

The Spartan Way

Some radical ideas:

First, beyond purchasing food, paying rent, gasoline or electricity for your car, perhaps a really insanely innovative idea we could do is the radical opposite of what capitalistic society tries to get us to do:

NOT spend money

I think this is a pretty big idea because all of this is centered around spending money.

Only cowards spend money?

"I promise, I'm so self-conscious, you won't see me outside with at least one of my watches" - Kanye

Certainly it is very very difficult to earn money, but *spending* money... is very easy.

Let us first consider the fact that the act is spending money, even a chimpanzee or three-year-old child could do it! Seneca, ever since he was about a year or two old, already knew how to insert a credit card, chip up, or even use the iPhone with Apple Pay to purchase things? Or even simply, handing off Dollar bills to the other person?

So I think the first idea is typically, maybe the best strategy is to teach our kids, and also maybe yourself, *not* to spend money?

Propaganda

About a month or two ago, we stepped inside at JP Morgan Chase, opening up a checking account for my mom, and they had these little kids activity coloring books, and one of them was like a book on the idea of saving money in your piggy bank whatever.

However, the reason why this was quite bad was because it was still centered around spending money! The idea was you save up your allowance and your money *in order* to buy that electric scooter you want or something.

I mean let us think about it... Ever since a kid was born, they are born into captivity by this capitalist consumerist market. Often society parents and people will be moan the fact that kids are all addicted to presents, games, video games whatever... iPhones, tablets iPad etc., but who is really at fault here? Of course the parents!

The first thing to note or to ask; if the kids are addicted to YouTube or their iPhone or the iPad or Netflix Netflix or YouTube YouTube kids or whatever... Are the parents addicted to it? Yes!

In fact, don't look at the kids, look at the parents! Typically, kids are just mini versions of their parents.

For example, even a funny thing that I realized, seeing my brother-in-law get my nephew Benji all these cool toys on his birthday, essentially it is interesting, my brother-in-law Khanh is buying his son toys that *he* wished he had as a kid. And this is where I respect my brother-in-law so much; he is essentially like a big kid! I think in fact, the parents are really care for or trust or admire are the ones who are the most silly, and also playful with their kids! You could see it in the split second at the playground; I only admire the structures playing with their kids! Not the disconnected parents, sitting in the shade, sitting on their butt, doing something stupid on their phones.

The matrix

So, let us consider the analogy of the matrix. I think the analogy the matrix is very good here because honestly in fact, we are all living in a metaphorical matrix right now.

For example, think about the battery pack. The battery pack is essentially like us toiling away with our physiological energy, brain power mind power soul power etc., in order to power these batteries. And, twirling away so hard, the funny irony; we work so hard and we sacrifice so much of our health and well-being, in order to purchase things which dull away the pain, but actually in fact... And up making us sicker and weaker?

For example, marijuana and alcohol; the two biggest depressants we got in modern day society. For an individual who is depressed, or lacking vigor or having poor health... Adding more marijuana to their life, or adding more alcohol to their life is a positive detriment. People not know that both these substances have physiological mental, and a physical effect on the body, which actually dulls your senses? It is almost like putting a condom on your mind?

Does man live to make money, or does money exist to serve man?

OK, the number one foolish mistake we all make; it seems that we live in order to make money, rather than thinking about this critically and knowing and understanding that in fact, the opposite is and should be true; money should exist in order for us to pursue our own personal needs desires and wants!

In fact, the whole cult around money has become pretty ridiculous. The notion of money has become its own godhead, its own cybernetic metaphor and impetus in life.

Minimum viable income

A very radical idea I have is towards this minimum viable income concept. The general idea is you want to reduce your expenses to the bare bare bare bare minimum, and instead, you direct all of your energy power and resources towards

augmenting your true life desires, your true true goals in life, rather than money for money sake, which is a slave mentality.

Just watch the movie 300; do you want to be one of those Persian slaves, or the traitor who just wanted to be showered in gold coins and drugged out hallucinating women? Of course not!

“Pretty girl with white toes, she like to put it in her nose!” - Playboy Carti

Something which is actually a bit shocking to me; I grew up super sober, I maybe smoked marijuana twice in my life, both instances when I was around 25 years old. I didn't really like it.

