heartbeat when using these techniques?' " or 'have i lost yourself trying to be sb. else?'"

"Benchmarking is stupid," said Tom Peters and a bunch of cool fellas.

It's not, it's just so outdated, and we no longer wear corsets in 21st century.

[update: ironically, found out later that many still do...wear corsets i mean...]

144. The (Awkward) Conversation

"...when my work is squeezed between the covers it loses its freedom...", said the writer.

"...sometimes we need finite form, as a platform, to help explore the infinity in our souls...", replied the philosopher.

145. The Speaker

"I'd look so small standing beside my ideas..."

"...and my ideas would look so insignificant compared to what they may help trigger in your thinking..."

"...I'm not here to show you my speaking skills, I'm here to deliver a message..."

"...I'm here not just to deliver the message, but to explore new possibilities together with you guys..."

Are you ready?

146. Thus Spoke The Philosopher's Mentor II

Foucault in debate or Berlin in contemplation?

"...but you don't pin yourself down under one label...the fact is you can be them all...go do & create something first before you limit your potential with some stupid categorization..."

"Go explore, son, 'cos this world is so beautifully chaotic..."

147. Thus Spoke The Philosopher's Mentor

"..maybe we just have to be modest...with lots of action (learning, thinking, creating)...'cos we don't have all the answers, son...focus not on changing the world with your ideas...but to take part in the debate and conversation...that's how we contribute...to help explore the possibilities, ideas and aestheticity...and hopefully inspire people to change the world..."

"...that is, instead of imposing your ideas on the world, you are opening up the possibilities for people to create even more brilliant ideas and to make the world better..."

148. a bigger life

Tear the template apart and toss it away. Imagine, explore, you'll see possibilities you've never dreamed of.

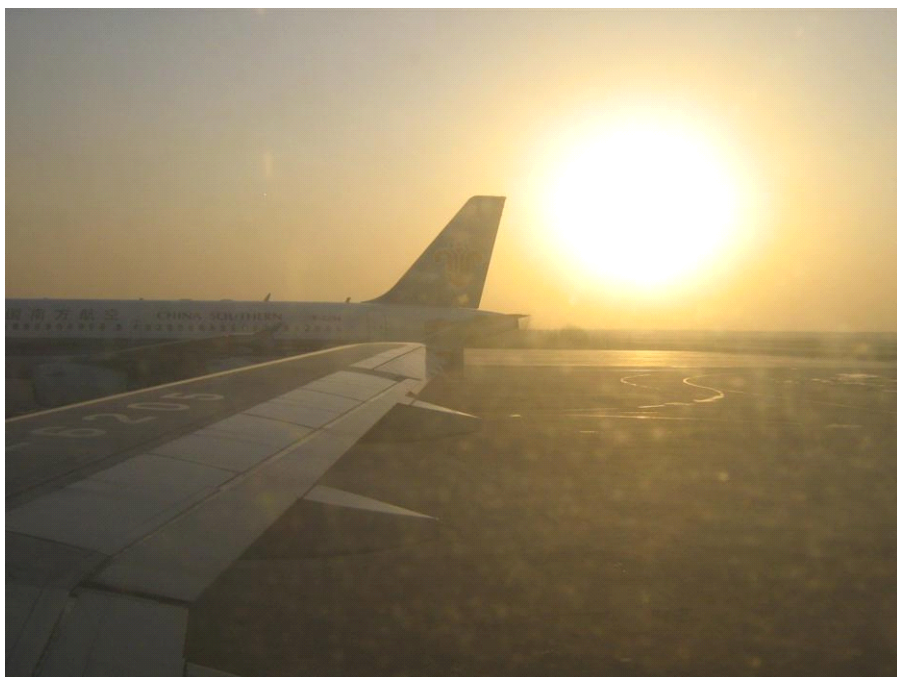
Take your life off the assembly line. Your life story should be an unique piece of artwork, unlike everybody else's.

Dream big, dream crazy. Attempt the "impossible".

There is so much more you can give to the world. Your talent and passion can make a difference. We need it.

There is so much more exciting, meaningful, and beautiful you life can be. You deserve it.

You can make a bigger impact, you deserve a bigger life. Ignore the mainstream mediocre, have a little faith, **go make your greatness happen.**



Go, make your greatness happen.

