

Interesting Times Magazine

#8, April 2012



The entrepreneur as reality-hacking archetype

text ARMED HIPPIE

[Editor's note: I was too hungover/bloated from Scandinavian schnapps and Christmas food to write a proper editorial, so I let my buddy Armed Hippie do it for me. Enjoy!]

There are different kinds of people walking the streets of our towns. They aren't scum as popular culture often will have us believe. Nor are they sheep being herded by the government or big corporations.

Sure, some of them are, but most of them are walking through life only half conscious. Headphones with music turned up dangerously high shielding them from the buzz of the city. Sunglasses limiting their field of vision and dampening their vision. Eyes fixed on the ground just in front of their feet, sometimes even hunchbacked as if carrying a way too heavy burden or having suffered years of servitude.



For these people weekdays are only transportation to the weekend. Workdays to be suffered as a means of getting enough cash to live a little in the weekend.

Nevermind the anxiety or depression becoming more common everyday in our part of the world, there are pills for that. Nevermind the back pains, headaches or heart problems. There are pills for that as well. Painkillers, antidepressants and blood pressure medication, even as common things as caffeine and alcohol. They are all chemicals used to make an inhuman lifestyle feel a little more acceptable.

These things being so common people don't question the way we work and live in the west today and any other order of society seems unthinkable. To find one you have to go back to before 1870 so change takes time and if you sit around and wait for The Revolution™ you might have to wait a long time. Revolutions take time and don't come often.

But as I stated in the beginning there are different kinds of people. Not all of them are semi-conscious only suffering work to get drunk and party in the weekends. (Fortunately) In my line of work I meet people from different branches and the way they act and

even look is different. When meeting people employed by the public (public schools for example) they are often unfit physically, shy away from looking you in the eye and apologize all the time. They seem in a way to act as if they are indebted to the public and as if their salary is a gift. The historical archetype of these people is a farmer standing on a cold field owned by the local noble.

They might as well start channelling a medieval scholar who on merit of his wisdom, is employed by nobility to teach their children. This is likely to change the way they look at themselves and their reality.

Security guards, like my self, are often underpaid, overworked and have a low social status. But they never seem to be broken. Even old guards I've meet look people firmly in the eye, keep their back straight and tell the boss to go to hell if pushed too far. Their historical archetype is the warrior. Some day I'll write a full article about the warrior archetype and the lack of a proper place for warriors in our society, but here I'll just point out that they are often pushed in to the military, police or security industry.

But historical warriors were never that disciplined, they fought for their tribe or worthy leaders. We lack worthy leaders



today and if you try and fight for your people today you end up in a criminal gang or become labelled a racist. So pretty much like a dog is a tame wolf, the policy, military and security guards are tamed warriors.

The people that seem the most content are people working in stores. I know most of them also work hard and have long hours as well, even if working in retail. But their historical counterpart is the merchant, happy to work hard as long as he can turn a profit in the end. Some people I know are truly happy to work normal office jobs and their historical counterpart is the scribe. The list could be made much longer but I feel I'm starting to reach the point where my readers fall asleep and so I shall go on.

My main point is that there really are truly different people out there, representing different historical archetypes. Some can easily find more meaning in their life by identifying with a different archetype and some will have to change career to enjoy life. And life is meant to be enjoyed, not simply endured. I believe that your line of work has to be something that feel integrated with the rest of your life, not something at the side of life endured to finance life.

This short text was originally meant to

be about starting companies to gain personal freedom and a more meaningful life. However meeting all these different people and realizing the vast diversity of human psychology I realize this is not for everyone. As well I'm only a novice in entrepreneurial adventuring and not a master, study the masters instead! What I can say with conviction is that your life will start to change for the better the day you take off your headphones and sunglasses, really start to look at the world and people around you and by that expand your horizon. Also you want to start questioning the way you work and live, as well as how your line of work effects your physical and mental health.

As the examples stated above, a shift in what archetype you channel may change how you are affected by your line of work. Reality really is negotiable. To a point. Some people are a true misfit for their line of work and need to change to be happy and healthy. And perhaps some people are misfits for being employees at all.

For the entrepreneur there is no one historical archetype. You can find the entrepreneurial spirit in the Nordic warrior tradition when some warriors are said to have travelled around until they could find a king worthy of fighting for. Far

from the nationalistic ideals of modern soldiers and more closely to the security freelancer. Or in the universal geniuses and explorers of the Renaissance, travelling to courts able to pay them rather than stay in one place no matter what. You'd find it in travelling salesmen or even free farmers and the craftsmen of medieval cities.

Being an entrepreneur is not an archetype in itself, rather a certain attitude of valuing freedom and independence. Most entrepreneurs I've spoken to work more, not less, than employees but have more control of their time, make more money and most of all seem to enjoy work a lot more. They seem to live more integrated lives where work is a natural part of life and not something separate from life that makes life possible. This is what I find fascinating about entrepre-
neuring and self-employment and that is why a large part of 2012 for me will be about studying how to start your own business or company and see how it affects people.

My hope is that ITM will aid me and other readers on this quest as I believe it is of great importance to personal development and ultimate lifestyle design.

Don't wait for the revolution, **be the revolution.**

Mission statement

Interesting Times Magazine aims to provide a holistic treasure trove of muscular self-development resources for the modern reality-hacker who strives for enlightenment and empowerment. We believe that life should be a Choose-Your-Own-Adventure novel, an epic role-playing game, a system to be gloriously hacked, or perchance all three.

We have chosen **7** core categories of interest:

Hacking bio-survival reality

Keeping oneself safe, supplied and sane in a hostile environment, be that a physical or mental one. Topics are survivalism, permaculture, martial arts, resilient mindset, etc.

Hacking corporal reality

Because the body is a strategic asset. Topics are nutrition, bodyhacking, transhumanism, life extension, etc.

Hacking economic reality

Time, mobility and income are vital resources to the reality-hacker. Topics are startups, lifestyle design, travel hacking, productivity, minimalism, career hacking, etc.

Hacking social reality

As any fourth-grader can tell you, the key to success lies in hanging out with the right people. Topics include social dynamics, social engineering, community building, conversation hacking, etc.

Hacking tech reality

It is the year 2012 and we find ourselves living in a Cyberpunk novel. The upside is that more and more cool toys keep dropping into the price-range available to the common man. The downside is that the list of things Man was not meant to know keeps growing. Topics are UAVs, Augmented Reality, existential risk, 5GW, lovecraftian neuroscience, brain-hacking, etc.

Hacking mental reality

Anything that sharpens the most important weapon in the arsenal is a good thing. Topics are positive psychology, creativity, mind hacks, goal setting, skill acquisition, nootropics, etc.

Hacking spiritual reality

Because we are esoteric hippies at heart. Topics are life purpose, destiny, The 8-Circuit Model of Consciousness, philosophy, etc.

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Staff:

A.H.A. Editor in chief, editor@interestingtimesmagazine.net

Ruben Berenguel Co-editor, ruben@interestingtimesmagazine.net

Leif Eriksson Co-editor, leif.eriksson@interestingtimesmagazine.net

Imoto Graphic design, imoto@interestingtimesmagazine.net

(Layout for "Do you Appreciate Women?" - Mie Arndt Larsen)

Website: interestingtimesmagazine.net

Cover: "At the offices of madness", by Kevin Scoppwer (kevinscoppwer.daportfolio.com)

Visit the magazine at **www.interestingtimesmagazine.net**

Contact us at **info@interestingtimesmagazine.net**

REVIEW:

The 4 Hour Body

text ARMED HIPPIE

by Timothy Ferriss

Tim Ferris is a man who doesn't need much of a presentation to our readers.

His thin book *The 4h work week* expanded most peoples' view on what's possible in the realm of lifestyle design. In *The 4h body* he wants to expand our view on what's possible when dealing with body design. Not only is the perfect life available to us, the perfect body is as well, and without letting diet and training become our entire life. At least that is what Ferris will make us believe. Before I go on with why you should read this book (and you should) I'll give one word of warning.

While *The 4h work week* was a short, well-written, easy to read, thought through and comprehensive manual for escaping nine-to-five this is one beast of a book. Not only is it huge, it isn't written to be read front-to-back. I know a lot of people who never read entire books anyway and are just glad to hop between pages. To some of us however, it becomes a bit confusing and hard to find the information promised to be in it.

This is without doubts a work coming from a passion. Ferris seems to have held up so much stuff regarding training he desperately wanted to share so he wrote it all down and couldn't care less about presentation or coherence. An awesome book nonetheless. Enough with my personal opinions and let's go on to why the hell you should read it.

The books' grasp is so vast I can't even sum it up well here, so this is only

a list of the most important lessons learned from the book.

1. Don't trust science too much

Science might be the best way to get knowledge, but sometimes profit comes in the way of good science and sometimes different research teams get conflicting results. This might be because some methods of training or some diets affect different people in different ways. Also some tests that could give interesting knowledge might be prohibited by law.

Ferris' background in selling supplements give him credibility in this matter.

This brings us to point two.

2. Self experiment

This is something I really took to my own life from reading the book. Ferris sets rules for his training and diet and then follows them long enough to measure the results. Not changing because of external pressure or some new fad in the training community. This is really an important point in another way as well. Goals should always be measurable. But I think anyone who has ever had any good results from training already knows this.

3. Don't hesitate to get expert help

Most of us get expert help if we get sick or injured. Some of us certainly get expert help if we need to become stronger, faster or more enduring. Some of us, if we come from countries where this is

common practice, probably do an annual health check to help keep healthy. (In Sweden for example however this is rare.) Ferris will have us get expert help for other things as well, get better at giving sexual pleasure for example.

4. Overcome genetic limitations

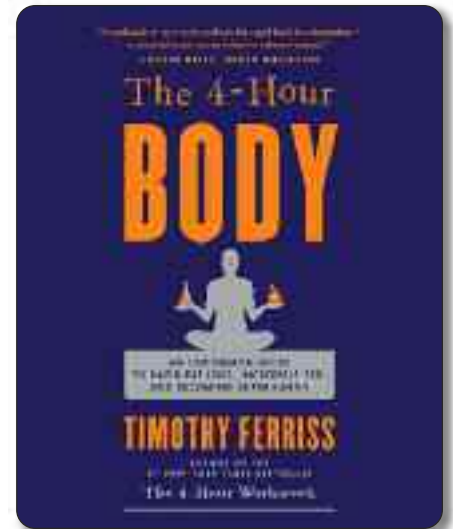
Or to be more honest, learn how to adapt your training to your genetic disposition to get the results you want. Do not accept – you just are not that type of person". For my part I just have to accept for a fact that I'm strong but not enduring and that this is largely genetic.

My brother proved our family could produce long distance runners and now I've learned how to overcome that challenge as well by learning from him. I've seen a 60kg friend turn in to a lean and muscular 75kg man in about a year after struggling his whole life before finding the right method. (I actually moved in to a closet in his kitchen for a few months and fed him traditional Swedish cuisine for workers, but that story is an article in itself.)

5. Reverse "irreversible" damage

Sometimes damage is not as permanent as the doctor or physio tells us. Ferris has good examples of this and I have in my personal life as well. Some injuries are of course actually permanent, but a lot of the time they are not and can either be healed or you can train to compensate so that your injury no longer is a limitation.

"His thin book The 4 hour work week expanded most peoples' view on what's possible in the realm of lifestyle design. In The 4 hour body he wants to expand our view on what's possible when dealing with body design."



6. Damage proof your body

But don't wait for your body to get hurt. Ferris will give advice as how to eat, train and stretch to prevent becoming injured in the first place. This is very important if you train hard as even slight injuries will halt your training and perhaps set you back weeks on your results. Ferris emphasizes stretching, something I, for one, have neglected. Our esteemed editor however is an avid supporter and told me to include stretching to the list of things to really take with you after reading the book.

7. Expand your concept of training

Ferris expands training to other areas besides cardio, strength and agility. This becomes especially clear in the area of sex as it is beyond the traditional training regiment. Ferris however regards it as any other physical endeavor, all though more fun and exciting.

And face it, our sex-life largely affects our all-round well-being. I can imagine more areas where the systematic work on improving results could be just to your advantage, especially in your work life, measuring and setting goals for your performance could probably pay off.

8. Find a balance between food, drugs and training

Ferris calls all supplements drugs regardless of their character. If it's not normal food it's a drug and should be handled with care. (Following this himself in one chapter he regulates his intake of almonds...) He ends up with a balance of somewhere around 60% food, 30% training and 10% drugs but admits it might be different for different people.

Why is this important? I only have to take a look at my own results. It was first when I started eating right that I started getting good results. I could even lower my amount of training and still get better results as compared to before.

Drugs really only add an effect when food and training are under control. They boost you to the last bit. I will not go in to a lengthy rant about what consumerism does to our brains here just point out that I think we always look for a way to buy ourselves out of hard work. Simply because that's what we've been trained for.

To be good consumers.

9. Weightlifting for runners

This was one of the surprising parts for me. He goes in to detail about how

weightlifting, especially deadlift, improves short distance running. I will not try to explain it here but I want to mention it because it really goes to show his spirit of trying to get us to broaden our view on how to train. This chapter is well worth a read in my mind.

10. It doesn't have to be your entire lifestyle

Although you might want to make training your lifestyle it doesn't have to be. Ferris gives real life examples of results people have achieved with 30min of training every other day or so (hence the book title The 4 hour body). 4 hour of weekly training is hardly giving up your life and fits well in with an overall active and busy lifestyle. Some of his examples are really extraordinary and goes a long way towards killing the last excuses you might have for not whipping your self in to shape.

My verdict is that this book is a real excuse killer and great source of inspiration. At the same time, it's intimidating in size and hard to navigate. So it is not for the faint hearted of short attention span. This is your armed hippie saying: Train smart or go home!

REVIEW:

Social Engineering: The Art of Human Hacking

text MIKAEL JANSSON <http://mikael.jansson.be>

Author: Christopher Hadnagy

Release: December 21, 2010

Pages: 408

So you've got bullet-proof security by installing doors that make bank vaults look like balsa wood? The ultimate fire-wall on your servers? Encrypted hard drives with the latest cryptography techniques? And yet, you have humans running the show.

The human mind, fragile as a leaf.

The chain is only as strong as its weakest link. This is certainly true when it comes to security: even though you have taken measures to make sure you have the latest and greatest of software security systems, bullet-proof windows and complicated authentication schemes for accessing the server room, none of that matters when you have the software of the human mind that ultimately controls all of this. Social Engineering is the notion of hacking the human mind by the way you listen, speak and act. This book gives insight into the world of Social Engineering, with case studies throughout the text.

It is an orientation for the person(s) responsible for security at an organization for understanding what types of threats exist, what you can do to recognize them and ultimately protect yourself against an attack. You will find in this book examples of actual attacks, varying in degree of severity. In order to under-

stand what to protect yourself from, you will need to understand the ways of the villain, which is necessary also to understand what you need in a security audit.

All is not pitch black: in fact, everyone already makes use of Social Engineering to some extent in their daily lives, most notably we have sales people, doctors or just about anyone that needs to make people behave in a way that suits their needs. It is therefore not a simple matter of seeing things as black or white, manipulating or not, but instead about making explicit many of the unwritten rules we have in society on interpersonal communication.

The second chapter is on information gathering and here is where the book starts. Gathering information on your target is crucial for a successful audit, which can be said to be a benevolent attack. The more information you have, the better picture of the whole you'll have and less is left out to chance when the actual audit takes place. There are many places where you can gather information and today with the Internet you have a surprising amount of information listed in social media and blogs, all readily available through the common search engines in use today. However, searching for information does not stop in the electronic world, as lots of valuable information can be found in receipts, shredded papers and discarded computers. Yes, this actually means you'll

have to loot the garbage can once in a while to find gems that might be crucial to make a successful attack.

