

The Philosophy of Time

Prize your life, this is the only life you got.

The economics and philosophy of time:

The death of film

I think this is something that changes a lot, once you have a kid. Or have a child a young child at home. Suddenly, your time becomes scarce, very very scarce.

For example, in terms of time scarcity... this is so insanely critical. If I gave you a choice... Would you rather spend 30 minutes playing and wrestling around with your kid at the house or at the park... Or would you rather spend your precious 30 minutes answering Emails from childless individuals who don't really have anything better to do?

Also with film -- fine if you don't have kids -- once you get film, 100% digital!

True success

I'm starting to think... True success is self ownership, time ownership, essentially... Never having anything randomly put on your schedule without your own desire.

For example, I learned that apparently Taylor Swift is signed to Universal records. Which means she has no control over her time or soul.

Also a very funny thing... Apparently Taylor Swift is about my age, she's born in 1989, I am born in 1988. I find it insanely bizarre that millions of 10-year-old girls know everything about her down to her drive-through food order?

Anyways... I think some simple filters:

Trust no individual who is signed to anything.

For example, I think a very admirable thing that Kendrick Lamar did I believe was quit top dog entertainment... And create his own record label, I think it's called PG Lang. I think this is also the wisdom of a Jay-Z... The real idea of taking a real chance is to create your own label, and to avoid getting signed to any record or label... Even if they might wave a \$100 million check in front of you. Because if you have to be on tour for the next nine months of your life... Every single night performing for three hours and night, seven days a week... No sleep and rest... Do you have freedom? No!

And I think the foolish thing which people do is they trade their most valuable thing on the planet... Their freedom and self ownership, in exchange for cash, arbitrary notions of "fame"... For the sake of what?

What is it that we truly seek?

One of my friends, Bing who I met in Singapore... The guy I am grateful for getting me into crypto bitcoin and digibyte at the time -- he said something interesting, very wise guy, saying that what he wanted in life was material desires like a purple Lamborghini, but also... More importantly, getting respect from people.

For example, he said that the primary issue in America is that there is no real notions of respect. For example even very very simply being in Korea, Southeast Asia of Vietnam etc.... On a very basic level, we use honorifics, when it comes to age. Be told, it feels really good! To have a young kid address you in an honorific way, warms your heart!

Also... I think in America one of the wise things that I've learned, just from myself but also echo and people like NASSIM TALEB is a simple idea:

Treat the janitor, the hygiene sanitation guy, the security guard with more respect than the big boss.

And also... Assume that everybody you meet is super super rich and successful and powerful and influential, irregardless of how they may look on the outside. Often times, the richest most powerful people are the most low-key, keep a low profile, and you would never expect it.

But I think the tricky thing is when it comes to human social capital... The whole “it’s not *what* you know but *who* you know”-- is also a little bit misguided because technically, especially in today’s day and age, I don’t think that networking or knowing influential people is important. All you need is a website, your own self hosted blog, ChatGPT and you’re good!

Examples

Humans are not super great nor efficient. For example just based on my experiences, I’m 36 now... Almost 0 networking events or meeting famous successful people have led to anything substantive. The only things which have led to substantive things were things that I decided to do on my own; like hosting my own workshops, creating and developing and selling my own products engaging people directly with my own email newsletter blog, platform, etc. Everything else has been a waste of time.

I think the biggest issues here is that when you are starting an entrepreneur... We do things in such a way in which we think it is the proper way. For example, when we think about business and networking... We think what it means is to get to know a bunch of rich successful people, “get your foot in the door” etc. Yet, I have discovered this is a total waste of time.

The way that I was able to build my digital capital my fame my power my influence was very very simple... Essentially learning everything about street photography on my own, and then creating really really insanely in-depth articles, blog post, pages, information and resources on anything and everything street photography. and the whole time, the whole endeavor of mine was guided by passion, personal interest and curiosity.

Curiosity is antifragile.

Lifting 1,000 pounds

On my personal quest to lift 1000 pounds, which is beyond 10 plates on each side of the barbell, was a personal curiosity:

How far can I take it?

Essentially, my primary curiosity was a curiosity of the limits of my strength, my courage, my ability and potential?

I remember the last time I was weightlifting in Westerly, Rhode Island, and an older guy came up to me and asked “what is the purpose of that? Why are you lifting like that?” I made a joke and I said, first-- to augment my ego. But the second more honest answer is **I’m just curious how strong I can become.**

Why curiosity is so critical

What is curiosity? Curiosity is care, curiosity is what drives us.

You cannot force somebody to be curious about something that they don’t really care for. You cannot spoon feed or inject curiosity in the soul of somebody, against their own will.

This is why a lot of Asian parents fail, when they try to force their kids to play violin, piano, or chess etc.

back to time

Time is ultimate capital, ultimate desirable non-renewable resource.

Another funny lesson: often the most seemingly bad movies, the ones with poor IMDb reviews are actually the best movies.

For example, the movie “in time” by Justin Timberlake. probably one of the best films of all time, and also, the most underrated. P the reason why it is so grand and great of a film is that it creates this metaphor, this philosophical world in which essentially money is, quite literally.