The reason why I am so anti-marijuana is because when I was in high school, I saw all my friends who got hooked on it, and it just made them lazy, dumb, and unmotivated. Just like Elon Musk said on the Joe Rogan podcast; “Smoking marijuana is like the exact opposite of drinking a cup of coffee“. And I love coffee.

I don't know if marijuana is pretty cheap now, or people using these vape pens or these weed pens or whatever. But, why dull your senses? Why not *heighten* them instead?

“I'm in love with a V dub engine, it dulls my senses” - JAY Z

“Success sucks, why? Too much stress” - JAY Z

Don't skip leg day

A funny thought; if you want to maximize your manliness, let us consider that your member, and your testicles are connected to the lower half of your body. And also let us consider that your legs are probably at least five times stronger than your upper body. For example, easy to lift 1000 pound with your legs in your shoulders, very very difficult to lift 1000 pounds with only your arms in your upper body.

Or once again, easy to do a 1000 pound atlas lift, difficult to do 1000 pound benchpress, nay impossible?

So the very very funny idea I have is maybe, if you want to increase your testosterone and your manliness, every day, work out your legs!

In fact, if I could tell you that by exercising your legs every single day, you could increase your testosterone by a factor of 10 X, or become 10 times manly, more confident, stronger, less tired less petite, more cheerful... Won't you do it?

In fact, I think the primary mistake that men make is that they only work out their upper body because they want to somehow attract women? My personal theory is that the primary way for a man to attract a woman is through his testosterone levels, his hormonal levels. For example, the number one complement is my tan, especially my foot, five finger... And there is also an ongoing theory that increased sunlight and sun exposure and testosterone manliness have a connection. Example, the notion of being tall and handsome, is really a good note here. Even other day I met this one friendly mom, and she told me that she was immediately attracted to her personal trainer, a tall dark handsome man with curly hair named Alejandro, and she ended up having a kid with him. It's funny because the kid doesn't look like mom at all and even the mom says I only know his kid because I birthed him!

Why do we desire to purchase certain things? Let me give you an example: I remember when I worked my UCLA undergraduate job, and IT tech-support, and I literally felt like I just spent five hours a day scrolling through Reddit, killing time on the Internet. And I would also spend a lot of time looking at these camera review websites, gear review forms whatever, and ultimately I think the desire was to just spend more time outside making pictures! And I think this is the insidious thing about the whole camera photography complex; the idea is that we like the freedom and the time to actually go out and make pictures, which is the desired goal... And we think, if somehow, we purchase XYZ camera or XYZ lens, or XYZ accessory... Like a carbon fiber tripod or whatever... Suddenly we will have more inspiration motivated and opportunity to actually go out to make photos? But is this true? No.

For example, the very very simple advice I have for any avatar is that the best camera is the maximally small compact one, the imagine like John Wick and his pistol. When it hits the fan, he is not toting around an automatic weapon, he just relies on his trusty pistol. Think about that one scene in which he is drifting his car doorless Camaro, and picks up his pistol, and shoots the bad guys.

If we consider the Ricoh GR camera, it is like our metaphorical pistol. It is both our precision tool, and also, our general purpose tool.

You cannot hide an M-16 in your front right pocket.

Ways in which I spent a lot of time as a kid, as a teenager playing counter strike, 1.6. The original one.

The funny thing is that video games, and gun violence don't really have anything in common. For example, to me as a kid guns weren't really a big deal; for example, when I was in Boy Scouts, in one of the summer camps, I got both my shotgun and rifle merit badge, the same month, as well as my archery merit badge! Kids aren't dumb; I remember being shocked as maybe a freshman in high school; instructor giving a bunch of kids rifles, at the shooting range, teaching us how to use it. A bit shocked as a kid, because even as a kid this seemed a bit dangerous. I remember asking the instructor "... Has anyone ever turned one of these guns around and just shot somebody else?" The adult got very serious, looked at me, and told me "Never say things like that." So with extreme caution, we never did anything dumb, and I was actually a quite good marksman! I could hit the target from very very far away, and also I was very good at shotput, in which you use a shotgun to shoot a flying disc in the air!