Now, just gathering dead data might not always give you enough information which leads to the art of successful communication with other people, involving topics such as elicitation, pretexting, neurolinguistic programming and various mind tricks you can play on others. This is the strongest part of the book, which makes for a really interesting read. There are many ways you can draw information out of someone that is not quite willing to give it up, by appealing to their ego, the use of alcohol or pretending to be someone else altogether. Pretexting, not just acting, but actually being someone else, is a method you will need to practice and master as it has high pay-off for the end-results of the audit. Imagine yourself in a situation at work when a upper-level boss calls you requesting information – you'd most likely give that out without blinking, and yet, there is actually no formal verification that this person has, in fact, the identity claimed! Attention to details is critical, down to the details of clothing and dialect, encompassed by context and background knowledge.

In interacting with someone, there are many things you can do to make the other more willing to give up information, which is discussed at length in the chapters on neurolinguistic programming and influence: how to send embedded com-

”Social Engineering is the notion of hacking the human mind by the way you listen, speak and act.”

mands, how to properly interview/interrogate someone, how to build rapport, altering someone’s frame of mind, and much more. Small things you would normally not have considered being of any importance at all suddenly turn out to be more important than anything else, a truly fascinating read.

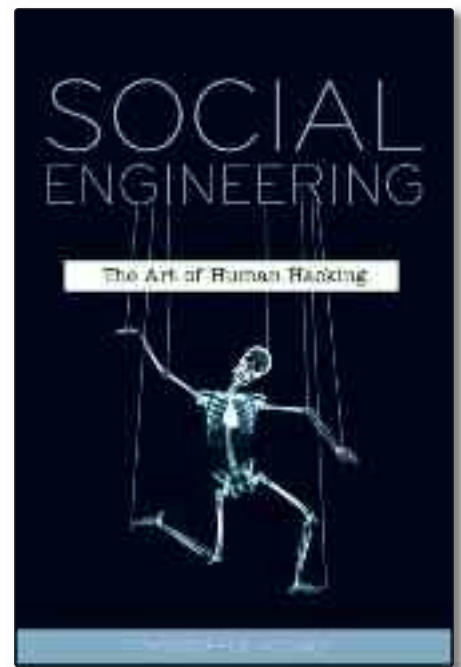
Moving away from the human, softer side, of social engineering, there are still cases where you will need to interact with the physical world, such as picking locks, tracking cars and making your way into computer servers. An overview of the field today is given with products and links of use for the aspiring social engineer, such as Maltego – an application used for collecting and categorizing information relating to an audit, the SET: Social Engineer Toolkit, used for creating phishing e-mails or PDFs that give the user a backdoor into the target system, and other software related to password hacking and GPS tracking.

This is followed by case studies from real-life audits including discussions of them from a Social Engineering context, breaking them down and analyzing them in the context of the framework developed throughout the book. Together with the previous part of knowledge of the human mind, this is another strong part,

since examples will weave the knowledge in the book together, such that you see patterns and understand why things are done the way they are.

The book ends with a discussion on how to prevent and mitigate attacks, by creating an awareness culture where the employees learn how to identify a possible attack, and what a company, and the auditor, should include in an audit to make it successful.

The book covers many topics with links to relevant information backed with an online wiki page and is written in a familiar tone. It gives a good introduction to the topic, such that the interested reader could continue educating herself by going deeper into the various parts. However, the tone is at times a bit too familiar and too wordy – the book would likely have fit in half the number of pages without sacrificing anything. Also, the bottom-up style is not very well-suited for this type of book, instead of I would have preferred starting out with the birds’ eye view using case studies and then expanding on each technique as you go. It takes a while to understand the necessity of the earlier chapters until you get further into the book, where a simple chapter re-ordering would have made for a better flow.



If you have read relevant literature on NLP and body language, much of those parts of the book will feel like repetition yet they don’t go in-depth very much. Personally, I’d prefer having that as a prerequisite, but that might also be because I have a personal interest in those subjects. Stillm they are good to have included in the book.

I suggest for further reading the following books:

- *The Definite Book of Body Language* (Pease, Pease)
- *Magic of NLP Demystified: A Pragmatic Guide to Communication & Change* (Lewis, Pucelik)
- *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion* (Cialdini)
- *Blink* (Gladwell)
- *48 Laws of Power* (Greene, Elffers)

In conclusion, the book gives a good overview and introduction for anyone interested in the topic, who can then continue diving into available literature. It is the only book I’ve seen about applying NLP and related topics to security, and if you’re interested in that, I advise you to read the book.

What is the Tactical Mindset and how does it apply to all areas of life?

text SAM ROBERTS aka SamuraiBobX26

Well you just played Black OPS and now your inner mall ninja is screaming that you should be more tactical. Well the problem is that you don't know where to start. Well, before you spend several paychecks on Black Hawk gear, maybe you should develop your tactical mindset and see how to apply it to your overall lifestyle.

Well, to start I don't even consider myself tactical. I don't buy into all of the new tacticool things that come out. I look at the practical nature of things and see if they have multiple uses. That is how I determine if something is tactical. So I will tell you my rules of how to determine if something fits into the tactical mindset.

So here are my rules. To most this will be a guide on how to develop a tactical mindset. To others, they will think that I am a crazed individual waiting for the Zombie P.A.W. to happen.

- 1:** It has to serve multiple purposes
- 2:** It has to be easily re-configurable for different scenarios
- 3:** It has to be durable and dependable

A good example of this is as a Security Officer, many Officers carry an ASP to be able to subdue a suspect. But an ASP is a deadly weapon and requires training to use and carry. In fact, the only deadly weapon that I am allowed to carry is a firearm due to customer requirements and state laws.

To get around that, I carry a three cell Maglite. It is a flash light that can be used as a club. The beam can be adjusted; I can add an orange cone to use it as a wand to direct traffic. I don't have to carry extra gear while working. The Maglite is pretty versatile and there are many accessories available to customize it even further. Hell, you can even buy a replacement battery cap that can be used as a glass punch.

If you have ever owned a Maglite, you know that it was built to last and can take all the abuse that you can handle without missing a beat. And when the batter-





"The more adaptable the item is, the more versatile to me it becomes and the less gear that I have to worry about storing or carrying when bugging out. If you and your gear don't adapt, you can never expect to survive in the ever evolving environment."

ies are dead, you still have a heavy metal object to use as a club.

Not bad for a simple flashlight. Plus, it fits within my rules of being tactically useful.

I guess now I have to explain my rules a little better. So I will start with the ability to serve multiple purposes. A single use item to me serves no real purpose at all. What good is a flashlight if all it does is illuminating the area? An item has to help reduce the amount of gear that I have to carry. Sure, a flashlight is useful, but when streamlining your lifestyle to be more tactical you have to look at every aspect and examine how useful an item really is.

The next rule to me is that an item must be easily re-configurable for different scenarios. What that means is that an item must be mission adaptable. There is a good reason that somebody came

out with tactical rail for assault weapons. Sometimes your rifle needs a flashlight and laser and sometimes you don't. What makes the rail system so versatile is that individual pieces of equipment can be added and taken off with it being permanently attached to the weapon. The more adaptable the item is, the more versatile to me it becomes and the less gear that I have to worry about storing or carrying when bugging out. If you and your gear don't adapt, you can never expect to survive in the ever evolving environment.

The last rule to me is the most important; it must be dependable and durable. It has to be something that you are willing to bet your life on. It must be able to take abuse under the hardest of conditions and still function properly when the moment comes. This quality is really the most important one in determining if something is truly tactical. There is no

use in having a piece of gear in your kit if it can't take the heat of battle. This quality is also the hardest to determine as the market is flooded with cheap made crap that breaks after any hard use. So do some research and test it in the field to make sure that it can handle the hard use of the tactical lifestyle.

So does every piece of equipment have to fit into those three rules to be considered tactical? The short and simple answer is no. These rules are merely a guide in helping you develop the tactical mindset. But to me, the more it fits into my rules, the more useful and essential the item becomes. You must examine every piece of gear, every article of clothing, and even the car you drive in when developing a true tactical mindset. When you have done this, you can determine what you need to survive and what you can do without when the time comes.

Hack Your Housing:

**Live Anywhere On Earth in a Free Home
Without Being a Freeloader**

text MATTHEW PETERS



We have all heard the "own a home or rent?" debate for years now. Both sides quote their research and statistics and both provide compelling arguments; that is until you throw in a third option.

Neither owning nor renting is the best option for mobility-conscious people like us. No matter what your lifestyle, no matter what your ambitions or dreams are, the best way to achieve your financial dreams on a lightning-fast track is to ***pay absolutely nothing for your home***. Housing is your biggest cost and the biggest drain on your bank account. It actually sets the *governor* on your lifestyle.

What would it be like to have an extra \$600 to \$2,500 every month to do whatever you want with it?

I'm not talking about *boomeranging* and moving back in with Mom and Dad or *couch-surfing* across the country from friend to friend. Sure, nomadic life can be great for a time. When we are young, we can couch-surf all we want, but it is not a sustainable living situation for the rest of your life. At some point, you need to have some kind of *home base* — place to land that isn't your parents' house.

This isn't about taking on three roommates or sharing a home with an elderly person or any other type of *temporary* living situation, either. I'm not interested in temporary — I have a wife and two toddlers, and I value my privacy too much to have even more roomies. I am talking specifically about finding a long-term, low-stress resident manager position *that is under your control*.

Like most of us, when we hear resident manager, we think of headaches such as late-night phone calls, angry tenants, broken toilets and in general a *night-marish, ball-and-chain situation*. And if you were to work like many resident managers do, I would wholeheartedly agree with that assumption.

However, my wife Fiona, and I have had an entirely different experience as managers for the last nine years. You see, if you are *lazy-smart*, every part of the resident manager's job can be systematized, automated or outsourced. Think, *how would Tim Ferriss manage this property?* It took us a few years to figure this out, but since then we have been able to take full advantage of:

- Pay off all debt and live debt free
- Holding full-time jobs
- Running our own businesses off-site and at home
- Following our dreams of recording music, filmmaking, teaching and writing

- Traveling to the far reaches of the earth for weeks at a time
- Having more quality family time"
- Helping people with our time and finances

As far as the amount of time that we put into actively working as resident managers, last year it was around 50 hours. ***That's a total of 50 hours FOR THE YEAR to manage a 34-unit complex!*** That is like working one week full-time to pay for your home for the rest of the year!

When I started tracking the time I spent actively working as a resident manager, I realized I had previously spent about *300% more time* caring for the lawn and grounds at my former house!

The system we have developed has allowed us the freedom to do what we want, when we want, while giving our residential community and the property owners who employ us plenty of reason to love us and to never want us to leave.

**”How do we work an hour or less a week?
We never answer the phone! We have a voice-mail that tells people our availability, pet policy, emergency maintenance phone number, and web address. We rarely have messages unless someone actually wants what we offer. It filters out all of the time-wasters. Apply that philosophy to every area of your management.”**

We are not only talking about free rent, utilities, phone, Internet and parking, but also thank-you cards from residents and the management company, gifts, bonuses, parties and more. This system works, and Fiona and I have taken the last several years to fine-tune it. As a matter of fact, it works so well for us, we knew it was about time we started sharing our system for success with the rest of the world.

So, how do you get a Free Home anywhere in the world? It's not complicated. Here are a few basic action steps for you.

1. Start by being aware of your surroundings. Know that there are people living for free all around you – and that it has been going on for literally thousands of years! Since there have been *landlords* there have been *caretakers* of those land holdings. So this concept isn't an exclusively 20th century thing or an American thing either.

Every apartment building you see has multiple people taking care of it; and

people don't stay in a resident manager position forever. These properties need to be managed by someone; so why not you? Wherever you go on earth, the need doesn't change.

Keep your feelers out and start letting people know you're looking to be a resident manager. The chances are that someone you know has a relationship with someone who manages a property. At some point that person will be looking for help. It's your job to fill that void. Try something part-time and get a little experience.

2. Know what you want and need. List what are the bare-bones basics you need to be somewhat comfortable. Now list the "perks" you would like. It is great to want a luxury apartment on the 15th floor overlooking New York's Central Park, but let's start a little more humbly. If you know our story, our first resident manager position was in a 218-unit luxury apartment complex, we had no experience and had horrendous credit; not exactly what you may consider top

qualifications to help manage a \$10,000,000+ property!

Fiona stationed the club house *8 hours a week* answering the phone, making cookies and showing the model apartment. For that our \$1,000/month apartment was \$280!

Our second position of a 17-room house for college women gave us free rent downtown, free off-street parking, free utilities and phone. Our living expenses were \$400 a month and we were making over \$80,000 a year at our full-time jobs. (yes, you can work full or part-time doing something else too). We managed that property in about **1 hour a week** and only after work. During that time, we were putting away \$4,000 a month into a savings account.

3. Start talking to people about it. Sure, there are ads in newspapers and on websites all over the world advertising property manager, resident manager and caretaker positions, but you should be more proactive about it. Start asking



around. Start where you live and ask if there are a few little things you can do around the property in exchange for some rent credit. If not there, ask friends and relatives that live in apartment communities to introduce you to their property manager. Yes, this does require you to get out of your shell.

4. Negotiate your wants. Now that you found a possible position and you need to discuss the finer details, you need to stick to your guns. Here is the key to getting the "dream job."

You need to know what you are willing to do, know how much of your day it will take and think about the way you can *leverage your time*. **Anyone can exchange 20-40 hours a week for "free" housing**, but that is not the idea and not what I would want, nor is it what we teach. You've got to treat it *like a boss* and figure out the **4-Hour Work Week** version. I'm serious. We work 4–8 hours a month and the property owner knows it! He read our book and called me up and said our methods were just fantas-

tic! Why is that? We keep the place rented up for him. When the property has 100% occupancy and rent prices are at the top end of the market, there is really nothing to complain about.

5. Get your systems in place. Now that you have the position, get organized. Get a voicemail, website and flyers to do most of the work for you. It isn't complex. Answer people's questions on your voicemail. How do we work an hour or less a week? We never answer the phone! We have a voicemail that tells people our availability, pet policy, emergency maintenance phone number, and web address. We rarely have messages unless someone actually wants what we offer. It filters out all of the time-wasters. Apply that philosophy to every area of your management.

6. Find your clone. Do you like to travel like we do? If you do, you need to start looking for people who can take your place in a temporary situation. We did this while resident managing and left for 5 weeks to trek across the Patagonia!

Front-load the work so there is little for your clone to do. Go on vacation during the slow time of year and give your replacement the very basic list of things to do. Keep it simple for them.

Is it worth all of the work finding the position, negotiating the work-in-trade and taking a week or two to set your systems up? Heck yeah. I've calculated that we have saved over \$130,000 in housing costs from the time we started. And, barring a few rare instances, as long as you execute your duties well, you will have free housing indefinitely! Housing security in any economy without relying on handouts and mobility to leave when you want to without having to wait out leasing contracts or selling a home to do so.

*To learn more about how you can get a FREE home of your own, go to <http://dontowndontrent.com> or search their best-selling book, *Don't Own, Don't Rent, Live Well: How to be DEBT FREE, Build a Nest Egg & Live Life on Your Own Terms*. Available worldwide. Facebook community: <http://fb.com/LiveDebtFree>*

All about Mastermind Groups

text AARON THOMAS — <http://themastermindproject.com>

A QUEST FOR SOMETHING MORE

Four years ago, I sat at a sports bar with a group of college buddies, reminiscing about our predictions of where we'd be by the time we turned 30. Surely we would have been discovered, drafted even, for our potential and greatness. Our brains and talent would have surely propelled us into the realm of millionaires, with Bentleys and supermodels all around us. But amazing wasn't happening for us. Over drinks, we wondered if we'd been naive and whether the absence of greatness was our fault. Why weren't we the huge successes we knew we could be?

You have had the same conversation with yourself. If you're honest, you have to admit you have not accomplished everything you know you could. The problem isn't that you're not working hard enough. The problem is that you're doing too much of the work on your own.

FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GREAT ACHIEVERS

Five friends and I decided to follow in the footsteps of great thinkers and achievers like Napoleon Hill, Andrew Carnegie, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, and Henry Ford and design our own Mastermind Group. These men credited their Mastermind Groups for pushing them to success.

Just like these men, we wanted to see if we could leverage each other's strengths to accomplish the amazing stuff we knew we could do.