For example, the super super rich people have 1000 years on their wrist, and hilarious enough, excuse the pun, but rich people and poor people are separated by “time zones”--

Also in this fictitious universe, real rich people take their time and move really slowly, whereas the poor labors, are always running, because they are so short on time.

time inflation

another funny thought: apparently in the early film, when Justin Timberlake is working as a laborer at a factory or whatever, do you have to scan your wrist, imagine like having Apple Pay, your checking account embedded in your wrist, and anytime you wanted to buy a cuppa coffee or food or whatever... You would just scan your wrist. And one of the scenes, Justin Timberlake complains “wait... A cup of coffee only cost 15 minutes, why is it now costing 30 minutes?” and the guy selling coffee, shrugs his shoulder and says “that’s time inflation!”

Why it is that the only films I care for are dystopic films

The matrix, Blade Runner, and these scientific fiction, alternate future sociological philosophical films, why ? They actually change you!

What is so interesting about science fiction typically it is just a commentary or a societal critique of our real society. And the thing exaggerated, in cinematic ways, or building up a universe, but in fact, it is really true to today’s world.

Anyways, back on the notion of time... Time is labor, money is labor time.

For example... One of the things I am so grateful about renting, and having the best landlord of all time, is that when something breaks, like our all-in-one washer dryer machine from LG... And the machine doesn't even turn on anymore, I don't have to be the ones Wasting my time driving to Home Depot, trying to fix it, or finding service technicians to fix it, scheduling it etc. Rather, I let the landlord communicate with his own labor task squad, his own maintenance team, to come in and fix it, when we are not home, and I could do better things like go on a hike with Cindy and Seneca, or do something fun!

In America, we have this weird virtue connection with doing the labor yourself. However, there is a differentiation between hateful labor and joyful labor. For example, I would probably prefer to have a mechanic fix my car, even though I could do the labor myself, because now that I have a kid, an hour spent fixing your car could be an hour playing with your kid at the park! Here a time becomes zero som, which means

If you only have an hour to spare, would you rather it be chatting with somebody random, or spending time with somebody you don't really care for, or doing some sort of labor you don't really care for, or rather would you rather spend that time to do something more critical you insanely care for?

For example, if you had an hour, to listen to the problems of somebody, or, you had an hour to work out exercises, and lift weights... What would you choose? And assume you could only do one. Obviously work out!

For me, my only regret in the evening is if I spent the whole day, assuming that I was in good health and strength, not working out? To me, my nonnegotiable thing that I must do every single day, irregardless of whatever is to lift weights, at least once.

Life before Seneca, life after Seneca

Life BC, life AD -- I still think it is hilarious that in America, the way we categorize time is life before Christ, life after Christ.

Life before the christos, the lord the saviour, and life after Jesus.

For me I like to use this analogy for Seneca. Before Seneca was born, I wasted a lot of my time, had coffee shops, kind of superficial relationships, etc. Why? I had so much time to kill!

And also good thing about having kid is that it helps you understand what is truly critical to you or not.

For example, business. Do not forget that the original notion of business was centered around being busy, “busy-ness”--

Even the ancient Romans, otium, neg+otium--

Negotium (business) meant the exact opposite of leisure.

I think often times, people like to just stay busy because when you are busy, you don't have to think about more important things in life, such as life purpose direction etc. And honestly, I think the reason why I philosophy is so critical for everybody is that if you cannot think philosophically, you're just wasting your life.

Even Seneca the younger stoic (Seneca's namesake) on his essay “On the shortness of time”-- or the short of life... Essentially that you could live a great life, even if it is a short life, as long as you use your time well.

For example, if you had a house with 1000 marble and ivory tables, with matching golden plates, can you take that with you when you die? No!

Let us assume that the average human span now, I think it is about 92 years old for men, 94 years old for women. But then again you never know if you're gonna get cancer or whatever, assume that it is 80 years.

If you knew that you would only live to be 80 years old, with 100% certainty, how would you spend your life, the next 10 years of your life? What would you do, what would you not do?

And also... Thinking about the mortality of our loved ones, our parents, your own mother.

For example, my mom is about to turn 70, and let us assume that she's going to live to be 80. How would I want to spend the next 10 years in my life with her, or without her?

Certainly I'm happy for her to do stuff like travel, do her artwork, but also, more critically more time with Seneca, myself and Cindy, but more critically for her to spend time with Seneca. Why? There's going to be a day in which my mom is no longer going to be around, and I would probably hope that Seneca could have some lovely memories with my mom.

I think this is also the thing... Of us live our lives, almost like we are going to live forever. Is that true? Of course not!

And also when you're younger... Let us even assume that you're going to live to be 80 years old. What that then means is that you have a long life ahead of you! But once again, what if you are Achilles, and your mom is a goddess, And you are known with 100% certainty that you will die at the age of 40? Then how would you spend your life, how would you not spend your life?

Memento mori

If you have the choice, the difference between memento mori, and memento vivere - the memory of knowing that you will die is more critical than the memory or the thought of knowing how to live.

