

Becoming Antifragile

Probably the best modern-day book I've read in the last 10 years is Antifragile by Nassim Taleb. The basic gist is this;

When things threaten to destroy you, how can it be used as fuel to make you stronger?

In case you missed it

No fear.

What does it mean?

Essentially the basic idea is that in life, painful, bad, even violent aggressions from others are not to be avoided, but rather, maybe even desired.

For example, if somebody ask for interacts with you in an aggressive, negative way, consider it as a good thing; after the incident, you have become more robust, stronger, and more impervious to outside aggressions.

Let me give you example. About a week or two ago at the gym, I was doing my typical atlas lift and a random guy asked me, how much longer I was going to be. Realistically it might've been 20 minutes, but I didn't want to rush myself so I added some buffer. I told him, around 40 minutes. As a result, he started cussing and cursing and saying that what I was doing was "fucking ridiculous." Fortunately

because I was having a good adrenaline rush from doing my lifts, about five minutes later I calmly approached him and asked if he wanted to working with me. He shook his head, and said he wasn't interested.

Moral of the story: that incident in which somebody acted bad manners towards me, I actually responded with very good manners. As a consequence, I no longer fear any negative interactions at the gym. If anything, I am quite proud of how magnanimously I was able to respond to such a petty encounter.

Stoicism is the way

Stoicism isn't a perfect technique, but it is certainly useful. I think in the context of manliness, and becoming a "real man", I think stoicism is one of the best ways to become stronger.

There are lots of different stoic techniques and stoic tips.

Essentially, the basic gist:

When in doubt, delay reaction.

I suppose I am pretty dedicated to Stoicism, after all, I did name my first son after Seneca.

Becoming more invincible to fate

The new topics and directions is combining stoicism, street photography, and entrepreneurship to life:

1. June 17th, Saturday, 2023: DOWNTOWN LA CONQUER YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY

AND LIFE

2. July 15-16th: ERIC KIM SAIGON VIETNAM TRAVEL STREET PHOTOGRAPHY EXPERIENCE 2023
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Essentially, I believe that street photography is the supreme form of photography, as it requires the most courage and guts.

One rep maxing

Another way to become more anti-fragile or essentially to become stronger is through the one rep max school of weightlifting. The basic notion is this:

What is the maximum weight, you can lift successfully, once, even moving the barbell half an inch?

Note —

1. One rep max atlas lift: 925 pounds
2. One rep max rack pull: 810 pounds
3. One rep max floor benchpress: 595 pounds

ERIC KIM POWERLIFTING 2.0

Antifragile emotions

This is another big thing. It seems nowadays, everyone is too hyper sensitive. This means,

Do not say, do, or interact with me in such a manner that there is even a .001% chance I might take it the wrong way.

For example, it seems that in modern-day times, it is not permissible to talk to strangers, to make small chat, to approach strangers, to joke, offend people, joke around, etc. Also it is not permitted to make eye contact, smile or say hello.

I say,

It is better to risk a social interaction, even if there is a 99% chance of a negative consequence.

For example, in my every day life, I am surrounded by very unpleasant people. Yet regardless, I am ruthlessly friendly. I will always ask how they are doing, even if 99% of the time they might snub me in a bad way. But I say fuck it, **better to be courageous and friendly than to be cowardly and standoffish.**

No Fear

Just loaded up my Texas squat power bar at the gym, 925 pounds in total, that is nine plates, 25, and a five pounder taped on top. The interesting thing:

No fear.

The goal?

To me, courage is everything. Curiosity and courage actually mean the same thing; cover means heart. Same also goes with curate.

Whenever I max out the barbell, attempting to lift over 900 pounds, people are always befuddled and ask me why I do it, what the purpose of it is, etc. I never have a quick enough or witty enough response. Typically I just say,

To fulfill a personal curiosity.

The personal curiosity of the limits of a human body, my human body, how much I could lift, without taking steroids etc.

But perhaps, a better way to think about it is actually, I do it as a means to conquer fear. To me a perfect lift is a lift in which you approach it, give it your all without any hesitation or fear.