We meet every other Wednesday, some of us in person, with our out-of-town members on the phone. We follow the format for Mastermind Groups that we lifted from Dave Canfield's "The Success Principles." We adhere to a deceptively simple framework: we each take 10 minutes to talk about whatever is on our minds and give progress updates on our goals.

From that foundation, we've made several additions and adaptations. We started out making several goals for two-week periods, but quickly realized that you overestimate what you can accomplish in short periods of time. Setting one goal ensured that you would pick the aim most important to you and also increased your odds of hitting the goal. We changed the period of time you had to reach each goal from two weeks, to 90 days, and then 30 days. Then we realized that the time period to reach the goal mattered much less than spending a good amount of time thinking about the goal before you set it.

We edit each other's business plans, resumes and grad school essays. We founded a nonprofit that provides financial assistance to usher high school students with borderline college potential to higher education. We share the inspirational nuggets we've gathered through a blog.



For three years, we have failed, triumphed, scrapped ideas and resurrected them, modified and tweaked, adopted and discarded theories and philosophies, hazed and supported each other, and continued to return to the same place every other Wednesday for more. After three years, we are all still here. We can't imagine living without the group.

THE SUCCESSES OF MY MASTERMIND GROUP

In just three years, the six of us have transformed. Physical transformations are visibly evident. One of us gained 15 pounds of muscle, another gained 28. After years of chubbiness, I lost 27 pounds, running several road and obstacle races while developing a six-pack of

abs. The average personal savings? Over 18 percent, in a country where the average is below five percent. The average increase in income? Forty-five percent — in the middle of the biggest recession of our lifetimes. Three of us have seen increases in our credit scores of over 100 points.

Individually, I've watched one group member go from losing his credit along with every dollar he had in a failed business (and plenty of dollars he didn't have) to starting class at a top five MBA program (with cash in the bank). While dropping 27 pounds, I also shed seventy thousand dollars in debt, with a total net worth increase of \$120,000.00. A guy who was working late nights at a porn store is now a star educator and will be

heading to a top business school in the following year. I've seen a guy who had been talking about writing screenplays for years without one to show not only write several, attend a top film school, produce videos with mainstream artists, but he has now sold a screenplay of his own.

One guy went from being laid off to being rehired by the same company at a 39% salary increase, and in his first full year back, set a department sales record of one million dollars in a month. The improvements extend to personal relationships: a guy with three girlfriends he hated went through a celibacy period of six months and is now engaged to the woman of his dreams. I've seen a guy change cities to join a new wife, and in the process, move to a higher paying



position in the number one investment bank in the world. The proof has been in the pudding.

WHY IT WORKS

So why does this work? It works because we are brutal with each other. In just 90 minutes, every two weeks, we challenge each other's assumptions and force the others to consider options we hadn't even thought of before.

They say you are a mix of the five people with whom you spend the most time. If these five people are fat, the odds are you will be too.

If you live in a house with five people who get up and run every morning, chances are you've completed a 5k in the last year. We'd like to think that what we eat and whether we exercise are independent choices, based only on our personal will and motivation, but research shows that this is simply not true.

Popular culture idolizes the lonely hero, the protagonist who, by sheer willpower, triumphs against all odds. We are taught to be self-sufficient. We insist that advertising doesn't affect us, but ad agencies everywhere are betting good money otherwise. We think we are so mentally strong that the chatter of our surroundings doesn't influence us. We are lying to ourselves. In reality, the big choices we make have been made for us, defined as normal by our surroundings. What would be unthinkable in one household is not a big deal in another. Adultery goes unprosecuted in most countries but can get you stoned in another. Cows are sacred in India; in Texas they are breakfast, lunch and dinner.

If so much is determined by your environment, it follows that self-improvement is a misnomer. To change yourself, you have to change your environment, otherwise you ignore how much your surroundings control you.

It's easy to lie to yourself. It's harder to get others to accept your wacky rationalizations. And it's almost impossible to slip that kind of BS over on a group of 4 or 5 other people.

Letting others hold you accountable is powerful motivation. Weight Watchers and Alcoholics Anonymous are built on this principle.

A Mastermind Group makes working diligently towards your most important goals the default choice, by giving you the ultimate support group.

Put ego aside. Recognize that there is a better way to reach your dreams than trying to do it on your own. If you can rid yourself of this prideful aim, the solo achievement loses its glamour. You need to hoard the help of others at each opportunity. You travel further when someone else drives part of the way. True greatness is achieved only through leveraging the energy of others.

"You have had the same conversation with yourself. If you're honest, you have to admit you have not accomplished everything you know you could. The problem isn't that you're not working hard enough. The problem is that you're doing too much of the work on your own."

Having five people sit and listen to you for 10 minutes with the express purpose of pushing you in the direction you need to go is better than having your own person board of directors. It's one thing to have a goal to lose weight. It's another thing to know that every two weeks, you are going to have to face five people who will interrogate you about what you ate, how often you exercised, and whether you have stocked your fridge with healthy food. It's one thing to say you're going to write a screenplay. It's another thing to have a group of men demand to see the pages you've written so far.

Accept that you are not in control of 100 percent of your choices. Your subconscious controls much of what you end up doing, and you can't directly control your subconscious. What you can control are the inputs that influence your subconscious. The friends you choose determine what you think is normal. You must ruthlessly limit which people you

allow into your world. You must surround yourself with capable and fearless individuals. You need to mold a subconscious equipped to battle all challenges on your journey to amazing. Joining a Mastermind Group is making a conscious decision to align yourself with people who will force you to make the choices to reach your ideal life.

Creating a Mastermind Group is choosing a new normal. By choosing to actively influence each other's decisions with positivity and a focus on shared success, we create a new normal of always pressing forward, constantly recognizing where tweaks could be made in our collective behavior to make us better. We end up making intelligent decisions based on a carefully manicured set of smart choices in front of us.

YOUR MASTERMIND GROUP

Choosing the members of your Mastermind Group is not about picking your best

friends. It's not about picking the people you want to have a better life. The members of your Mastermind Group should be the people who already want a better life and are willing to fight for it. They are people who are willing to fight for you. You want people that will push you. You want people that will be honest with you, both about their failures and about yours. All you need is four to five people willing to convene for 90 minutes once or twice a month to push each other to greatness.

Are you tired of feeling like you are alone in your quest for amazing? Do you want to experience the confidence of having a small army fighting for you and willing to sacrifice to help you reach your dreams? Do you want to open the doors to a life of unlimited possibilities? A Mastermind Group will change your life by changing what you can accomplish. No matter where you want to go in life, you will have an easier time getting there with a Mastermind Group.

Developing Mental Toughness:

Positive Self-Talk

text JASON SELK

"Sometimes when I walk out to the mound in front of the crowd on game night, I don't feel right, I start to think about all the things that I need to do to be successful. Then I start to think what if I screw up, what if I can't find my stuff. I start to sweat, I mean really sweat inside and out, and from there it all seems to be uphill." This is an actual quote from an American League Pitcher currently pitching in Major League Baseball. This quote says a lot about the pressures and demands placed on individuals these days.

Take sports for example. The elevated expectations and performance levels of competitive sports have bred a desire and necessity for mental toughness within athletics. These same principles extend to business, everyday life and anything else we face as human beings, for that matter. However, most of us are not privy to the mental skills that are needed to increase skill development, improve consistency and control fear and anxiety in pressure situations.

What is mental toughness? How does one go about developing it? Can anyone become mentally tough? These ques-

tions and more will be answered in the following article.

Mental toughness simply put is the individual's ability to use the mind to increase potential in the areas of skill development, emotional control and performance consistency. Any individual has the ability to learn the mental skills necessary for the development of mental toughness; however, being strong between the ears requires hard work and dedication. Generally speaking, for the development of mental toughness to occur an individual must learn the necessary mental skills correctly and

emphasize quality training of those mental skills on a daily basis.

Although there is a growing number of people who are discovering the value of mental training programs, many still are in need of proper instruction and training techniques to encourage the achievement of peak performance.

Getting Started: Developing an Identity Statement

An Identity Statement is an individually tailored self statement that helps individuals break the negative thought cycle.

Let's use a common example. A sales person may have a meeting with a client where the client decides to go with a competitor.

The lost revenue produces thoughts of panic and fear about other clients taking their business elsewhere, thus causing the sales person to be "off of her game" the rest of the day.

What we need to get the sales person to think about is that which will improve her chances of success (solutions) rather than thinking about things that contribute to failure (problems). The hard part is that humans are very good at thinking negatively. Our brains are hard wired to do so. It is natural to think about problems or things we are not good at.

The unfortunate result of problem focused thinking is that it leads to more problems. That which we think about expands and that's why being positive can make such a dramatic difference in achieving success. Identity Statements are positive thoughts that you can turn to in the face of negativity.

To create your Identity Statement answer the following question.

What is the one thing you would most like to improve about yourself (example: I want to be more positive and mentally tough)?

Now create an "I am" statement about yourself as if you have already accomplished this feat (example: I am confident and strong and I stay positive in every situation). This is your personal Identity Statement.

You can use the Identity Statement any



time you catch yourself having problem focused thoughts. Get in the habit of replacing all negative thinking with some type of positive thought and watch your success start to grow. Any time you catch yourself thinking about problems, replace those thoughts with thoughts emphasizing your personal strengths within 60 seconds. Any time you become aware that you are thinking about what is wrong, try to stop that thought and replace it with your Identity Statement. Commit to focusing on what you can control, even in the toughest situation, and you will be happier, healthier and more successful.

Ten years ago, I was quite skeptical about the power of identity statements, but the more I tested the concepts with my clients, the more I realized the research was rock solid. I simply cannot tell you how often the creation and repetition of a strong identity statement has been the turning point that puts clients firmly on the road to success.

Take, for example, Samantha, the

owner of a small advertising agency, who set a product goal of personally netting one million from her operation. Although she progressed in many areas, she did not start making big money until she changed her identity statement from the following:

I am confident and creative, I am a highly successful businesswoman.

to

I am confident and creative, and I personally make more than a million dollars a year.

"Somewhere along the way, I began believing it was true," Sam says thoughtfully. If you ask her what changed, she will report that she really had not believed she could make more than a million dollars per year until she began repeating her identity statement daily.

When you truly believe in your ability to accomplish your goals, your corresponding self-image will motivate the behaviours you need to live up to your expectations. Your identity statement essentially becomes your personal mantra – a mantra that confirms you are the type of person who is successful and gets things done.

For more information on the other important skills involved in a successful mental training program, check out "10-Minute Toughness: The Mental Training Program for Winning Before the Game Begins," available in bookstores now, or Executive Toughness, available since November 15th, 2011.

Force Modifiers

FOR LIFE

text JOHN ROJAS

FORCE MULTIPLIERS are factors that can make one fight as many. There are several things you can do you increase your force multipliers but first, we need to learn how they work. This guide is not definitive nor is it authoritative. We should all simply adapt and use what we like best.



WIKIPEDIA: “Force multiplication, in military usage, refers to an attribute or a combination of attributes which make a given force more effective than that same force would be without it.”

People usually think of guns when they think of force multipliers but that is a very one dimensional way of thinking. We live in a three dimensional world and there are three dimensions to every man, woman, and child. No I’m not talking about length, height, and width. I am talking about Body, Spirit, and Mind. The force multipliers we will be discussing cover those human dimensions.

When you wake up tomorrow you will find yourself in one of the following environments: Rule of Law (ROL), Might

Makes Right (MMR), or Supernatural Encounter (SE). The ROL is the world that most of us live in now. You can identify it by the legal paper work. The MMR world is identified by visible weapons. The SE world can be identified by the lack of reason and logic but may include aliens, monsters, gods, angels, devils, etc.

Physical force multipliers in the MMR fall into several categories. The first are weapons. Every living soul has a right to defend them selves. Cows aren’t very effective at this because they don’t carry guns. There for they end up as hamburgers. I will show you how to avoid being hamburger.

Weapons like knives, swords, guns,

rifles, bombs, and death rays will increase your physical force, allowing you to dominate in the MMR world.

Armor comes in many forms. There are clothes, helmets, flak jackets, bullet proof vests, hardened leather, silk, mechanized infantry, and more. Understand your threats and dress accordingly. If you live in downtown Seattle, you shouldn’t brandish a samurai sword in the ROL world.

While Training uses the mind, it is a physical discipline that we all can take advantage of. By practicing motions and maneuvers, we can train our bodies and muscles to do them easily without thought. This is good because in a stressful or fearful situation, your brain

”We live in a three dimensional world and there are three dimensions to every man, woman and child. No I'm not talking about length, height and width. I am talking about Body, Spirit and Mind. ”

will shut down. Martial arts are a good thing to learn but you can also practice at home on dummies, wood, and other things. In China poor fighters punch walls with newspaper for padding to build strong knuckles. Be creative.

There are new medical advancements every day that will increase your physical abilities. There are surgical eye enhancements that let you see farther, electronic muscle stimulation, and mechanical supports for joints and load bearing apparatus. The most recent is Platelet Rich Plasma therapy which stimulates rapid tissue repair and promotes steroid like muscle growth without the side effects and 'roid rage.

Physical ability will also help you rule the world after the SHTF. Can you run a mile? Can you walk a mile? Can you stand on your own two feet? Chances are you are not the strongest person in the world. Most people aren't. We don't care about that, all we care about is being able to out run the zombie hordes should they arise.

It's OK if you are out of shape. It's not OK to do nothing about it. Start lifting weights, doing pushups or sit-ups today, don't wait. Go for a walk, run, or hike

every chance you get. You can eat a lot of food but that food has to be good food and accompanied by exercise. This brings us to the next domain.

The human SPIRIT is not something you can hold in your hand but it is as real as love. For these purposes we are talking about morale. If you are happy, confident, and generally in a good mood, you will be more successful in everything you do. This is your heart and gut instincts and it is your most powerful weapon: the indomitable spirit. If things go sideways and angels and demons appear, your morale may be your only effective weapon.

Some of the most effective armies in history were comprised of lovers. The reason they were so effective was that you will do what ever it takes to save your family and loved ones. If you don't have a family or someone to fight for, you will be at a disadvantage to someone who does.

Chesty Puller was the most decorated Marine ever. He was renowned for his morale which resembled something from a Spartan or super hero movie. He fought simply for the love of being a soldier. Some of his quotes during battle included:

“We've been looking for the enemy for some time now. We've finally found him. We're surrounded. That simplifies things.”

“All right, they're on our left, they're on our right, they're in front of us, they're behind us...they can't get away this time”.

Some of the best morale boosters are not specifically identifiable because they will be different for everyone. What works for me may not work for you. Historically they include religion, humor, drugs, alcohol, spirituality, beauty, love, music, and a whole slew of other things. Freedom is by large the first on the list with love coming in second.

William Wallace fought for freedom and love. The Greek warriors at Thermopylae fought for freedom, love of their families and homeland, and reason and logic.



Regardless of what your reasons are, you need to find those things that make you the happiest and multiply them.

To do this you will need to increase your mental force multipliers. Some people think that the brain they have now is as good as it gets. This is not true. You can train your brain and make it work for you instead of against you. This is your weapon in the ROL world. The first pit stop on this road is to get rid of all the crutches. Anything that slows the brain should be identified, weighed, measured, and removed.

The things that hold your brain power back fall into chemical, nutritional, and physical categories. Physical restraints that you CAN do something about include exercise. A healthy body means a healthy mind. Your blood must circulate. The human body is just a bunch of pumps so moving around is paramount. Walk, run, or crawl for an hour every day without stopping and your brain will get the blood it needs to grow.

Meditation is a tool that won't make you smarter but it will allow your brain to work better. The brain is a series of electrical impulses that determine the info that comes in from your 5 or 6 senses. Your brain spends most of its time processing that information and decoding it. By closing your eyes you free up a major drain on brain power. This allows your brain to do other things. It doesn't turn off the vision portion immediately so you will need to sit in a quiet place, undisturbed, for at least twenty minutes.

