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REALITY IS MALLEABLE!

Dear friend,

A word of encouragement and something I believe in: realize that reality is malleable!

You have the power!

This is my thoughts:

In the modern world, many of us feel disempowered, because we don't think we have the power to change our external reality. We feel trapped; we feel like prisoners. We feel trapped in our 9-5 jobs, we feel trapped by outside social expectations, and we feel trapped by society.

However realize friend -- reality is malleable! You have the power to change your external reality (and internal reality).

Perhaps in the past if you were born as a slave, you literally wouldn't have any ability to change your external reality. But in today's free world-- you have infinite power to do anything you desire!

Human needs

For example, let us ask ourselves:

> What do we really **need** in order to **not** die?

Simply put, we must not starve to death, we must not freeze to death, and we must not die of thirst. Beyond that-- our needs are actually very meager.

In other words, what we NEED in order to survive:

1. Eat food
2. Stay warm
3. Drink water

Beyond that, everything else is "superfluous".

We are living in the best possible time, in human history.

The phenomenal thing to consider is that in today's world, to survive (and not die) is essentially free. In today's prosperous modern world, you couldn't starve to death (even if you tried). You wouldn't freeze to death (clothes are essentially free). You wouldn't die of thirst (there are free water faucets/fountains everywhere in all public places).

Taking it a step forward-- a lot of us like having access to power outlets and wifi. And that is essentially free and open at community libraries, some public parks/places, and can also be accessed for very cheap (assuming you spend $2 for a cup of coffee at a coffee shop).

Not only that-- but you can essentially buy a super-high end smartphone for almost nothing. You can get an uber-powerful smartphone for less than $100 USD! This blows me away. With your smartphone you can access the internet, access infinite video content (YouTube), you can access infinite knowledge/books/information (Project Gutenberg at gutenberg.org / Internet archive at archive.org), you have access to free publishing platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Medium, Wordpress, YouTube), and at worst-- the only minor annoyance is online advertising. But beyond that-- the internet affords us infinite possibilities, is open, democratic, and to some extent-- a "level playing field".

What do you really want out of life?

Sorry I'm getting a bit distracted with the internet-- realize that when I say that "reality is malleable" what I mean is this:

You have the power to dictate how you live your life, with whom you associate yourself with, and you have control over your time/attention/energy/life.

The only thing which restricts our freedom is when we desire the superfluous. If you desire to live a life where you are making a bunch of money, that you drive a BMW, that you own a Rolex, all the newest Apple gadgets, live in a big house, etc -- then of course, you're going to have to compromise your time/freedom/attention/life. If you desire to have all of these superfluous stuff-- you will probably have to trade your life-energy for this stuff.

But, if your #1 priority in life is to have control over your time, energy, attention, focus, and life force-- then I encourage you to create a lifestyle which allows you to have maximum personal freedom, with the minimum amount of compromising.

There are infinite options on how to make a living

For example, do you know that you can live in Vietnam (Hanoi or Saigon) for quite well-- for less than $20 a day? (~$600 USD a month). If you speak English, do you realize how easy it is to get a job teaching English in Vietnam, Korea, or many other Asian countries?

Do you realize that you don't have to live the rest of your life with a "traditional" 9-5 job, working 5 days a week? You have so many options to "make a living"!

For example, some ideas:

1. You can work like crazy for a year and make a bunch of money at your traditional job, and save a bunch of that money, and then after the year-- live as cheaply as possible in Saigon or Bangkok until your money runs out, and then you can start

the cycle again.

2. You can figure out ways to monetize your passion: For example if your passion is photography, you can end up teaching workshops, you can shoot commercial work, you can sell products, you can sell education/courses/information, and you don't need to make a million dollars. You can earn a "basic" income for yourself through your passion, and then **focus on living a place with a low-cost of living**. For example even living in the states, DON'T live in San Francisco/Bay Area, New York -- opt for Detroit, or any cheaper city/neighborhood.

3. To make a "living" as an entrepreneur -- the easiest strategy is to LOWER your costs of living (instead of trying to increase your income). Earning more money/increasing your income depends on convincing others to give you money -- whereas you have 100% control to *REDUCE* your daily living expenses/lifestyle. Ideas for reducing your lifestyle expenses: don't eat at expensive/fancy restaurants, don't pay a lease/monthly payments for an expensive car (you can just buy a cheap used car), you can end up sharing a room (or move in back with your parents), and get rid of your smartphone data plan (you can just use Wifi when you need it).

You have more control than you think you have

Essentially what I want to share with you is this:

You have more options in life than you think you have.

The hard thing about life is that most of us live by analogy. We look at the lifestyles of others, and it is really hard for us to reason from "first principles" in terms of how to live our lives.

Which means-- **you can create your own unique lifestyle for yourself (as long as you don't starve, freeze, or die of thirst).**

Dictate your own ideal lifestyle for yourself.

I'm currently living a "digital nomadic" life -- and I like this lifestyle. However this isn't for everyone. I prefer it, but others might not.

And that is cool -- you don't need to justify your personal lifestyle preferences. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to live. This is what makes being alive/reality fun -- it is the ultimate "MMORPG" with infinite possibilities!

Real life is the best video game. We have the maximum frame-rate, no lag, endless worlds to explore, every human being is a "playable character" (NPC is a character in a video game you cannot interact with -- a 'non playable character'), and as long as the laws of physics allow for a certain movement/behavior -- you can do it!

This is why video games/Grand Theft Auto/world of warcraft/RPG games are so hilarious to me-- real life is the ultimate video game! In Grand Theft Auto, it is amazing they've created a replica of Los Angeles that can be explored so much. However in video games you always have restrictions -- in real life you don't have any! For myself, I've realized some fun "life hacks" -- like you can hang out in expensive hotel lobbies without spending a dime, you go to an expensive restaurant and only order 1 entree (and still get served), and the whole of planet Earth is so infinitely big-- even if you wanted to see all of it in your lifetime you couldn't (and planet Earth is constantly in a state of flux/change).

Photography = the ultimate video game

This is why photography is so fun to me-- photography is like the ultimate video game. Do you remember the game, "Pokemon snap?" Or even nowadays "Pokemon Go" -- you explore the real world (Augmented Reality) with your phone-- and you gotta "catch em all!" In photography, you gotta capture all of reality-- capture photos of people, capture "decisive moments", capture nature, capture urban landscapes, etc.

Create your own reality.

You have more power than you think. You can change reality-- your own reality (both internal and external). Put a dent in the universe.

BE BOLD, ERIC