In fact, I believe that 99% of street photography is simply conquering your fears. To not let hesitation get in your way.

What do we regret?

I think I'd like, typically our biggest regrets or regrets related to cowardice, or fear. For example, you wanted to ask that one girl out on a date, but, you were afraid of getting rejected, and you never did. Or you were fearful for asking her to get married, and you never asked, because you were fearful.

I know for weightlifters, powerlifters, people like me who enjoy doing one rep max lifts, I think the biggest regrets we have is when we want to lift a certain weight, but fear and hesitation gets in our way, and instead, we lift a lesser amount, afraid that we may "hurt" ourselves.

However, an interesting thing that I've learned is the fear of hurting yourself is actually a good motivator to force you to focus.

For example, now at the gym, I'm laser focused. I don't fuck around. I don't rush my warm-up routine, and I've also been going harder in my warm up, stretching, yoga routine before I lift.

Greater danger, greater fates

I forget if it is Heraclitus or Democritus who said this, but essentially the gist:

In life, the more that a man attempts, risks, and exposes himself to danger, the greater his legacy and fate.

Fortuna adiuvat Fortis, the tattoo on the back of John Wick. The basic idea that lady Fortune favors those who are strong, brave, and maybe perhaps a little bit reckless.

Foolish versus wise fear?

There is some fear which is wise. For example, I am fearful of dying in a texting while driving accident, and therefore I never text message while I drive, let alone ever text message. I have all notifications turned off on my iPhone.

Also, with Seneca, I let him do superficially do “dangerous” stuff, but when it is actually really really dangerous, I tell him. Fear of critical or irreversible injury to Seneca is a fear which is wise.

What is entrepreneurship anyways?

I think “to entrepreneur” should be seen as a verb. To risk, to attempt. Even the modern day notion of an essay, comes from the French *assay*, which literally means attempt. When you write a written essay, it isn’t some storehouse of irrefutable truth. Rather, it is an attempt for you, the writer, to gain a deeper truth about something.

Success or failure is trivial

For example, what do you think about king Leonidas and his spartan 300, they are not remembered because they beat the Persians, but rather, their courage.

Also interestingly enough, in the Iliad, in the duel between Achilles and Hector, Hector knows that Achilles is the superior fighter, and also, Achilles is a demigod, whereas Hector is a mere 100% human.

However, Homer puts both Achilles and Hector on equal footing. In the eyes of Homer, both fighters, irregardless of their lethality, are both seen as equal.

Your life?

I think modern-day life, it may not be fear which holds us back but uncertainty. For example, last summer before me and Cindy went to Phnom Penh Cambodia [thoughts on Phnom Penh Cambodia vlog], I was simply a little bit on the fence, I didn't know if it would be good or bad. I was may be a little bit indifferent.

Therefore the simple heuristic;

If something is even a little bit marginally interesting to you, or might be interesting, just do it.

If I think about my travels, I don't think I've ever really had an experience in which traveling was a "net negative" experience for me. There has always been good which comes out of every travel experience, irregardless of how difficult it might have been, or some annoyances along the way.

For example, going to South Korea last year, I got massively annoyed by all of these backwards Confucian moralizing and ethics. But, much good came out of it, because it forced me to do a deep dive on the history of Confucius, Confucian teachings, in order to undermine it.

Often things which make you angry can be very productive.

Your life goals?

I think honestly speaking, I am the most encouraging person that I know. Even my mom said it was a dream of hers that I became some sort of motivational speaker or something.

Even when I think about my workshops, my passion and my goal is to encourage every single participant in person who attends. To not be a nay sayer, but to be an enabler.

Other people?

I have a theory about modern-day society and capitalism and consumerism; it is all predicated on making you feel small and inferior, and the promise of capitalism and consumerism is this:

If you work really really hard, and earn enough money, you can buy your happiness, your self-worth, your self-esteem through cars, jewelry, things, homes and possessions, commas and zeros in your bank account etc.