If you want exact numbers and times, it will be different for everyone. You determine when it works and when it doesn't. Don't meditate when sleepy. It's pointless. After you clear your mind and think



about nothing, the important things will start to gather in your mind. If you find yourself actively trying to think about something, worrying, or not drifting then you are doing it wrong. To fix this, focus only on your breathing. In, out, in, out, for as long as you can.

Read. If you don't read then you need to start. If you already read then you need to read more. If you spend more time watching TV than reading, you need to reverse that. Reading turns on your brain.

Take the road less traveled. There are some things that will turn you off after the first sentence. If you label something as a conspiracy theory, hokey BS, or not your kind of thing, then you are closing your mind to possibilities. If you like something, listen to it. If you hate something, listen to it more so that you can fully understand why you hate it. Understanding is key.

Control your senses. The information that enters your body should be discriminated against. This sounds like it contradicts the previous statement of listening to things you hate but it doesn't. Listen to them but understand them and use your reason and logic before you accept them. If you know that a news show is biased, watch it and figure out where and how it is biased.

Protect your brain from unwanted input. Turn off the TV for a month. Wear colored lens glasses. Visit nature for extended periods of time. This will boost your brain activity to many cycles more than a couch potato. The more you do, the more you CAN do.

Participate in challenges like games, puzzles, brain teasers, etc. The point is to get the diversity needed to expand your mind. Learning new things is fun and builds morale.

Get an imaginary friend and say what you think he would say. Some famous smart people had imaginary friends that they would consult to get another point of view. What would Einstein say if he were here? What would Horatio Alger do in this situation? What would Jesus do?

If you are sick, you don't think well. This common sense boost affects both body and mind. Citrus contains high amounts of vitamin C and that will deter common ailments like the cold and flu. It takes around thirty days for a new high vitamin C boost to kick in fully so give it some time as with all supplements. Barbados cherries have extremely high amounts of vitamin C.

After living through the 70's and possibly the 80's, you may need to regenerate some brain tissue. Foods that contribute to brain growth and healing include everything with a blue or dark purple skin. Examples are eggplant, raisins, blueberries, grapes, apples, prunes, cherries, etc.

Eating foods that are good for your brain is not a quick fix. It should be a continuing part of your every day life. Foods to avoid are refined sugars, hydrogenated

oils, and polyunsaturated fats. Too much sugar can actually cause brain damage. Most everything bad is in cheap junk food and fast food. To put it simple for you junkies: if you eat crap, your brain ain't gonna work right.

Most chemical imbalances can be cured by fixing your diet. One of the biggest and easiest things to remove from your diet is Hydrogenated Oil. The other is Sodium Benzoate which is a known carcinogen.

Remove stimulants and sedatives and your balance will come back. It is amazing how many people don't equate drinking with mood swings.

Aromatherapy can be used to great advantage. The key is to get it going when you are in a really good mood. If you get a raise at work, beat your nemesis online, or bag the perfect girl, meditate with aromatherapy for twenty

"Aromatherapy can be used to great advantage. The key is to get it going when you are in a really good mood."

minutes to associate that terrific feeling with the smell of Navras, Frankincense, Ylang Ylang, Champa, or Eucalyptus (all mind stimulating scents.) Then when you need a mood boost, you get those smells going and it puts you in that same happy state. Trick your mood.

Nootropics are "smart" drugs, herbs, and other chemicals designed to boost brain activity and increase memory. There are quite a few of these available but anything coming from a prescription will have adverse side effects.

Vinpocetine is the only one so far that has no noticeable side effects and can even be taken with blood thinners. Even Ginkgo will thin your blood. Some herbal forms are Phosphotidyl Serine, St. John's Wart, B Vitamins, and Omega 3s. Piracetam is the most widely used chemical version with the fewest side effects.

Quality in means quality out. Read good books. Watch good movies. Eat good food. Sure you've got a stockpile of weapons that would make Rambo jealous but when was the last time you played chess? If you don't work on all three categories of force multipliers you will have two undefended fronts. Try to get a leg up in at least two out of three and you will beat most others when the time comes.

Above all, remember that you are in charge of you and what ever you decide to do should be something that makes you happy.



ABS LIKE THE MAN OF STEEL

text TIM ANDERSON

For most of my adult life, I have wanted to be Superman, or Batman, or Wolverine. I have always had an infatuation with superheroes. This is one of the things that led my friend, Mike McNiff, and myself to write *Becoming Bulletproof: An Uncommon Approach to Building a Resilient Body*. We want to be like superheroes, physically capable of doing anything without the fear of getting injured.

One of the secrets to becoming bulletproof is to have a very strong mid-section, abs of steel, if you will. And no, I am not referring to an aesthetic "six pack", though having a set of chiseled abs never hurt anyone. I am talking about a real, solid center that ties the upper body to the lower body together.

Now, before you drop on the floor and start doing crunches again, you should know that I do not believe doing traditional "ab exercises" will build a strong midsection. Your midsection is built to

stabilize your torso and efficiently transfer forces generated from your lower body through your upper body. In other words, your core, or your midsection, is designed to transfer force and hold you upright. Sit-ups and crunches do not address this design.

There is, however, an exercise that does address this design. An exercise that you once did with grace and strength, but you may not be able to now. An exercise so easy, even a baby could do it: crawling. Before you start shouting an



explicative of disbelief, let's take a closer look!

Babies earn and develop their strength by learning how to move. When a baby starts learning how to crawl, the child is building a powerful muscle girdle, or mid-section, that will prepare his or her body to walk, to run, to jump, to throw, etc. Crawling teaches the shoulders and the hips how to work together; it ties the muscles of the core together. Input from the hands, arms, legs and feet teach the muscles of the midsection how to func-

"We want to be like superheroes, physically capable of doing anything without the fear of getting injured."

tion and support the torso. Crawling gets the midsection ready to transfer force!

Crawling, specifically Spider-man crawling, is a great, easy way to start developing a midsection that Superman would envy. Spider-man crawling is done on the hands and feet with the butt held in a low position. The butt is down low, and the head is up to see where you are going. Just holding your body in this position takes strength. Getting used to being in this position builds strength. Reflexively, every time your hands and feet (especially if you are barefoot!) touch the ground, you reinforce your strength and dynamic stability. The proprioceptors in your palms and feet signal your muscles to fire. If you get the chance, watch someone spider-man crawl. You will notice that their lats contract as soon as their hands hit the ground. This is also happening in the muscles you can't see like the muscles of the rotator cuff. Spider-man crawling ties the core, the body, together and prepares it to transfer force. Spider-man crawling builds strength.

Spider-man crawling makes a great warm-up, or movement preparation for any training session. I believe it will even improve the outcome and performance of the training session. While spider-man crawling can be a great warm-up, it can also be a great training session in, and of itself. Don't believe me? Just try spi-

der-man crawling for 5 minutes. If you hit one minute off the bat, I'll be impressed. Another great thing about spider-man crawling is that it is easy to progress. You can crawl backwards or sideways. You can crawl for time or distance. You can even drag things or add weight to yourself when you crawl. All these progressions are effective and equally brutal ways to increase your strength.

From my own personal experience, I was never able to perform a naked warrior pushup (one arm, one leg pushup) until I started spider-man crawling backwards. Over 20 years of traditional weight training never enabled me with the strength to be able to perform that style of pushup. After just a few weeks of backward spiderman crawling and I was a naked warrior! Don't get me wrong, weight training did make me stronger as far as weight training goes. But weight training did not enable me to be able to handle my own bodyweight the way that spider-man crawling did. Spider-man crawling helped fill in the gaps in my strength; it tied me together.

Some of you reading this may find that spider-man crawling is too much of a challenge. It may really tax your strength or your ability to coordinate your limb movements together. If you cannot find your rhythm, moving opposite arm and leg together, or if you cannot keep your butt down low, you may need to start out

with traditional baby crawling (on your hands and knees). Baby crawling can help lay the foundation of limb coordination and core strength to prepare you for spider-man crawling.

Again, I believe a strong midsection is a key, if not the key, to becoming bulletproof. If you want to be strong, really strong, you need to have a strong midsection, or core. Spider-man crawling is a great way to achieve a very strong core. There are other benefits to spider-man crawling as well like brain development, coordination, balance, proprioception, and much more. In fact, as we mentioned in *Becoming Bulletproof*, I believe crawling is a "reset button" for the body; it sets things right.

You can incorporate Spider-man crawling into your training sessions or even in your daily warm-up. However you do it, make sure you do it. Find a way to crawl. You will develop abs like the Man of Steel. Or maybe that should read: abs like Spider-man?

Tim Anderson, co-author of Becoming Bulletproof

www.BecomingBulletproof.net

TAsfitness@earthlink.net

See this video for instructions on how to perform the spiderman crawl:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BM-BCbJl7LDs>

A Sleazy Mind

text ILLUMINATUS

Inside the mind
of Aaron Sleazy,
seducer and author

My name is Illuminatus. I am a meditation expert specializing in psychonautics – the exploration of altered states of consciousness and how they can be used to effect positive change in one's reality.


I write regularly about meditation and personal development on my website Personal Power Meditation (www.personalpowermeditation.com), and have recently released my first book, *The End of Social Anxiety*, which teaches people how to use straightforward meditative exercises to overcome social anxiety.

I became friends with Aaron Sleazy (www.aaronsleazy.com) three years ago via the online newsgroup mASF, which at the time was the "hub" of the seduction community and had featured as the focal point of the events described in the book *The Game* by Neil Strauss (a.k.a. Style). Around this time, the seduction community was very much grounded in the paradigm established by Mystery and Style, the main pickup artists featured in *The Game*. Their methodology centres around entertaining women over long periods of time through "routines" (magic tricks, stories and silly games) in order

to get them into bed. Mystery himself asserts that having sex with a woman takes, on average, seven hours from the moment you first start talking to her. This "ideal" of seducing women did not tally up with my own experience, as I had personally seduced women in much shorter times, and with far less effort than playing games and reciting made-up stories. Additionally, most of the "pickup guys" I had met in real life who had subscribed to mainstream seduction teachings had ended up becoming even more weird than when they had first started; learning "game" had only served

to alienate them further from the women they were trying to seduce, and their results were generally poor as a consequence. As most seduction writers and marketers were continuing to peddle Mystery-Style methodology and its derivatives, there were few reliable resources available for the struggling seduction student to turn to.

This all changed when Aaron Sleazy came along. He disregarded most of the mainstream teachings of seduction and instead advocated a fast, physical, non-verbal style of seduction, which flew in the face of what was currently accepted truth in the seduction community. His results were outstanding, and he became an overnight sensation on mASF for his outlandish field reports which often involved him having sex with women in nightclubs within minutes of meeting them. He chronicled these adventures in his first book, *Sleazy Stories*.



Sleazy's disillusionment with what he saw as borderline fraudulent activities by mainstream seduction instructors led him to become an outspoken critic of the seduction industry, which he attacked in his book *Debunking the Seduction Community* for teaching ineffective methods and financially exploiting desperate men. Sleazy thus became both a pariah to the old regime of mASF and a hero for a slew of men (including myself) who just wanted something that worked and which didn't involve wearing a feather boa and constructing an artificial personality based on fantasy and half-lies in order to impress women.

Around this time, I made Sleazy my mentor, paying strict attention to his writings and exchanging emails with him regularly. As a meditation teacher, I became particularly interested in how Sleazy had used meditative methods to create the mindset of clarity and focus which he attributes much of his success to. Thus, instead of focusing on his adventures in seduction (which are already well-documented), in this interview I have chosen to focus on the mental basis of Aaron Sleazy: the man himself, and how he developed the psychological wherewithal to become a master seducer capable of flouting social norms and behaving on

his own agenda at will — a feat most men only dream of.

Illuminatus: When I log on to a personal development forum, the majority of posts I see typically relate to some problem the individual is experiencing in his or her life. More often than not it is quite clear to me that the individual lacks insight relating to their part in 1) Creating the problem and 2) Helping it to persist. More importantly they lack perspective on the events that they consider to make up their "problem". I've put problem in quotes because I really don't consider most of these things to be issues at all. I feel that I have a slight bird's eye view over the events in other people's lives, and that I generally think, "This would be so simple to solve if you just thought about it in this way." I also know however, from experience, that I have these same blinders on to many of my own thought processes and emotional responses to events. I often end up being the guy asking for advice, although 90% of the time I am offering it.

Aaron Sleazy: This is an issue I could probably write a book about. I think the main issue is that people feel very uncomfortable changing their behavioural patterns. This seems to affect a

majority of people, and it also ties into your idea that most people are more concerned about avoiding any kind of negative emotions, instead of actively seeking positive ones. It might even go as far as someone not even wanting to seek new experiences at all, resulting in a rather passive lifestyle. Doing something in a different way can of course lead to a feeling of anxiety, so people try to avoid it as far as they possibly can, unaware of the drawbacks of such an approach to life.

On a related note, I have recently come across an intriguing example in Steve Wozniak's autobiography *iWoz: Computer Geek to Cult Icon*. In one of the chapters he describes his time working as an engineer at Hewlett-Packard. One fine day, a new kind of calculator got introduced at the company, but the engineers seemed to almost feel offended by it. While the then-common calculators required you to enter equations in so-called Reverse Polish notation, the new ones were just like our modern ones, where you key in the term from left to right in the so-called infix notation. The underlying issue was that the engineers had spent so much time learning and perfecting their old method that they stubbornly clung to it, even though a

novice with a new calculator ran circles around their elaborate but now outdated method. This is an illuminating example, as it shows that no matter how educated or intelligent someone is, attributes you would doubtlessly use for people designing computer chips, they might very well follow the same ridiculous patterns as most other human beings.

Likewise, the bulk of people on self-help forums seem to exhibit the same pattern. In fact, they might even know what their problem is. Let's consider dieting, which is not exactly rocket science, as it boils down to eating healthily and exercising if you want to lose weight. I know that there can be other issues, like a thyroid malfunction, but the number of fat people certainly outweighs that group by a factor of several hundred. So, if your doctor can't find any issue with your thyroid, you just might have to hit the gym more than once a year. This is an obvious fact. Yet, there is a weight loss industry that is worth billions. It is addressing people who claim to want to fix a problem, but secretly they don't, because they have become too accustomed to a leisurely lifestyle full of little guilty pleasures. Of course, having killer legs would be great, but, man, would Jane Potbelly miss those buckets full of juicy chicken wings at KFC! Due to that kind of reasoning, the question such people really ask is, "How can I change X — without having to change at all?"

Unfortunately those people forget to mention the part after the dash, and this is precisely where the prevalent magic pill mentality comes from. Instead of working on the obvious, people crave for a shortcut that would allow themselves not to change. What our lovely little Jane



Potbelly wants is of course an impossibility. Her capacity for logical thinking doesn't seem to be much developed, though, so she asks herself, "How can I keep consuming shitty food, hardly ever move, yet look at least as hot as Gabriella Fox?" This doesn't quite work, no matter how much she wishes for it. However, the moment an ad for some absurd fitness device comes up on the TV screen, she considers buying it.

Illuminatus: I've known you online for several years now, and I've never seen you ask for help on anything.

Aaron Sleazy: Well, I am sure I occasionally ask for suggestions if I think I could benefit from an outside perspective, but this is far from the kind of guy or girl who reveals very little information about themselves, yet expects people to magically read their mind and provide them with a solution that immediately solves all their problems.

Illuminatus: How do you view events in your life in anticipation of them happening, as they unfold, and afterwards in reflection?

Aaron Sleazy: I do live almost completely in the present. Of course, I am aware of deadlines and I structure my tasks accordingly, but I feel no anxiety about it. I prepare as best as I can or am willing to, and that's it. This doesn't mean that I excel at everything I do (far from it), but why should I make things more difficult for myself? Even when my activities are much more connected with enjoyment, such as going on a vacation, I don't obsess over it for weeks either.