I think meaningful ways, and also after this incident I had a few years ago being held up at gunpoint with me just me and Cindy, before Seneca was born... And fortunately I grab Cindy's hand and we ran away, and we did not get popped at the back of our head. And in our adrenaline, after the incident... What was my only one regret, Assuming that I have might have died? It was very simple, not having a kid! Then immediately after the incident, we started trying, and then Covid happened, and then we stopped... and then we did a webinar saying that kind of babies and kids were kind of immune to Covid, and then we tried again... And boom, got pregnant within a week!

Anyways... Often it is these life or death encounters which clarify things. After this incident, I had zero thoughts about my wealth, money in the bank etc., or my fame or success or whatever. I literally had zero regrets besides the kid thing.

The greatest joy on the planet

I was thinking this morning, what is something that never loses its novelty factor? Seeing and witnessing your kid grow up!

Also... As a man, by far a 1,000,000,000,000% gratitude thing, having a son, having at least one son, one male, one man, and especially having your first kid being a man!

Why? Speaking from the perspective if you are a man, **what every man desires is at least one male heir**. Certainly when you see a family with three girls, four girls or five girls, no boys, you know what the family was trying to do.

And also... The whole second kid question... honestly, if for some reason or another, we couldn't have a second kid, I'd probably be fine because the joy of knowing that at least, our first child was a son!

Anti women?

I think if I think about it very very honestly honestly... If our first child was a girl... I'm sure I would love her 1000%, but secretly at the back of your head, you're always thinking wishing and wondering and desiring, to have a boy.

So this is my simple thought --

If you and your wife, or partner or whatever or girlfriend, decide to have a second kid, and your first kid is a boy... Don't push the whole second kid thing.

Also, if I told you that let's say that your wife decided to have birth to a second kid, and there was a 90% chance that she might die in childbirth... Would you take the risk, assuming that your first kid is already a man? No!

Back to time

Honestly just throw your iPhone to the trash. Something that people don't understand is that the iPhone is toxic; even reading one weird thing on your phone, one weird movie, film, news headline, TikTok video whatever... Strange pornography video or picture, can infect your mind, For a few days, randomly in the middle of the day, or even when you're about to sleep.

The reason why I deleted Instagram in around 2017 and no-- that ERIC KIM on Instagram is not me-- the person that made my @erickimphoto Instagram account was just a faithful follower, why is it started to do bad things to my mind and weird things to my mind. For example I'd be driving, in the suburbs, or the city... And at around noon, while driving, I would get distracted and think to myself "wait... did I uploaded something to Instagram today?" I caught myself thinking this, and I thought "wow, this is bad. I got to get rid of this". And in 2017, when I had about 65,000 followers, I did probably one of the most courageous and proud things in my life, which was to delete my Instagram.

mental Freedom?

Something my friend Jeffrey Lam tells me about is this notion of mind space, ideas that was not just a timeframe but, a mental space thing.

For example, you could in theory have 12 hours of free time in a day, but as long as a strange thought is lingering in your mind, you can never really focus 100%.

I think this is called the Zeignark effect, for example let us say that you read an email that needs to be attended to... And you don't attend to it or respond to it, and it will plate your mind for days, sometimes even weeks, sometimes even months. This is why I avoid my inbox, or my text messages like the plague...

One strange message email or text message or communication thing can distract you for days on end.

Playing cyber defense

I also think the reason why email needs to be fixed is now, it is so easy to fake an email, ChatGPT, with bots, or generative AI, even if the person is good or bad, or even if the bot is malicious or benevolent.

For example, let me give an extreme example, let us say you are Taylor Swift, and everybody on the planet knows your email (taylorswift@gmail.com)-- let us say.

if you are Taylor Swift, and you literally get 1 million emails a day, would you have the time to either read every single email, or even worse... Respond to it? No? This would be mental suicide! This is why I quit email and all messaging apps Around 2016, 2017, because honestly I was just becoming too famous, too much cognitive load!

Dodge

In the Iliad, when the heroes are killing each other... They do two things, obviously they wear protective armor, like shields, helmets, etc.... But if somebody throws a spear at them, or an arrow, what they do is dodge it.

If you see an incoming spear, you are not a fool, ideally you dodge it, ideally dodging it is more effective than even raising your shield. Why? If it hits your, there is actually a chance that it might penetrate your shield, and end up either wounding you or killing you.

I wonder if we should apply the same philosophy two things. Like if you see an incoming missile, or a beer or a bullet... You don't take the chance. Dodge a bullet, rather than testing your bulletproof vest.

“That little vest ain’t gonna do you I shoot from neck up”- JY Z

The ghost of soulja slim --

Soulja Kim?

The notion of soldier, like Soulja Boy etc., and interesting thought... The notion of a “soul”, period with the notion of a soldier?

And apparently, if you really really need people from the hood, like Crenshaw, where Nipsey Hussle got killed, the honorific to call somebody worth valor is “soldier”.

Kind of like calling somebody boss or chief. Like Chief Keef

Chief Kim! Too many Indians, not enough chiefs!

Anyways, long story short, **prize your time. This is the only life you got.**

ERIC