Your word is your sword

I think the grand difficulty that we have modern day life is that we no longer have any avenues for physical valor. The only thing which is commoditized is sports; but the reason why sports is bad is that it is too regimented, too constrained, and lacks any sort of real life application.

As NASSIM TALEB has commented; what some fools think is that somehow... A chess master would somehow be a master in military strategy. While this might make a good movie plot, in real life it is not true.

The reason why I am actually anti-chess, and a lot of these board games or whatever... Consider how poor it is for your physiology. Sitting on your butt the whole time, stationary, using your brain. It requires no physical valor, or skin in the game. Worst, you lose the match, and maybe you feel bad, but beyond this, there is really no downside to losing. This is also where video games are; There is no real life downside.

At least weightlifting, powerlifting, uplifting, one rep maxing is interesting is that there is some sort of potential physical downside. If you aren't focused enough, yeah certainly you hurt yourself. And that is the whole point!

And this is where I found the logic to be so bizarre; when these steroid did out guys would be so shocked of how much I would attempt weightlifting at the gym, when I would wreck up the barbell with seven plates, eight plates, nine plates, 10 plates, 10 plates and hook another 25 on top, they would always tell me... "Be careful".

Now that I think about this commentary in retrospect, it is really kind of a weakling cowardly side jab;

I am much bigger than you, and you look smaller than me, and also you are built more lean, and also you are Asian... And therefore I am befuddled how you are so much stronger than me, and I want to inform you how you might hurt yourself.

Even I have heard people talking about me at the gym on the side;

*You know... there are some guys who are on steroids who don't **look** like they're on steroids (referring to me)*

Anyways, what these wimps don't realize is that they are staring at an Achilles in the flesh, a demigod; half man half God; born mortal father, with a goddess mother.

“I am a god”

I think one of the most radical, gutsy things ever uttered in rap music is the Kanye YEEZUS album, in what he put out the “I am a god” song and album.

Note, he did not say that I am *the* God, but *a* god (lower case). Even some random stuff that I started to do research in during Covid times is the whole Jay Electronica, movement of black African-American guys turning to Allah, the fruit of Islam movement, in which the code word for “ALLAH” (arm, leg, leg, arm, head) the general idea in which all humans are born like gods, born in the image and the likeness of God.

“I know I’m not the most high but I’m on a close high.” KANYE, I AM A GOD, YEEZUS ALBUM

In fact, the only concert I have ever gone to my life was seeing Kanye West live at the Oakland Coliseum, for his YEEZUS Tour. It might have been one of the coolest things I’ve ever witnessed, especially when they put the fake mountain in the fake Jesus to come on stage, and also when Kanye put on the sequin kept facemask, they shot a laser on it, and reflected it all around the dome.

Ethics is the future, not technology

Ethics, worldview, philosophy, your own personal code of ethics, the way you decide to approach life, this is the future, not the loser iPhone Pro, or any of these ridiculous virtual reality headsets.

Very very simple; what we desire real life real world engagement-- we desire the embrace in the sweet smell of a woman, no no no... You don’t want to be having virtual reality sex, with your virtual reality girlfriend, or live with your virtual reality dog, driving around in your virtual reality Lamborghini, getting virtual reality head or whatever... Nobody wants a virtual reality babe.

In fact, do you think about ancient Greece, philosophy the Romans etc.... There’s almost no focus on women. Women are absent; they are never mentioned, nor discussed or talked about. Certainly not talked about like commodities in today’s

world.

The way that a lot of guys get suckered is this strange logic: if I get super super rich, not drive the Lamborghini or the Ferrari or the big truck or whatever, and I'm super super buff, and I have a six pack, suddenly I will try all these babes, who will want to have intercourse with me, Not super happy Playboy lifestyle for the rest of my life, in pure Bliss, without any obligations?

The true Spartan way is almost a polar opposite; live a maximally frugal and economical life, have kids and beget children, have at least one son to carry on the family name. And the rest of your life is just focused on military training, combat, to be ready to defend your family, your nation when shit hits the fan.

This is where once again, all this fake ass patriotism stuff annoys me; if you're on Facebook, looking at Donald Trump memes, watch Fox News or Tucker Carlson, make fun of "libtards", talk about the alphabet gender spaghetti, you are not a true American. Just keep your mouth shut, enroll in military duty. You have nothing to defend yourself against.