Of course, the date of the flight is marked in my calendar, and I will certainly make sure to arrive at the airport on time, but it's not that I am counting the days or have to put up pictures of the destination on the fridge as a way of escaping reality. Once the day arrives, I board the plane, and I have no fixed

"So, if your doctor can't find any issue with your thyroid, you just might have to hit the gym more than once a year. This is an obvious fact. Yet, there is a weight loss industry that is worth billions. It is addressing people who claim to want to fix a problem, but secretly they don't, because they have become too accustomed to a leisurely lifestyle full of little guilty pleasures."

ideas of what I expect to happen, besides the bleeding obvious.

On the other hand, many people seem to build up an awful lot of anticipation about literally everything, and then they easily get disappointed when things are not as pleasant as they imagined them to be. For example, look at the myriad of women who mistakenly believe that they can literally buy happiness. Sure, a new dress and a pair of sexy high-heels may be nice, but after some days this stuff will just look as old and unappealing to them as the other eight dozen dresses and 120 pairs of shoes in their wardrobe. This is simply a result of their bizarre world view, and unfortunately many don't seem to be able to think objectively about their shopping patterns.

Illuminatus: Where do you think whatever world view you have on the events in your life comes from, and how do you think it affects how you process the

world and how you live your life on a day-to-day basis?

Aaron Sleazy: Well, one of the biggest boons, but quite possibly also the greatest curse of my life, was that I had intellectually matured rather quickly. Even in primary school I found myself in situations where I managed to irritate some of my teachers because I could do some tasks quicker than they could. There were instances of some teachers who were doing the mathematics quizzes as we were working on them as well, probably to check whether we would have enough time according to their opinion. But of course, little Aaron Sleazy wasn't quite greeted with enthusiasm for handing in his work before they were done with their trial run. However, I was just an innocent little boy who wanted to do well in school, and not some smart alec that was out to prove his superiority. I remember quite a few such conflicts with my teachers, and while the few

male ones were glad that there was such a bright kid in the class, the female ones were usually not that pleased. So, in my early childhood the seeds for both my disrespect for authority as well as quite possibly a slightly misogynistic streak were planted.

The big picture is equally unflattering because the problem of unquestioned authority pervades all our life. Even, or maybe I should say, especially, in universities, the level of groupthink is unbelievable. The humanities are notorious for it, but the situation isn't much better in, say, economics, which might even be worse than other social sciences. The methodology in those fields is just highly questionable, and I do wholeheartedly agree with Richard Feynman who famously said that all those "experts" are merely making things up and don't even dare to properly test their hypotheses. You surely know about Robin Baker's book *Sperm Wars*, which

was entirely built upon the hypothesis that there are killer sperm cells whose only purpose is, well, killing other sperm cells. This is of course extremely useful in the likely event that you find yourself inseminating a cheerleader right after an entire NFL team had been with her. Baker, though, despite being a reproductive biologist, never bothered to check whether his outlandish hypothesis would survive an experiment. Probably he was too pleased with the whole edifice he built in his head, and of course who would want to make science interfere with the appeal of fiction? Well, about a decade after Baker had written his book, some other reproductive biologists dared to actually mix sperm cells from a number of donors together, and what did they find out? – that Baker's idea was completely bogus. By the way, the academic journal *Science* did report those findings in 1999. Nonetheless, Baker's bullshit hypothesis featured prominently in the work of some other writer in need of anything that made his absurd fantasies more appealing, namely in Neil Strauss's *The Game*. One wonders why he didn't bother to do some proper research.

Generally, the realisation that people often don't really know what they are talking about made me very wary of any kind of advice, especially if it is presented as allegedly impartial information. For some reason, the printed word instils quite some respect, but this is just another example of propaganda. However, you surely don't need to read

Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent* to become critical of the messages spread in the mass media. Just compare what your politicians say with your experience of the world, and the scales will fall from your eyes. Why would they lie to you, you may ask – after all, your vote has put them into office, hasn't it? Economic events of the past two to three years are an excellent case in point. The US government, for instance, is busy proclaiming an economic recovery. Yet, at the same time as a recovery is being pronounced, the number of people receiving food stamps is skyrocketing. The last time I checked the numbers, it was 46 million people. So, why do you still blindly believe anything they tell you?

However, I don't think that the people lying to us are all idiots and imbeciles, despite compelling evidence to the contrary. They are simply ruthlessly following their own agenda, and they might very well believe their own lies, not unlike Orwellian "doublethink." As a consequence, I do find some amusement in the events that are taking place, even though the world resembles a tragicomedy, such as what is happening in the US and Europe right now, when the bill for the fraudulent actions of the banking industry is now footed by the public sector, and especially the poor and unborn generations. Thus, it's no surprise that politicians and businessmen don't dare to show themselves in public without bodyguards any more.

But how does this affect me? First, I am relatively critical of everything I read, which is also why you perceive me as someone who doesn't ask for advice. I'd rather make up my own mind, especially given the excessive level of deception in the world, and even though it might sometimes take longer to find a solution to a problem, it's important for me to find my own solution. This will give me a sound reason for my actions instead of just regurgitating somebody else's views. At times, it has made my life much more difficult, but at others, I have immensely benefited from it. Most importantly, though, this stance literally forces me to keep an open mind, which goes back to your initial observation about people asking about how they could change. It's often not that they can't imagine a way out – it's that they don't want to because they have allowed themselves to be conditioned to falling for empty promises and not thinking for themselves. Again, think of the weight-loss industry, which perfectly shows that instead of questioning their nutritional behaviours and lifestyle, people prefer to be lied to and believe that some "gimmick" will finally enable them to reach their goals – of course with no effort at all.

Illuminatus: Regarding living in the present moment. I think there are two scales for this, both of which are intimately linked: short-term, where you are actually just walking around interacting with the environment in the moment and not trapped inside your own head; and long-

“However, I don’t think that the people lying to us are all idiots and imbeciles, despite compelling evidence to the contrary. They are simply ruthlessly following their own agenda, and they might very well believe their own lies, not unlike Orwellian ‘doublethink.’”



term, regarding planning, where you are deciding “I’ll just do this” and doing it, and not thinking about things in the future too much. For example, I’ve just moved to a completely different city on a whim. And people are asking me, “What are you going to do?!” The idea of moving is kind of like an uprooting to them, and needs to take on all these contingencies which require feverish thought and panic. This is the same as what you were saying about deciding to go on holiday then not even thinking about it till the day arrives – we both seem to understand that, beyond the most basic planning, 99% of thought about a matter is absolute conjecture and is therefore worthless, and also builds false expectations, so we’ve stopped doing it. Bearing this in mind, I wanted to ask you how you arrived at the position where present-moment liv-

ing became your dominant way of life, both in the short term of everyday activities and in the long term of not thinking about the future too much. How, and why, did you start thinking and operating like this, and are there any processes you went through, or still continue to do electively, to keep your mind in the present moment?

Aaron Sleazy: A key moment was when I discovered Zen meditation at the age of 16. In my youth I was a voracious reader, and after going through some books on Eastern philosophy, it didn’t take long until I discovered a book I quite honestly consider somewhat hackneyed and trite in hindsight. It was Eugen Herrigel’s *Zen in the Art of Archery*. There is some controversy about both the book and its author, but this would go too far off track to go into now. However, you

can learn even from bad books. My key insight from this one was that mastery requires not just technical skills, but also mental ones, which was described as the ability to not let your mind interfere with your actions. I was aware that the book was not to be taken literally, but this idea nonetheless struck a chord with me.

The next resource I came across was a documentary on a Japanese Zen temple. It showed little more than meditating monks and their surroundings. Of course, I didn’t have the intention of devoting my life to meditation, but I wanted to experience the effects I had read about myself. It turned out that this was all I needed to start out. From then on, I made it a habit to meditate daily. At first, the lotus position required some practice, but it turned out that sitting in



“So, dear reader, is your TV running in the background? If that’s the case, then get up and switch it off! Maybe you won’t even have a problem with that, but this simple step is next to impossible for people who are used to if not outright dependent on it.”

the lotus for five minutes was a minor problem compared to controlling my meandering thoughts.

You may now wonder what the big deal is. Well, the problem is that in our culture there is constant noise and a plethora of distractions. It is not uncommon for people to have the TV on while browsing the Internet, listening to music on the computer, and maybe even calling up some of their friends. This scenario might be over the top, but the need to not be left alone with your thoughts pervades our society. What do you do when you get up? You automatically turn on the radio. After breakfast, you grab your iPod and listen to some music on the way to work, maybe even as you get your daily dose of propaganda from your “reliable” mainstream newspaper on public transport. On your desk, there will be the radio again, a myriad of pointless emails, and blathering colleagues of both genders.

Once you are back home, you switch on the TV to “unwind”. There are people that can’t even have dinner without having the radio or TV on in the background, and I’m not talking about “white trash” here.

So, dear reader, is your TV running in the background? If that’s the case, then get up and switch it off! Maybe you won’t even have a problem with that, but this simple step is next to impossible for people who are used to if not outright dependent on it. Heck, I have been with some girls who had the bizarre habit of always keeping the TV on in their apartments, even when they weren’t watching, and it was amazing to notice how quickly they got nervous when I suddenly turned it off. Somehow I got the impression that they were feeling like addicts going cold turkey.

Those observations are relevant to med-

itation, because the ability to endure silence will eventually lead to a much greater mental clarity. I quickly acquired the skill of just calming myself down through meditation, but after some years I mastered the ability to literally switch off my thoughts at will. Let’s just get back to the vacation example previously mentioned. If it is your normal state to have a myriad of disconnected thoughts and baseless concerns in your head, you worry about the most inane things. On the other hand, for people like you and me, we simply book the flight and that’s it. There is no need for unnecessary thoughts about what might happen in the future. Also, while we are on a vacation, we are also much more likely to enjoy ourselves, while other people might already start to worry about some unfinished tasks at their office desk.

Likewise, you mentioned that you recently moved to a different city on a

whim. I have done the same a couple of times in my life as well, and the experience that I could just pack my stuff and rebuild my life in a different place was more than liberating. There's a great relevant quote in the movie *Fight Club*: "If you wake up at a different time, in a different place, could you wake up as a different person?" Well, of course you could. However, if you try to discuss this idea with other people, they more often than not seem threatened by the thought that you could easily just go away. Quite often, though, they are not satisfied with their lives and would like to move, too, but they are too worried about – nothing at all. Their biggest concern is probably that they might miss their favourite TV show once or twice.

You were also asking about my current meditation habits. I've been practising meditation for literally half my life now, and I used to meditate daily for years. The humble beginnings consisted in five-minute sessions, but in my early twenties, already having half a decade of practice under my belt, I regularly sat for one hour. These days, I meditate much less often, because after I learnt how to control my thoughts at will, I had less of a need for it. Nowadays, I can even enter this meditative state in a noisy environment, without following the rituals I used to adhere to.

Illuminatus: Let's talk some more about this ability of yours to turn off your thoughts at will. I want to know every-

thing about it you can possibly tell me. How do you do it? Also, what are the effects or identifying markers in each of your sensory representations and also in the thinking mind? For example, when meditating I will have disturbances in my visual field which eventually settle down and give way to white light which looks and feels like a clear, shimmering lake. I want to know everything about your particular experience of your no-thought state: when you first developed it, how you developed it, what the "a-ha!"-moments were, and how you use it now.

Aaron Sleazy: I developed the "no-thought state" in my meditations. After a year or two of constant practice, I reached a point where I only had to sit down and assume the lotus position to clear my mind. The effect was almost immediate. However, it took me many more years to be able to do this in other contexts, but this was probably only due to me not trying it earlier, because I associated the act of clearing my mind too strongly with the actual ritual of meditation, which prevented me from experimenting with this state.

It was only due to mere chance that I stumbled upon using meditative techniques in my daily life. The first conscious occurrence was when I was sitting on a London bus one night in 2008. I was on the way to a club, but it was rather early. Consequently, I was the only person on the upper deck. Because I was a bit sleepy, the auditory

impressions, mostly traffic noise and the sound of the bus engine, began to blend into each other. I am sure you are familiar with this from your own meditative practice. At first, you focus on certain sounds, may it be outside traffic noise, birds singing, or your neighbour playing the piano. But after a while, you don't pay attention to it any more. The noise is of course still there. Yet, it somehow can't reach you any more. To put it metaphorically, it goes right through you without affecting you. At other times, it may feel as if it goes around you. Yet, you are still present enough so that you could quickly focus on one particular auditory impression if you wanted to. Of course, this state only occurs in the early phase of the meditation, and there are further stages in which you cannot focus on anything but instead feel as if you are "blending" with the environment and lose awareness of your bodily sensations.

Let me explain this in more detail: While you normally perceive your body to be a vessel under the control of your mind, this particular state feels as if your mind expands and "bleeds" into your surroundings. As you stop thinking, you also somewhat lose your perception of the boundaries of your body. You don't even feel as if you are wearing clothes any more because you don't notice their weight. From there on it's just a short step to having synaesthetic experiences, which you can of course reach via many ways. I had a few experiences where I felt to "be" a certain colour, and some

other times when I was not meditating but having sex instead, the boundaries of my "vessel" would mix with the boundaries of the other person in my perception. It was as if I would dip into her "vessel", and it was an interaction not with the boundaries of her body, but more with the aura surrounding it. Of course, this language is somewhat metaphorical because synaesthetic experiences are very difficult if not impossible to describe with words. On the other hand, this is a topic I hardly ever talk about, so maybe I'll be able to express myself clearly if you ask me again in a couple of years. Also, I'm fully aware that those descriptions may sound rather odd to the uninitiated. It's thus not unlike trying to describe sex to a virgin. However, those experiences are certainly not unique. Meditation is just one way of reaching them. After all, drug usage with the aim of having similar experiences is not that uncommon.

Illuminatus: Could you tell me more about the practice of clearing your mind through meditation, and how you can stay in this state for a prolonged period of time, even while you are doing other things?

Aaron Sleazy: Let's go back to that particular bus ride: I slipped into this early mind-clearing state of meditation somewhat by accident, and it was probably

more triggered by the surroundings than by any conscious action done by myself. It was a rather odd feeling because my mind attained a state of simply letting things pass through. Yet, on a subconscious level I still paid attention to what was happening. Otherwise, I surely would have missed my stop. Even more interesting was that I managed to maintain this mental state even in the nightclub. I have written about this experience before, and called it "God Mode", in a nod to a particular cheat code in first-person shooters by ID Software that makes you invincible.

I'd had my fair share of success with women before, but after that key moment nothing was ever the same. "God Mode" meant that I could do no wrong, and while I couldn't enter this mental state reliably at will, and I still can't, it happened often enough. The effects were that I became fully aware of the reactions of other people, however minute, and I could literally see not only whether women were interested in me, but also how strong their level of interest was. Furthermore, because I was just letting the visual and auditory impressions pass through me without trying to analyse them, and just acted on my impulses without censoring my thoughts, I had literally one amazing interaction after another. I won't go into detail, because I have documented those adventures ad nauseam in other places,

such as on my old blog and in some chapters of my book *Sleazy Stories*.

It's also interesting to discuss how flicking this mental switch affects my physiology, which is something that was pointed out to me by a friend from Australia, another well-known seducer and author known as Cosy or *TheCostOf-Success*, who was staying at my place in Berlin for about a month in 2009. We had been exchanging experiences, and I detailed the effects of my meditative practice. What was interesting was that he could tell when I was entering that particular mental state, in a club or elsewhere, because, according to him, my facial features softened and my eyes lost focus for a very brief moment.

It is probably no surprise that Cosy is a very experienced practitioner of various martial arts, holding two or three black belts. I have a few years of experience myself, and I have been instructed by some people who had a similar ability of clearing their mind and following instinctive patterns of reaction. The most intriguing example was by a master of Aikido. Of course, you can say whatever you want about the effectiveness or lack thereof of this particular martial art in real-life contexts, but that's not the point. It might not teach you how to defend yourself against some particular techniques, but it teaches you an almost

uncanny awareness of equilibrioception. After many months of practice, I started to become aware how even small movements affected my balance.