For me, what are my greatest enjoyment is going to the gym, simply going there as a sociologist, and analyzing people, their behavior, their speech patterns, etc.

Something I have discovered is when people tell you to be “careful“, they are simply crowdsourcing their own fear onto you.

For example, when people first started to see me Atlas lift over seven plates, eight plates, nine plates etc. even the really really strong guys would tell me in a hushed tone—

... but be careful.

When people tell me this, essentially what they are saying is,

I would never attempt that, because I am afraid that I would hurt myself if I tried.

Simple lesson: when other people crowd-source their fears onto you, it is simply a signal that **they are the cowards, not you.**

Now what?

I think in life, the best way to live is to always have something greater to aspire towards. For example, it is the joy of the weight lifter to indefinitely increase his or her one rep max, in any given lift. Also it is the joy of the entrepreneur to keep innovating, taking on new ideas, new creative paths, **new risks.**

[How to take more risks in life]

This is where a lot of people are foolish; they dream of the day that they could cash out their Silicon Valley unicorn for \$1 billion, and then just chill on the beach for the rest of their lives. No. The true entrepreneur perhaps would actually never sell their company; For example, mad respect to Mark Zuckerberg for not selling out Facebook. The deep regret of Instagram and WhatsApp founders to selling to Facebook, and also the regret of the oculus founders for selling to Facebook.

Missionary or mercenary?

One good framing that I got from Peter Thiel in 0 to 1 is figuring out whether other people are missionaries or mercenary's. Missionaries do it because their soul is in the game (Nassim Taleb), mercenaries simply do it for a fat check and a bonus and a salary.

In fact, the truly great entrepreneurs in history like a Steve Jobs and Elon Musk were actually quite ascetic.

For example, Steve Jobs lived like a weird homeless person, and even Musk first built x.com with his brother, sharing the same office space, sleeping in sleeping bags, showering at the local YMCA, and feeding himself on two dollars a day with nothing but hotdogs and spaghetti. Maybe this is where Kanye West is a bad entrepreneur; I think he cares too much for expensive and fancy things.

Legacy?

A lot of philosophers have thought about this, but the more I think about it, seeking immortal fame amongst mortals (Heraclitus) actually seems like a good idea. Why? Granted that you have kids, legacy and your fame after death is the only thing which could outlive you, and aid future humanity.

I think deep down, all humans are altruistic to a certain point. Thinking about legacy isn't really considering your fame and notoriety after death, but rather, how your life has impacted those who are currently alive, and also people who are not yet born.

What are you capable of?

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Fear conquering consulting

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Now what?

1. Portable thinking: I still strongly believe that a semi nomadic life is probably the best approach of living. Therefore, never buy, purchase, invest in anything which is not portable with you. For example when you travel and live abroad, you can't take your house, you can't take your Tesla, you can't take your Lamborghini etc. This also means that with your devices, make sure they are super portable.
 2. Why bitcoin is the future, not Ethereum: the new BRC-20 ordinal theory with Bitcoin – the new ethereum killer. Don't trust anything built on top of the Ethereum network. Further skepticism towards chainlink.
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Now what?

1. Chat GPT is cool, WHY APP ZEN OF ERIC KIM is better. Chat GPT is like a very efficient Google. Why app, Zen of Eric, is more interesting because it forces you to do the thinking in philosophizing, not amalgamated intelligence scraping off of Google. I think for now Google is safe, because it has been embedded within chrome, and Safari, and it is now in official verb. But, maybe as open AI, ChatGPT continues to expand, google will become less and less useful. Bad News For Google.
 2. I think the future is social spaces. For example, building new gyms which are social experiences, and also let us consider the massive success of an Irvine spectrum, in terms of all the foot traffic they can get.
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Antifragile technology?

The new thoughts:

1. Building an anti-fragile website or web platform?
 2. Can chain.link be used perhaps to facilitate more anti fragile things online, via the blockchain?
 3. CRYPTO THOUGHTS
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Forward the turbo thoughts!

Feeling a little bit of wind in your wings? Feel free to forward this to a friend or family member who could use the turbo!

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