Similarly speaking, we liberals also have this bizarre notion of virtue signaling; if you are a true progressive liberal, don't even say the "Donald Trump" name -- don't talk about the news or politics or whatever. The simplest thing is to just vote against the other party you don't believe in, get involved in local city politics, attend some sort of city council meeting, vote on issues you care for. Also don't use Twitter, which might be about 99.9% bots ?

Only Spartan women can birth Spartan men.

Physical training is both critical for men and women. This is also where it is so impressive that Israeli women also serve military obligations, I think this is a great idea. Maybe also America, there was some sort of obligatory ROTC training in high school, both for men and women, maybe a junior and senior year... this might be a good idea. Good for virtue, physics, the physical element, physical training, building a sense of camaraderie or kinship between our fellow Americans.

In fact, even though I am a Democrat, I have always voted Democrat, and also I consider myself a liberal, I have had nothing but positive interactions with conservatives, Republicans, people on the right. In fact if anything... Right wing people to be more friendly, fun, jovial, and happy. I remember accidentally walking into some sort of anti-Joe Biden rally, talked with all the friendly people, and was even offered free hotdogs and free ice cream barbecue from the people there!

The reason why social media and the Internet is so toxic is that it villainizes other sides, these metaphorical human beings. But if you actually talk to people face-to-face in the flesh, person-to-person, pure to pure; we are about 90% similar, 10% dissimilar.

Only purchase digital things?

A random thought, maybe the way we could curb all of this superficial consumerism is to only purchase digital things, digital goods, digital things.

Digital money: Bitcoin

Digital books, digital movies-- Apple TV shop, iTunes Store, iBooks Store. I actually find that purchasing a film is much better than subscribing to a streaming platform. Why? Skin of the game. When you pay the \$10 a month or the \$15 a month or whatever for that streaming service, you don't really value any of the films or TV series on it., It is almost like a sedative; you watch something not because you want to watch it, or learn from it, but instead, just watch it to distract yourself.

Putting your money where your mouth is

The funny thought is the point of purchasing something isn't too "support" producer, but instead, to have a sense of pride that the thing that you purchased is actually something that you believe in or care in?

For example, I have purchased with my own money all the John Wick movies, all of the matrix movies, and now both of the Dune movies. Typically when we actually purchased something with our own money, it is a sign that we actually really really believe in it.

Also, the reason why you never want to trust anybody who is sponsored by anything, is because typically when you are given free things, or sponsor by something, you don't actually really believe in it, you just accept the advertising and the sponsorship in order to make money or to feel special.

For example, in the context of cameras, reviews, sponsorships etc.; only trust a photographer who had actually purchased the things with their hard earned money.

For example, I have done collaborations with Fuji film before, received free cameras in the past, free lenses etc.... And have also been paid money by them. Also I did some free consulting for them, sharing some good ideas like adding a film grain simulation effect filter to their cameras, which they did, in which now you could add green tier digital JPEG photos with the Fujifilm filter, and select either weak, normal, or strong grain.

I am proud that all the Ricoh cameras that I purchased, none were given to me by free from Ricoh. I purchased them all with my own money.

Also kind of a random thing; I think the whole blogosphere was shocked when I purchased a LUMIX G9 camera -- it totally seemed like out of left field, because Panasonic Lumix was on nobody's radar. And currently, now that all my Ricoh GR cameras are dead, my only camera is the Lumix G9 camera and the 14mm f2.5 pancake lumix lens (only \$200!). And the only two cameras I think might be worth considering purchasing in the near future is the new Ricoh HDF cameras, or the new Lumix S9 camera with the pancake manual focusing lens.

Trust?

Ultimately, trust nobody, only yourself.

Also with filters; put more trust in dead people than people who are alive. Why?

The difficult thing with following people who are still alive today is that you don't know how it all ends. With dead philosophers, artists, innovators, you do.

Also, I think the big differences in the past, there was not a profit motive. An artist or an innovator did not need money, because they had the private patronage of some wealthy family like the Medici's, Leonardo da Vinci etc.