When practising with this Aikido master, he would at one point during the execution of the move close his eyes. At first I was baffled, but after watching him countless times, and practising with him frequently, I figured out what this was about: He "knew" or felt at which point I could not stop my attack any more, which was when he blocked visual input by closing his eyes. It was then when he executed his move. It's obviously a matter of a split-second, and if you don't believe me, you can try for yourself to just stand upright and make any kind of aggressive swing. It's obvious that your level of control diminishes the farther along you are in the execution, which is what the highly stylised Aikido techniques exploit. There is a "tipping point" at which you start losing your balance, and can't control your violent swing any more. This means that you have become vulnerable. Of course there is a small margin of error, but that master was able to close his eyes at seemingly the exact moment his opponent's position was compromised, and execute his counter-move.

The previous example is interesting because that master's behaviour gives you a clue about what he is doing, but

"When I just look around, I have the very distinct feeling of a mind sitting in my body. I may feel where the skin is stretching, and where the muscles move, but once I pass that particular threshold, the impression is as if your mind extends to engulf your whole body."

surely there are people out there who can let the visual impression pass through them instead of closing their eyes, and execute their techniques perfectly regardless. Either way, it probably doesn't matter how you do it, but those examples show that it is not entirely uncommon that people "switch" to a level at which they let their unconsciousness take over. Meditation is just one of many available paths.

Illuminatus: I have experienced some great mental states in my life – very similar if not the same as your "God Mode" – but there is a lack of consistency in getting it when I want. I do not know what the process behind getting it consistently is. This is one thing I am really trying to get from you in this interview: the processes behind God Mode.

Aaron Sleazy: I think there are many ways to reach "God Mode". Has it ever happened that you were a bit sleepy or a bit hungry and went out nonetheless?

This can lead to a somewhat similar mental state too because your body is then concerned with meeting some more primal needs. In turn, this means that you can't fully focus, and, more importantly, you don't even have the energy to entertain many distracting thoughts in your head. Admittedly, this is very different from the mental clarity you can reach through meditation, but there are many similarities nonetheless. Further, I do not drink nor do I take drugs, but it is my understanding that a state of mild intoxication has a similar effect of putting you more in touch with your instincts. Meditation is just another way to help you connect with your animalistic side. As I was hinting at before, I am not necessarily talking about the effects of prolonged meditation. The particular mental state I am referring to is one you can, with some practice, enter right away once you have gained the ability to clear your mind at will. You just shut off your thoughts, and then your instincts take over.

I'm not exactly sure what you mean by speaking of the "processes behind God mode", but there is a change in my physiological perception. When I just look around, I have the very distinct feeling of a mind sitting in my body. I may feel where the skin is stretching, and where the muscles move, but once I pass that particular threshold, the impression is as if your mind extends to engulf your whole body. I'm sure for someone who hasn't had a somewhat related sensation, this all sounds nonsensical, but the physical impression is indeed as if you are less in control, or, better: that you control yourself less and simply let your body act on a subconscious level. I'm sure this is something people who are heavily into sports are familiar with too. It is a switch from analysing to acting. You become your instincts, so to speak.

The challenge, though, is to maintain this early meditative state. Of course, you lose it once your mind starts taking over, and in this regard it is similar to lucid dreaming. There is a fine line between changing your dream, and influencing too many of its aspects, which will then end it. I had experiences where I actually woke up because I tried to change too many aspects of my dream episode, and the next thing I knew I was fully awake. It's the same with God Mode. This means that there is a twofold challenge: to enter it, and to maintain it.

However, if you manage to do this for a prolonged period of time, you are in for one hell of a ride.

Illuminatus: You've written two books already, *Sleazy Stories* and *Debunking the Seduction Community*, both of which I enjoyed immensely. In addition, you have translated *Sleazy Stories* into German. You are currently working on another book. Can you tell us a bit about it?

Aaron Sleazy: Of course. I'm currently in the final stages of writing a book on the basics of seduction. I can't give you a release date yet, but it will be announced on my blog in due time. The initial idea was to provide a guide that allows guys to recognize their strengths and maximize their success with women. Of course, many books have been written on seduction or "game", but if you open them, you notice that the content is presented in such an absurdly complicated way that it makes you wonder whether the guy even understands what he has written or whether he's just making it up. A further omission is that those people present a plethora of "advanced theories" of doubtful merit, while completely disregarding some very basic aspects, which will of course come back and haunt you over and over again. On the other hand, given how the "seduction industry" works, this is probably just part of their business model, because they

hope it'll lead to return customers.

In my forthcoming book, I'll thus develop a simple and concise framework, which is presented in very clear language. I'll show you how to identify your strengths, how to effectively meet women, and how to transition this into the kind of relationship you want. The promise of the book is not to turn you into a second Don Juan, as this is, once you leave the realm of fantasy, outside the interest and ability of many men anyway. Heck, in most places on this planet you'll have a hard enough time just finding a number of available attractive women. Instead, I want to show you how you can, in your particular situation and with your individual strengths and weaknesses, enjoy a respectable level of success with women and have a fulfilling love life, which is an eminently more achievable and satisfying goal for most men than becoming the cartoon ideal of a "pickup artist" advocated by the mainstream seduction industry.

*Illuminatus's writings on meditation and personal development, including his book *The End of Social Anxiety*, can be found at www.personalpowermeditation.com.*

Aaron Sleazy's writings on seduction can be followed on his website at www.aaron-sleazy.com.

Further, I do not drink nor do I take drugs, but it is my understanding that a state of mild intoxication has a similar effect of putting you more in touch with your instincts. Meditation is just another way to help you connect with your animalistic side.

INTERVIEW WITH

JOHN ROSS

text KEVIN CARSON

For a long time I've been an avid reader of your work, and consider you the most provocative analyst out there when it comes to the ongoing war between networks and hierarchies and the possible ways they might develop in the near future. I've been heavily influenced by your writing in the development of my own ideas. So it's an honor to interview you.

Starting with Rand authors like John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt in the '90s, continuing with work by Naomi Klein and Frank Kernaghan, the post-Seattle movement, yourself and Jeff Vail, and even defenders of the old system like Richard Telofski, the concept of netwar or networked resistance has had widespread currency. Oh, and don't forget the Cluetrain Manifesto... Is this a natural outgrowth of the rise of the Internet? Is it "steam engine time" for networked resistance. Is thinking in terms of networks an outgrowth of the Internet?

Yes.

Open source warfare is definitely in motion. It's evolving, getting better... More powerful. Tunisia, etc. is the latest example.

How about the potential for open-source warfare techniques as a way of evening things up between superempowered individuals in the Western countries and powerful corporate/state institutions?

It's already even. Small groups can use disruption as economic coercion against any large corporate/state target.

One thing I have in mind is marrying networked resistance techniques to the labor movement: antecedents and/or possible components include the use of Web 2.0 for Wobbly open-mouth sabotage, the Streisand effect, corporate campaigns, Frank Kernaghan's culture jamming, and early networked efforts like the Imolakee Workers and the Walmart Workers' Association. Does this strike you as a feasible application of the individual superempowerment principle?

Sure. It's an effective method of conflict in the 21st century environment. It can be used in a variety of ways.

Months ago, you proposed "Economies as a Software Service" which seemed to dovetail quite a bit with stuff like David de Ugarte's phyles and Daniel Suarez's

darknet. Elsewhere, you proposed phyles as a model in their own right. First, have you further developed your agenda for building phyles or EaSS? Second how does Miiu tie in with this? I've noticed that there are bits and pieces at the Miiu wiki that could serve as building blocks for an EaSS/phyle architecture, but it's not really developed as a major sub-category at the site.

I proposed EaSS as a way to connect decentralized resilient communities. Each economy, in this instance is a game. Different rules. Different dynamics. All virtual. You play the game that makes sense to you. However, it's going to take some time to get there.

So, to build these new economies, I've proposed building open source ventures. Business ventures that operate according to the same rules as open source software, but that are formed to make money. That's much harder to pull off than it seems.

Businesses are dictatorships for a reason: ownership/control. Also breaking that relationship runs up against all sorts of psychological barriers formed over the last hundred years.



Open source ventures appear to work best if they are very narrowly focused. A very specific business idea with a very specific set of rules/rewards.

Open source ventures reach their ultimate potential when they are open to the crowd. The simple rules/reward structure can scale like nothing else. The ability to reward people from the crowd that contribute, with value derived from their contribution over time, radically increases returns.

Anyway, I've tried to build something like this. Learned a lot about what works and what doesn't. It's possible, but I'm not the guy to get it done.

MiiU has some of the elements of an open source venture. It's a wiki, so its open to contribution. People that build pages related to resilience (that are good pages, not scams/spam), can add affiliate links and keep 100% of the revenue from them. Some of the folks working on the site are already earning a couple a hundred a month from their pages.

However, the best part of MiiU, is that it is aimed at collecting all of the informa-

tion/insight possible on resilient communities. From how to survive a crisis of capitalism/hollow states to how to start a new local economy. From DIY projects to books to permaculture plants.

You've proposed Resilient Communities and assorted networked platforms supporting them (phyles, EaSS, etc.) as something to fill the void left by the hollowing out of the central state. Do you see the process of hollowing out as a prolonged one (a "Long Emergency" in Kunstler's words) or as something short and catastrophic? Or a mixture of the two?

I see a hollow state, accelerated by sovereign default/debt. I also see a crisis of capitalism as the global economy plunges into a deep economic depression. Think in terms of the 1930's with a lot more dynamism and the nation-state in decline.

What do you think of attempts to slow down the process?

Not going to work. It's inevitable given the rise a global economy and a global communications system.

One proposed alternative is to coopt networks, putting new wine in old bottles through techniques like Enterprise 2.0 and military 4GW doctrines that incorporate network elements into hierarchy.

It doesn't work well in the US military. It's completely bureaucratic. It does work on the small scale unit level, although given the level of autonomy they need to be given, there's lots of worry/oversight.

Another (mentioned by the P2P Foundation's Michel Bauwens among others) is making open-source, network communications and green technology the basis of a new "engine of accumulation" or Kondratiev long-wave cycle that will provide a new sink to absorb surplus capital.

Hmmm. I think that will be crowdsourced companies and resilient communities. Essentially, these will increasingly compete with traditionally organized systems.

It seems to me that the first alternative does a very bad job of incorporating networks (as you've observed in regard to military attempts to take advantage of

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network communications technology in Afghanistan). And the second won't be much of an engine of accumulation unless it relies in "intellectual property" to enclose new technology as a source of rents.

True to the first point. To the second: It can be an engine of accumulation if it is a complete economic game (i.e. currencies, markets, dispute resolution, dynamics, etc.). A new game can suck capital out of an existing system. Hard to do? Not impossible though. We're already seeing games online today that have as much complexity as any new economy would.

You've been writing about the hollowing out of the state, and the supplanting of its functions by agile networks, for some time now. What's your view of where we are in the progression of this process?

It's accelerating. Open source movements just replaced a bunch of governments in the Arab world. More are coming with the onset of sovereign default. Nothing happens overnight, but the big trends are inexorable over the long term.

As a follow-up to the previous question: Many of the technical developments that

are pre-requisite to a darknet/physle economy – the network culture itself, encryption technology, digital currencies, and various platforms that could be expanded into the architecture for a counter-economy – are already available to a considerable extent. What do you see as the tipping point that will spur their widespread adoption?

A crisis of capitalism. A deep and dark global economic depression where people lose faith in global markets and the financial oligarchs that rule them. That will kick things into high gear.

As a further follow-up, can you describe trends in our current society/economy – stuff like Angie's List, the Ebay reputational system, etc. – that are contributing building blocks for a future darknet economy?

Yes. Early corporate models of how it's possible to employ the crowd. The feedback we see on eBay and Amazon etc. are what makes it valuable. It's what will drive open source ventures that employ the crowd in the future.

People like James O'Connor have argued that, in the past, deep recessions have been associated with a shift of manufacturing activity from the mass-

production core to the lean/networked periphery, and with a shift to self-provisioning by the unemployed/underemployed in the informal and household sector. A number of commentators these days argue that, with the tendency toward idle capacity and underemployment becoming a permanent secular trend, these tendencies are becoming permanent. How do you see these things as contributing to the adoption of resilient local economies and networked economic platforms?

Look. The dependency that we saw develop over the last 150 years is a blip. A child-like dependency on "jobs" and "utilities" and "government services". That has changed/distorted our politics and colors every conversation. That will end when this mana from heaven stops flowing and people have to become more independent. All the tech is there to do it. It's not rocket science.

In the past year or so, The Pirate Bay, Wikileaks and Anonymous have been featured prominently in the news. How do you interpret them as extensions of the ideas you discussed in Brave New War? And how do you see the struggle between them and legacy hierarchical institutions (corporate and state) shaping up? Are the responses of the latter at



all effective, or are they just setting themselves up to be killed faster?

They are another step in the evolution of open source movements/warfare. The struggle is going to get more aggressive as the economy winds down. More attacks. More violent response.

In Brave New War and subsequently on your Global Guerrillas blog, you've described Al Qaeda's shift toward maximizing "ROI" by using minimal expenditures of resources to provoke enormous overreactions by the West. Do you still see their strategy as progressing along this path? And how are the strategies (if you can call them that) of Homeland Security and the TSA playing into Al Qaeda's hands?

It's funny how weakness often begets the right strategy. It's probably too late for the shift however. Would be better off rebranding and starting fresh.

The TSA and Homeland Security in general THRIVE on terrorism. It drives their budget. Organizes their day. They wouldn't exist in their current form without it. So, it's now a symbiotic relationship. Does system disruption cause more expense? Yes. Does it matter to the TSA? No.

Without any breach of confidentiality, can you give some idea of your interaction with Suarez in the period leading up to the publication of Daemon and Freedom?

Didn't know Daniel before Daemon.

We've become friends since. Lots of interaction. We're on the same page with lots of things.

Can you describe the influence of writers like Neal Stephenson and Bruce Sterling on your own ideas?

A ton. Bruce is a friend. Loved all of his books. Don't know Neal. Loved his work too. My favorite Sterling books: Schismatrix and Islands in the Net. Absolutely brilliant.

Thanks very much for taking the time to participate in this interview. It's been a pleasure.

John Robb's blog can be found at <http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com>, Carson's at mutualist.blogspot.com

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

...and most skillful?

text JAMIE SCOTT

February 22nd 2011 started as a fairly ordinary day. As ordinary as days had been since a magnitude 7.1 earthquake lit up a network of fault lines around the city of Christchurch, New Zealand – an area, despite the seismicity of much of the country, not renowned for its earthquake activity. A minor rumble, just after 9am rattled the windows and walls of our central city office without any inclination of what was to come. The weeks prior had been relatively quiet as far as aftershocks were concerned. Those not accustomed to living in an earthquake zone might be forgiven for thinking that “quiet” when it comes to earthquakes, is a good thing. Not so. “Quiet” possibly just means that something was brewing. And it was.

At 12:50pm, I was walking on my treadmill desk contemplating where I would go for lunch. At 12:51pm, that decision was made for me as a shallow magnitude 6.3 earthquake slammed into the underside of the city, accelerating the city upward at over twice the speed of gravity. This force threw me from one

side of my office, five metres to the other side, landing me almost directly under a doorway. I tried to brace against the twisting and contorting building, but the narrow door frame just wasn’t going to offer me any protection should the building begin to crumble.

As I crawled along the hall toward the three other individuals who were in the office that day, there were thoughts about how much more this building could take. Walls were cracking, windows were shattering, and the sound was akin to a train at full noise in a subway. Within 20-30 seconds, the worst of it had stopped. The office looked like it had been turned upside, necessitating some scrambling to get out – one never being sure whether that shock was a prelude to something bigger, or whether it would generate aftershocks which, although often smaller, may still be big enough to finish a building off.

Bursting out the rear fire escape to an open car park, the air was thick with dust. We were in a block that had suf-

fered a significant number of building collapses. Brick buildings from the early 19th century were falling down all around us. The restaurant next to us had taken the life of one occupant with its partial collapse and had left a handful of others sitting on the pavement, blood seeping through their business shirts. A glass high-rise building rippled as the first aftershock hit. This was no place to hang out in. We had to get out of a built-up city that was rapidly crumbling, and get out now.

