

Why Be Different

To Be Successful, Be Different.

Why Be Different?

Dear friend,

A thought:

Why be different?

What are the benefits of being different?

Are we trying to be different for the sake of being different? Or something else?

I always preferred to be different

Ever since I was a kid, I always prided myself in being different.

For example, when all my friends had Sony Playstations, I had a Sega Dreamcast.

When my friends all desired Jordans and Nike shoes, I preferred Adidas.

When other kids wanted to buy fancy BMW's and other expensive sports cars, I preferred to modify my own car (1991 Sentra SE-R).

When I got older, I scorned the iPhone 3G, and decided to get the HTC 4G instead.

Even though most people like using iOS and iPhones for their phones, I think I still prefer Android.

I like to look different

Whenever I see everyone partaking in 'herd mentality' (sheeple, falling victim for trends and fads) I always get a bit suspicious. I prefer to 'purposefully procrastinate' on new trends-- to ride it out, to figure out whether it is just a trend, or actually substantial.

For example, I remember when everyone was buying all-red sneakers. I am glad I resisted that trend; it is dead.

With clothes, I don't like to wear clothes that other people wear. I prefer to stand out; to look different -- yet, to still have a personal aesthetic which I like for myself.

But one question I am curious about myself:

Why do I like to look different?

Furthermore (this is more important):

Why do I like to think different from others?

Thinking different

I have always had 'crazy' or contrarian ways of thinking about life. I have always questioned and been suspicious of certain societal norms on success, money, wealth, fame, influence, etc. I think a lot of this questioning existed ever since I was young, and was further instilled in me when I studied sociology as an undergraduate.

Even now -- sometimes I think the rest of the world is crazy. I wonder to myself:

Are other people that way because that is their actual preferences? Or because they are getting suckered by society to think that way?

Anyways, I have no idea about others-- because I can never fully determine why people think they way they do. And furthermore, I think most people don't even know their own preferences. Thus, to fully understand other people is impossible.

But I guess my goal is for me to strive to really know myself.

Why think differently?

This is my idea:

The point isn't to think differently for the sake of thinking differently-- the point is to think for yourself, and not let yourself get suckered by how the herd thinks.

'Herd mentality' and the 'madness of crowds' is real.

If you have an individual in a swarm of people in a riot, they will act differently than if they were by themselves.

Similarly, if you are a music-loving fan at a rap concert, you will act differently (surrounded by the herd of other people), than if you were there just by yourself.

Individuals act differently when they are in a herd. And **perhaps individuals also think differently when they are part of a herd, a group, or a collective.**

So the point I am trying to encourage you to think is this:

Think for yourself, and ignore what others think.

This means whenever you hear of 'studies' or 'proof' of any ideas or things-- **always be skeptical**. Furthermore, **be skeptical of yourself** (Richard Feynman said something like, 'You are the easiest person to fool.')

I think if you start to think for yourself, and act according to your own personal morals and code of ethics, you will definitely be different from others. You will think differently from others, you will act differently from others, and look differently from others.

And I encourage you -- pride yourself on being different. To think different. To act different.

In praise of standing out

When you think different, act different, and look different-- you will stand out. And in today's world, the best way to 'succeed' is to stand out; to be different.

For example when I think about capitalism and consumerism, it is always cooler to own or drive a car that is different from others. I would never want to own a Porsche, BMW, or Mercedes-- because everyone already has one!

As a consumer, I only want to purchase and invest in items and things which are different and look different. I think this is why the luxury market is so successful:

Luxury goods are usually insanely expensive, thus you are less likely to see other people wearing those goods.

In other words:

The more expensive something, the more rare it is.

But the problem is with all the rich people in the world now, a lot of people own expensive goods (everyone has a Louis-Vuitton purse, everyone has Gucci sneakers, everyone wears a Rolex watch). Thus, to me -- **these luxury goods are no longer cool; because so many people own them!**

Be different to succeed as an entrepreneur

If you have your own business, or if you are your own sole proprietor-- I think the best way to succeed is being different.

Now to be clear, just being different won't *guarantee* you to be successful, but I think being different from others will increase your *likelihood* of being successful.

Being different in the club

Consider if you go to the club and want to pick up some sexy partners-- you want to look different and dress different. Better to risk looking like a ridiculous peacock (all-purple suit) than to be ignored (looking like all the other chumps in the club).

Takeaway points

Anyways to conclude, these are practical takeaway points for you:

1. Experiment with different digital tools (don't just get suckered for Apple devices, because everyone else has them). Test things for yourself. Ignore tech reviewers; make your own judgements for yourself.
2. Try to purchase more custom, artisanal, bespoke items than mass-market goods. The more custom the goods you buy the more satisfied you will be with them.

3. Whenever you see a trend or a fad, be skeptical. Purposefully procrastinate on making a decision -- to better judge the fitness of that thing. Because some fads actually are good-- but you don't know, unless you wait it out (time is the ultimate judge of how worthy something is).
4. Don't take other people's word for it; learn the truth for yourself.

BE BOLD. ERIC