So I'm starting to think more and more... Maybe the best true way to be a true artist, visionary, thinker, innovator entrepreneur is to independently make money somewhere, and don't have to rely on advertising or sponsorships or brands to support your lifestyle.

I would put more faith in the photographer or the weightlifter who makes his living investing in bitcoin, rather than somebody who is always spamming you with advertisements on YouTube or podcasts.

In fact, are there any podcasts which exist which don't have any advertising?
Besides my own?

Why bitcoin is the future

Bitcoins, Satoshis-- this is finally the solution to these annoying online advertisements.

Maybe the true Spartan only cares for in bitcoin and Satoshi, but never spends it or touches it, but just keeps accumulating it.

Bitcoin is like our shield -- our economic shield and our hedge against the uncertain future.

ARMOR UP! ERIC

Economic theory

Always thought that economics was stupid, honestly, truth be told, I think when you look at all this fake mathematics behind theory, it is all fake, the new hocus-pocus witchcraft, and the number one critical thing I learned about studying statistics both in high school and in college is that statistics is fake metrics that could be gamed however you want.

Therefore, put zero faith in statistics. Better talk to a real human being, face-to-face, person to person, instead of engaging in ridiculous debates on the Internet, which again is filled by 99.9% ChatGPT powered bots.

Once once again, if I waived a magic wand, and I revealed to you that in fact, all of the negative comments you write in your life on the Internet, these trolls who said mean things to you, if you actually found out that they were all just artificial intelligent ChatGPT bots the whole time... Wouldn't you feel better?

The next generation of comments on the Internet

Maybe the only way we could truly verify whether somebody who is leaving a comment is a real human being or not is to institute the orange check icon, that the individual spent maybe \$10 worth of bitcoin or Satoshi's to verify their humanity. Several years ago, I had the wisdom to just disable all and delete all comments on my website and blog etc. and also disabling them on YouTube etc. Why? For the most part, comments are useless. Even the positive ones!

When people say nice things about you in the comments, the reason why you could be bad is that it becomes a shackle; you keep publishing stuff that gets good feedback, and as a consequence, you end up staying the same instead of being innovative.

For example, when Bob Dylan went electric; he probably polarized 90% of his fanbase. Also, everyone likes the old Kanye West in the college dropout album... But I like the new Kanye, I like the new carnival, the newest version of an artist is always the best. A funny contradiction; everyone always wants the newest iPhone, the newest Tesla, whatever... But everyone wants the older artist, the older music, the older version of a certain thinker? If we stay consistent here, shouldn't we prefer the new philosophy or the new thoughts or the new approach of an artist or a musician or a thinker versus their old self?

For example, everyone seems to prefer the old ERIC KIM, the old EK, but this is when I was still addicted to Facebook, using an android phone, and I still had my 95 job.

Sometimes, for myself, I miss my old Vietnam self; but in fact, my best self is my now self with Seneca! Also, sometimes I miss my old ERIC KIM gym self, the HYPELIFTING self, but when I think critically about it, I am 1000 times happier with my new bitcoin self, my new off the grid self, my new walk 10,000 steps a day in the direct Los Angeles sun self.

Then I think the biggest nugget of wisdom:

Prefer the you self right now, not the past self?

Kill your old self!

ERIC

EK PHOTO SUPPLY

EK WORKSHOPS

Become a new you:

New books, new media?

Now that everything is becoming so hyper, once again, think about the past.

The Iliad, the Matrix, the 300, John Wick, Tippet simple, keep it succinct. I'm very very skeptical of anything new, whether they be new movies, new series, new films etc.

Even this past generation, the last 10 years, the only innovative film created was the John Wick series, nothing else. Even though I was also enthusiastic about the new Mandalorian series, eventually after the first season, it all goes downhill.

With Marvel movies, I think the only good ones was before Disney bought it, for example the original Iron Man, the original Captain America etc.

Why? The problem with Disney is that it is trying to maximize its profits, let us consider it is a publicly treated company, and as a result, the logic is to appeal to the lowest common denominator. Whenever anything is created for the masses, it is bad.

Once again, would you prefer to drive the McLaren, with the butterfly doors, or would you prefer to drive the Toyota Corolla?