There were crowds of people walking around, dazed, some injured, most in shock and all potentially unpredictable. They were making their way to a nearby park to sit down, contemplate what was happening and to search for friends and family. But they were also there to wait for someone to help them.

Unfortunately, they would all be low priority on the help list. I too was concerned about my loved ones, friends, my home and my cat. My priority was getting home, if I still had one and finding the people in my life hopefully all okay.



Despite only a relatively short distance to cover to get back to my townhouse, getting home was going to be more effort than it would normally have been.

My route home would require me to negotiate buildings threatening to topple, traffic backed up, people potentially requiring help and with yet another aftershock, water rising up from the ground with a speed I just didn't think possible. I had to sprint, jump, dodge and wade my way back to my place, a trip which saw me falling into a liquefied hole up to my waist. But I made it. I made it to a house that was severely cracked, and due to its proximity to the river, was flooded through its ground floor. I had one friend who had made it home, and between the two of us, we

managed to lift all the downstairs furniture to the upper floor, hoping that with every aftershock that hit the house would hold. We also began to pack evacuation bags.

A second friend made it home, and I eventually heard from my girlfriend. Everyone of immediate concern was all present and accounted for. The next decision became one of whether to ride out whatever wrath was being unleashed on Christchurch or to get out of dodge. Power was down, water and sewerage off. The roads were barely holding together in parts. It was likely prudent to get out while we could, escaping to a small town south of the city that would at least have basic services. The only problem with this plan was that of four avail-

able vehicles, one was trapped inside the inner city cordon, one had been abandoned due to traffic being gridlocked, one was parked on the road in front of my place and was rapidly slumping into an ever-widening crack, and my car was trapped in my garage behind a 30cm deep wall of liquefaction.

We began to dig, one of us with a small shovel, and me with a plank of wood. It had to do. It took three hours to shift enough silt to get the car out and down the long drive, build bridges across the cracks, and eventually get the car on to a piece of road that wasn't cracked. Had we been another hour, the eventual complete rupture of the first exit road would have trapped us there. At 9:30pm that night, I had my first meal since ear-

lier that day. We had survived the initial hit and had created our own luck for the rest of the day. At no point was there any thought of sitting and waiting.

Later reflection on this day put many of the reasons behind why I train into perspective. I strength train, I interval train, I sprint, I walk, I climb, and I eat in such a way that my energy levels and ability to exert myself are not contingent on having eaten something in the last two hours. People ask why I do all of this, most often perplexed that I don't do any of this for any particular sporting endeavour. I do this for the very reason outlined above – to give me the capacity to respond to any given scenario that a day might present. Despite how closeted modern life would like to keep us, I don't believe that life is inert. I firmly believed that it wasn't a case of if, but when would something as catastrophic as an earthquake would test me – a test I had no intention on failing.

Having worked in the fitness industry for 15 or so years, I have seen many fitness fads come and go... Body building, balancing on balls, vibrating platforms, and many a variation of dance class. Underpinning all of this, is the on-going belief that aerobic endurance training (running, swimming, cycling), at 80-90% of maximum heart rate, is what one needs to be able to do to be considered fit. But survival of the fittest, whether it is earthquake, tsunami, or riot, is never a case



of survival of the 100-miler cyclist, the marathon runner, or the 50-lap swimmer.

At no time, on February 22nd, did I, or anyone who I knew or read about, require the ability to run at such a high aerobic pace for hours on end. Top-end aerobic endurance was just not a life-saving skill that anyone required. My story was largely unremarkable for that day. Others found themselves scrambling into buildings, lifting large lumps of masonry off people, or carrying people to hospital. Yet others found themselves trapped in buildings, some by collapsed walls and ceilings, others by collapsed stairwells preventing exit from the building.

But nobody, as best I can tell, was ever trapped by their inability to jog around a park, caught short by their inability to

engage in floor-based core strengthening exercises or crippled by their inability to perform bicep curls whilst balancing on a ball. I don't even believe people were found wanting for a lack of flexibility. What people were trapped by was their inability to get themselves off the floor having been knocked off their feet, their inability to move fast, to climb up and down and overall, their inability to create their own survival options by virtue of the capacity to do so that they had built into their bodies.

Faced with a strange and challenging world that seems to be getting more chaotic and unpredictable by virtue of natural disasters, economic decline and rising food insecurity, we need potential, capacity and skills that can be direct and relevant to such tests. These skills might include being able to walk well and cover

"As you prepare for disaster, you wouldn't prepare an emergency kit with supplies that were old, broken and not up to the task that you would expect them to be able to perform. So why would one expect a slow, tired and weak body to get them through when put to the test? Strength and conditioning will take you so far, but without skills you really only have capacity and health without useful ability."

long distances, sprint and move fast in multiple directions, carry food, survival equipment or loved ones, climbing up and down what will often be awkward obstacles, crawling, getting into and out of tight spaces, jumping both high and long, and if need be, standing to fight.

From the Christchurch experience (and seen similarly in subsequent events such as the Japanese tsunami and UK riots,) many people required the stamina to walk 3–4 hours, often over hills and dodging rock falls, to get home. If they were required to run, they were required to run fast, as was seen in 9/11 as people ran from the World Trade Centre. If you need to get out of a building under threat of collapse or need to escape an angry mob, you are not going to jog your way out of the situation. You require strength that is functional – not the ability to simply lift a nicely balanced bar that is set at just the right height – but often awkward objects with little grip.

You might require the ability to pull yourself up over a high fence and scale the side of a building to escape an impending wall of water, as was witnessed by a film crew escaping the Japanese tsunami. You may be required to belay large people down the side of a building as was seen in Christchurch. You might need to push a car, barge a door in or drag a body. You will require enough hip mobility to get into a low squat position, to move in that position, to crawl through

small and narrow spaces that have been formed, either for you to get into or out of a building.

You may also require the ability to exert yourself for many hours without the opportunity to stop and refuel. My following of a high-fat, hunter-gatherer-type diet has given me that capacity. My energy levels do not rise and fall with a wildly fluctuating blood sugar level, nor do I have to stuff my pockets with energy bars to get me through. During the Christchurch earthquake, whilst everyone was stocking up on bread, cereal, and milk, my survival kit contained eggs, bananas, coconut cream, and dark chocolate.

With no idea how long one might have to stand in the face of disaster, you may also require a degree of mental stamina – a mentality that allows you to manage your thoughts, and asserts that you can rather than you can't. Knowing you have the skills and capacity in your body allows you to have a similar capacity in

your mind. At the point at which I decided to dig through large amounts of silt with a plank of wood to rescue my car and get out before the road collapsed, there was no requirement for me to question whether my body could dig for three hours. I didn't need to convince my mind. I knew I had the physical capacity and the mind followed.

As you prepare for disaster, you wouldn't prepare an emergency kit with supplies that were old, broken and not up to the task that you would expect them to be able to perform. So why would one expect a slow, tired and weak body to get them through when put to the test? Strength and conditioning will take you so far, but without skills you really only have capacity and health without useful ability.

In Interesting Times, the most important thing in your emergency response kit is you – your physical capacity and your ability to turn that capacity to the useful skills those times will inevitably require.

Stand up, **stand tall**, persist, **defend**.

text ParagonA

Life can be a real bitch.

The moment you feel you finally achieved a state of stability, harmony and tranquility, more often than not, is the very moment something evil and bad bullies through your life and tears everything into pieces like a hurricane.

I've experienced that so many times in my own life, let alone seen it happen to others. That's just the way it is, the way it goes.

Of course, there are some Fortuna-spoiled, rich-ass, life-long sorrow-free dudes out there, and, man, I am really happy for them. On the other hand, we T-men are T-men partly due to the fact that, in our lives, we had to deal with adversity.

Life is not always easy and the world is

not always a cosy place, and some of us literally travelled to hell and back more than once.

It was just the other day I met an old friend I haven't seen in years. I run into him on my way to work about a week ago, we exchanged our business cards (I hate it, but that's the way one exchanges numbers nowadays). After a few e-mails we finally made an appointment for last Monday and agreed to have a drink or two after work in our favourite bar in the city.

The first thing that sprung into my eyes when we met was that Patrice must have lost 40 pounds. He resembled more of a skeleton than the well-trained Nordic beau I used to know. I could go into great detail of what he told me on

that evening, but I won't. I'll just give you a short "executive summary": his long-time girlfriend left him pregnant from another guy, he found a new girl, fell in love, and got married. Last December their first daughter was born. She died 30 minutes after birth. This year, after having found a bit of peace in life again, he was diagnosed with cancer – a tumour had grown in his belly area. He first thought that he had gotten fat. When the doctors cut out the tumour which was somehow embedded in a fluid-filled cyst, it had the size of a football and weighted over 7 pounds.

When Patrice told me what he had to go through lately, I felt my eyes filling with tears and couldn't help to blow my nose a couple of times. But what touched me



”Find someone to love and fill as many as possible lives with joy and happiness. Laugh, cheer, play more, chase butterflies and dream at both nights and days.”

the most was that he didn't seem to have lost any of his enthusiasm, optimism and inner piece. This man would have more than enough reasons to be angry with the world, pissed about life, destiny, God; however you want to call it. But he isn't.

He told me: "Look, in life, it's always desirable to choose your battles wisely. To choose the ones you can win. This one [he was talking about his cancer], this one has chosen me."

Patrice is not going to die anytime soon. That's what I believe and want to believe. The doctors are very optimistic, the chemotherapy went very well. He is back to work, back to training, back to life. He still plans to climb the famous Matterhorn one day, still plans to compete again in at least three different sports, still plans to learn Spanish. His wife and he still plan to have children one day and to be happy and healthy without any setbacks for many, many years to come.

I pray every single day for all that to happen.

One thing I want to tell you, is, that in life, you just have to expect adversity. Friends will turn their backs on you, beloved-ones will die, you'll get sick, recover, get sick again, and fall in and later out of love. There will be accidents, financial troubles, a hell of a lot of unforeseen shit you cannot even imagine now, and – eventually and inevitably – you'll die.

Boom. There it is: the ugly truth.

On the other hand, when you really think about it, it all has its good side. This I wrote so many times before: the fact that our lifespan is limited makes it so, so very much more precious. The fact that there are times of sorrows in our lives makes the interim time golden.

I know, I really do know that all that is said much easier than believed in, or lived by. I had to push through some

hefty shit in my life, too, and many times, it was all but easy to keep my optimism, or even my will of life. My approach to this is as simple as brutally hard as powerful: every single morning when I get up I tell myself that the past is past, that every day is a new life and that I will stand tall, persist and defend. Every single day. Have been doing this for 30 years now and will continue to do so until the last day of my life. Not to chasten myself and not to keep me in a melancholic state of mind. But to plainly show myself that life is fragile and transitory, that our soul is only borrowed and that one day we will have to give it back. This keeps me going. It keeps me wanting to live to the fullest, it keeps my intense desire to live alive.

There is this memorable quote in the latest Rocky movie (Rock is talking to his son here):

"You let people stick a finger in your face and tell you you're no good. And when

things got hard, you started looking for something to blame, like a big shadow. Let me tell you something you already know. The world ain't all sunshine and rainbows. It's a very mean and nasty place and I don't care how tough you are, it will beat you to your knees and keep you there permanently if you let it. You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get it and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done! Now if you know what you're worth then go out and get what you're worth. But ya gotta be willing to take the hits, and not pointing fingers saying you ain't where you wanna be because of him, or her, or anybody! Cowards do that and that ain't you! You're better than that!"

It ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. Having realized that is the very essence of being a T-man.

A common reaction to being encountered by adversity is to become a cynic. Don't. Patrice, my dear friend, would have more reason to disgustfully look at the world as a place filled with irony and bad jokes – most of them on him. But he doesn't. He still is the humble, yet life-loving man I've known for almost two decades. He still tries to get better every single day; be it a better husband, friend, employee or athlete.

A common reaction to getting a terrible stroke of fate is to somehow "pay it back". Usually that means rage, violence, vandalism. Don't. This will not make things better, but worse. It will not enrich your life nor will it help you forget. The only thing that can heal that wounded soul is love. And you'll only get love if you spread it.

That's what Patrice is doing. He spreads love and good feelings. When we said good night last Monday before we headed back to our beloved wives (fi-

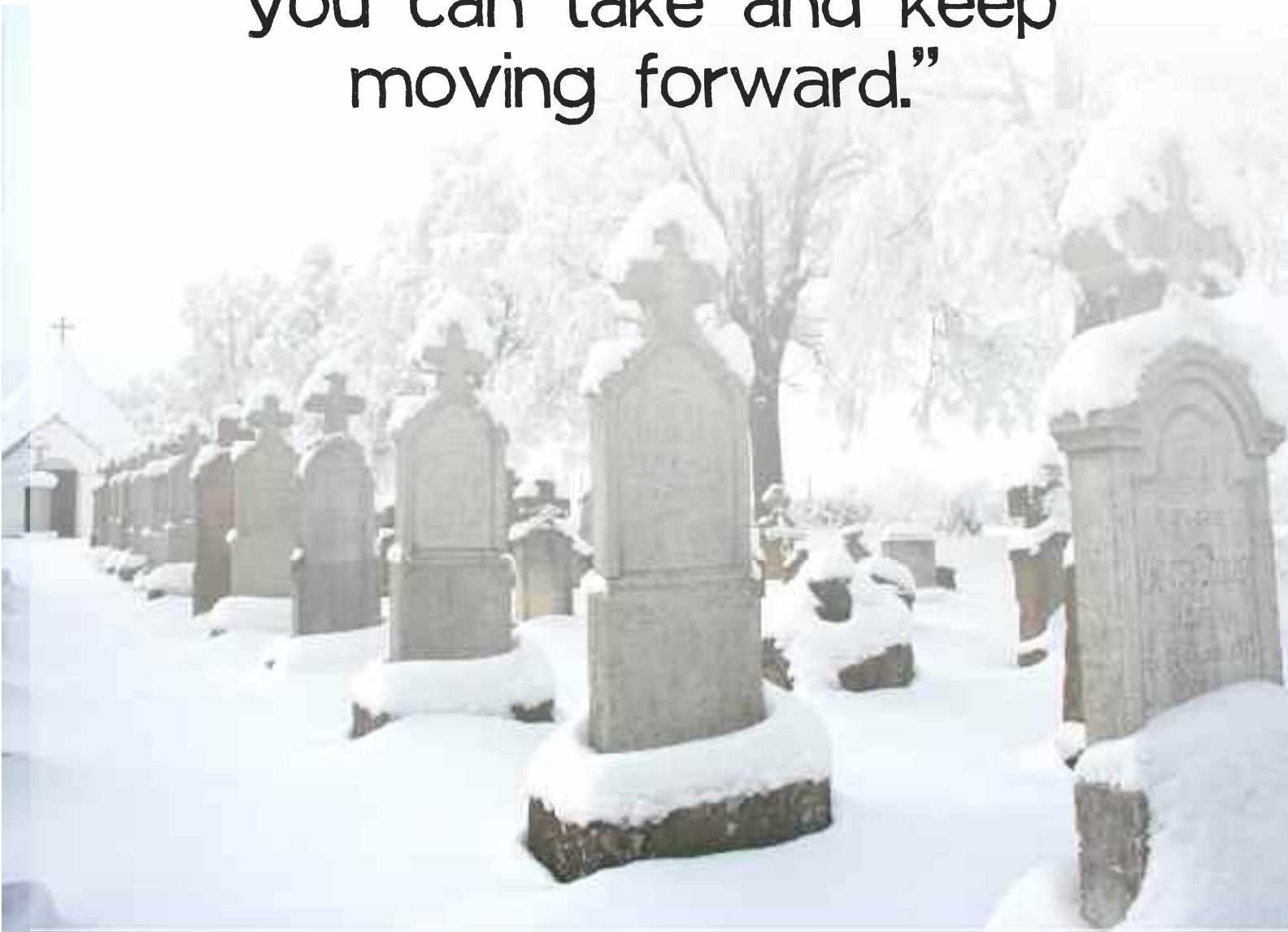
ancé, in my case...), he gave me a hug, told me that I'll be fine and that I can be very proud of myself. Man, this evening should have been all about him. Not me. But he gave me the feeling of being something special, of being understood and loved. The ability to do that is a blessing, and the most sacred thing on Earth.

Now, you know that adversity will strike again. Sooner or later, it will. In the meantime, do me and yourself and the world a favour and live like you really mean it. Find someone to love and fill as many as possible lives with joy and happiness. Laugh, cheer, play more, chase butterflies and dream at both nights and days.

Choose your battles wisely, and accept the fact that some will choose you. No matter what, stand up, stand tall, persist, defend.

Yours, ParagonA

"You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get it and keep moving forward. How much you can take and keep moving forward."



the art of ukeme

text ROBERT PANE

Take the story of Joe. Trains regularly at the local dojo, knows his kata, scores well in kumite. However one day for no reason he gets king hit and goes down hard. He wonders what went wrong. Where was his training when he needed it? Has it all been a waste of time?

But there is no need for Joe to soul search and doubt his ability, he just needs to know "how" to get hit and that's where the teachings of ninjutsu can be instructive. Despite the fact that ninjas are pretty darn hard to see let alone lay one down on them, they have mastered the art of receiving or Ukeme, and it is on this aspect of the art I'd like to share some thoughts.

So what is Ukeme and can it be applied to self development? Well, ask yourself, have you encountered something unexpected and been knocked down (physically or literally) and had to pick yourself up? Perhaps you wished you could have lessened the impact, maybe even turned it to your advantage. Well understanding Ukeme can provide the grounding you need.

Quite simply, Ukeme is the art of receiving. In ninjutsu it's how we react when our opponent attacks, when we are ready and when we are not. It is how we turn an attack to anything we want. Note

that a ninja is always in control however it may look from the outside, it's all part of the magic.

Ukeme is about completing the attack, the yin to the yang. Most people when they learn to fight they get one sided instruction. How to punch, kick or throw their opponent. Counter-attacks then become mechanical rather than adaptive to the emerging situation. But an important part of training and fighting is how to be on the other side, how to take that punch, kick or throw for only then can you truly understand how to protect your life regardless of what is thrown at you.

From a self development perspective Ukeme is then how we receive what the world brings. It is how we turn a negative event like verbal abuse, disappointment or even physical attack to our advantage or at the very least, to make it less painful. From a positive perspective, it is also how we react to the opportunities we experience in life and ensure that we can hold on to them.

Applying Ukeme — The Unexpected Attack

It's just not practical to always be on-guard. No person can remain at a high level of attack-readiness without

stress eventually breaking you down. With good situational awareness we give ourselves a chance, but how else can we deal with the unexpected?

Enter the ninja. From an unexpected attack this fearless warrior will instinctively move away while shielding the blow as best possible. However this is not the classical 'roll with the punches' scenario. A ninja has options:

Where there is no chance of avoidance then **lessen the impact**. It's about giving yourself the option to fight back and you can't do this if you're knocked out. The combination of increasing the distance away from the opponent, going with the flow of the attack and offering up a body part that can take a hit is the initial response. This needs to be automatic as any thought will take precious seconds from your escape window and increase the probability of being overwhelmed.

Change the timing. Somewhere between "what the" and feeling the sting of pain, you need to alter the attack speed and control the next outcome. A typical fighting system advises block then counter-strike, a 1-2 approach. Ninjutsu cuts out a step and makes every block a strike, so now you're ahead by 1 and this allows for -

What's your **next move** or **where is your**

out? Your choice, either a counter with overwhelming force or the cut and run.

So now you've turned around an unexpected assault by knowing to first receive it, then take control of the attack speed. But how does this change if it's expected? Please read on.

Applying Ukeme – The Expected Attack

In most cases the start of an attack sequence is pretty easy to spot. It could begin with an altercation or hearing the less than subtle "I'm going to knock your f**king head off". So you've been given some warning but what do you do? Do you shape up Queensberry rules style or do you do what a ninja does – nothing. Yes that's right nothing – for anything else would be telegraphing your level of capability (i.e. I am a boxer) or your next move (i.e. I am going to fight.)

When faced with an expected attack, a ninja would blend their Ukeme with the environment they are in. On the battlefield it would be a quick kill and move on but in today's society that is not encouraged. Your environment will necessarily dictate your response – for example, had you noticed the attacker's mates moving in to give him a helping hand? Or that security is closing in and their faces indicate that it will end badly. Or even that attractive girl in the corner,

looking decidedly impressed with your ability to handle the situation?

So following the same routine as before, we have this example of applying Ukeme:

Lessen the impact – we may still want the attacker to hit us but now it is a controlled hit, one more for effect than causing any actual damage. Again this is done by moving with the flow and letting the attack strike a part of the body you choose. Here the ninja may also project fear, cower or even groan as if in intense pain. The purpose is twofold:

Firstly, we want to create in the attacker's mind a sense of victory – that they have overcome us and the fight is over. This is in essence ninja mind control, you allow the attacker to believe they have won but only because you put the thought there. The attacker sensing victory becomes less wary and complacent to a counter-attack.

Secondly, to any outside observers you appear to be the victim of an unprovoked attack. This makes your next steps appear to be an act of self defence rather than a calculated move to entrap your opponent.

Change the timing. As before we want to master the attack's timing, but instead

of just trying to take evasive steps to protect your life, you are already a step ahead by anticipating the attack and are pre-positioned for your deadly counter-strike. Furthermore, that sense of victory you created will briefly distract the attacker before they fully commit to the final blow giving you an extra moment of time.

Now your **next move** becomes much simpler and you'd be surprised at how time virtually stands still when you are in control of the situation. By presenting yourself as a helpless target you can direct the way the attack will occur. By giving that sense of victory and creating that pause, you impel the attacker to commit more fully to the attack. Once the attacker moves past the point of no return, they cannot effectively defend against your counter. Your ability to receive the attack has saved your skin.

Application to Self Development

Proper Ukeme teaches us that knowing how to receive an attack is just as important as knowing how to initiate one. It benefits us in learning the art as we are able to train close to live fight intensity in the knowledge that you won't incapacitate your training partner (or to later cope it double when it's your turn).

But there are other benefits. By developing that first response to protecting your life at the onset of an attack we create options. We first create the option

to survive having not been defeated in the initial onslaught. Then we create the option of taking control. Finally, we create the option of assessing our next move, as the situation may not call for a brutal response: we may simply want to subdue or avoid.

The philosophy behind Ukeme should be a key part of your self development – that is, how to properly receive what life throws at you. There have been many a person who blessed with a golden opportunity loses everything by being unable to accept what is happening to them. Try to not let this happen to you.

From a self development perspective I therefore recommend the following:

Consciously acknowledge the receipt of every challenge, threat, disappointment, gift or great opportunity. It's important to recognise that something has been thrust on to you. Don't be caught in the "what the..." and "why this is happening to me". These reactions are for later when you're self reflecting on the events

Lessen the impact – if you are in danger take immediate steps to protect your life and minimise the damage to your body (physically or mentally). Even when the event is good, lessening the impact means not letting the euphoria overwhelm you to point where you act irrationally (i.e. boastfully, arrogantly, or embarking on actions you'll later regret)

Control the timing – if it's happening too fast for you, find a means to break the flow or to pause the proceedings. This is the "deflect" or "direct" stage. Where an event is just too much for you to handle you would use its momentum to deflect it aside – say to a trusted aide or in a direction where it will naturally dissipate. Alternatively, you may recognise the opportunity and draw in it to yourself by directing how and when it will occur.

What are your options – having survived the initial event and created a break in time, your next task is to develop and assess options. Here it is important to match your response to the environment you are in – for example an unexpected gift might see you grateful, or a drunken friend who's just taken a swing at you might see you subdue and then take action to protect their life.

Finally Ukeme is a study that takes daily practice. We sometimes become too reactive in our fast paced lives and disproportionately respond to events we later regret. However, by understanding how to "receive" life we can improve the odds of achieving our goals. You will not always get Ukeme right but with time and perseverance it is possible to master it.

The author can be contacted at harrynemo@hotmail.com

"Consciously acknowledge the receipt of every challenge, threat, disappointment, gift or great opportunity. It's important to recognise that something has been thrust on to you. Don't be caught in the 'what the...' and 'why this is happening to me'. These reactions are for later when you're self reflecting on the events."





DO YOU APPRECIATE WOMEN?

**I mean, truly appreciate their existence in this world?
In this article, I will be debunking a few of the common
“pick-up community myths”, and offering an alternative
perspective on how to be more successful with women.
The article is part of my Mindfull Masculinity programme,
go to undercover-coaching.com to learn more.**

By: Christina Melanie Cooper

Mindfull masculinity begins with appreciating the feminine aspect of life. Not “wanting” to “get” more “pussy”, but truly appreciating the female essence.

This may sound counter-intuitive to some, and you may be asking “is not the idea of cultivating masculinity to become more male?” Is it not a question of starting to appreciate being a Man, and not try to be a wussy, effeminite, touchyfeely, non-sexually aggressive “always the best-friend-never-the-lover” real MAN?”

Yes. And being a real Man, requires acceptance, appreciation and adoration of the female essence. So let me start by unfolding what I mean by female essence as the term may seem rather vague. Really it's basically nothing more than viewing

women first and foremost as people who just happen to be carrying the feminine aspect of life as their biological gender.

Without women, there would not be life. All of us, come into existence, because we were carried around and nurtured for nine months by one woman. That woman is your mother, and for all the things you resent her for doing, not doing and generally being a nuisance, without her, you would not be.

But without men, there would not be life either. All of us, come into existence, because we were created from a single egg that merged with a single cell of sperm, coming from one man. That man is your father, and for all the things you resent him for

doing, not doing and generally being a nuisance, without him, you would not be.

Now this may seem a truism, and why am I even saying this?

Because we tend to forget, that women are not the creators of life. Women are co-creators of life. We also tend to forget, that men are not just “donors” of sperm. Men are co-creators of life.

This is part of the beef I have with the evo-psych theories of the nature of relationships between men and women. Evo-psych all too easily reduces men to sperm-donors. Beings whose primary purpose in life, is to donate as much sperm to as many women as possible, because it's within “the nature of the male” to impregnate as many females as he can. Whereas the woman, well see her sole purpose in life is to find the best genetic material that will ensure strong offspring, and to find a provider that will take care of her and the offsprings basic needs. And it need not be the same man.

“Honoring you own true masculine essence is first of all – not reducing yourself to a spermdonor. Realizing, that in essence, you are the co-creator of life. You'll need a woman to carry that life around for you, before it evolves into another human being, but still. You are the co-creator of life.”

According to the pop-version of hardcore evolutionary psychology, at least.

Honoring you own true masculine essence is first of all – not reducing yourself to a spermdonor. Realizing, that in essence, you are the co-creator of life. You'll need a woman to carry that life around for you, before it evolves into another human being, but still. You are the co-creator of life. Like potential kinetic energy, stored in a coil of conductive material, ready to be released at your will.

Think about that for a moment.

What resonates more deeply with you:

“I am a man, therefore my nature is to seek to impregnate as many females as possible”

or:


“I am a man. I am the co-creator of life”.

THE PICK-UP ARTISTS MINDSET

Now a lot of the “self-improvement” books out there, and almost all of the bullshit that is sold as “pick-up advice”, is based on this first idea. That men, by nature, seek to spread their seed. And women, by nature, seek to weed out any less genetically fit material from the genepool, by NOT having sex with “beta” or “omega” males.

Therefore, the theory goes, as a man – you need to display qualities of “the ALPHA male”. Yes indeed. You need to display, that you are genetically fit. Because if you don't, you won't get laid. Why? Because, the theory says, women are hardwired to respond positively towards men who display characteristics of being “alpha”.

And therefore, the theory says, if you don't appear to be an “alpha male”, she ain't gonna want to sleep with you. She may want to be your friend though. And she may also want to have you as a “provider”, for the offspring that is not yours.



“I say: What a load of abso-fucking-lutely pure and utter bollocks!”

But sexually? She's not going to want you in that way. Oh, don't blame her, the theory says. Don't blame HER, because she is merely responding to you, in accordance with her female nature. She can't help it. So, the theory says, when YOU display those characteristics – of the “alpha male”? She is going to be rendered absolutely helpless. She will not be able to resist you, because she is hardwired to respond to the “alpha male”, by wanting to have sex with him, so that she may get those super-fit alpha male seeds.

And the PU-bullshit then goes on to tell you, that this is why it is good to be “pre-selected” by other women, when you are seeking to impress one or more of them. Because, like, if you are already having sex with other women, then you must have “good genes”. So the theory says
Oh yeah, sure, modern day women use

contraceptives. Most women in their 20's aren't looking for someone to settle down and have kids with, like – now. But her essence, the theory says, her very nature as a woman, is to respond to the presence of an alpha male, by getting sexually aroused.

Or so the theory says.

I say:

What a load of abso-fucking-lutely pure and utter bollocks!

While research findings in the area of human sexuality do suggest, that women respond to certain bodytypes and certain facial features more on certain times in their menstrual cycle than others, it does not in any way suggest, that her mind goes out of the window, when she meets a man who is wearing nine inch platform shoes, a



big fuzzy hat, and does cardtricks whilst talking about how he wrestled a lion and lived to tell the tale.

She may find him interesting. That does not mean, that she finds him attractive. She may find him attractive, but that does not mean, that she is feeling aroused by him. And even if she is feeling aroused by him, it does not mean that she actually is going to have sex with him, now.

And here's the thing:

Evo-psych "Pick Up Artist" bullcrap tells you another big fat lie: That women are "hardwired" to NOT be promiscuous.

Why? Oh, well – see, the theory says – for a woman, having sex can be rather expensive. Because she may end up getting knocked up, and you know, carrying around a foetus for nine months aint exactly a stroll in the park, so she has to be very carefull not to get pregnant. Therefore, the theory says, women dont just fuck around.

Men on the other hand, well – you can just find 'em fuck 'em and forget 'em, without ever having to worry about the cost. If you dont want to be a father, you can just leave. So, in order to get a woman to have a onenight stand with you, you kinda have

to work around her "built-in hardwiring". Oh yeah, the theory says, women dont naturally seek onenight stands (except for the real slutty ones) so therefore you need to apply some sneaky tactics, in order for her to .. oh but hang on a second. Were women not "rendered helpless" in the presence of an "alpha male"? Oh no, wait – I forgot. The theory also says, that women are "hardwired" to want relationships. So you see, as an "alpha male" you have to constantly be on guard, because the women you sleep with are like – or so the theory says – allways going to want to convert you into a boyfriend, ie a "provider". Oh yes, she will you know, and it may not be at first, but it's only a matter of time. Yeah. Because women are hardwired to want security, and men are wired to want variety. Ergo – women are not wired to be promiscuous.


Boom, flaw in logic solved.

But hang on a second, if women are hardwired to seek the best sperm, would having sex with a lot of different men not be the best way to ensure that? I mean, we all read "Sperm Wars" right? So, when a woman is fertile, would it not make much more sense, from an evolutionary perspective, to have sex with as many men as possible, so that the sperm that did reach the egg, would have to be stronger than not just all the others from the batch, but it would have to fight its way through a whole sea of other men's sperms?

Hm, I wonder if that is why women have evolved to be able to have sex right after reaching orgasm, and men kinda have to work at it to gain that skill? Well, I'll leave that hypothesis hanging.

It is, as with any other evolutionary psychology-theory, only a hypothesis.

An unverified and unverifiable hypothesis.



And most of the unverifiable theories out there, are complete bollocks. So nevermind the bollocks, lets get back to appreciating women.

A HEALTHIER PERSPECTIVE?

Now what do you think it would do to the way in which you relate to women, if your reality was this: "I appreciate women, for being co-creators of life" Instead of "OMG I really want to get laid. Like now".

Why do you think women panic, when their biological clocks starts ticking audibly, and they know, that within a very foreseeable, and very real timeframe, they will have lost the opportunity to procreate, because nature is designed in such a way that there is this thing called the menopause?

It's an odd word, because "pause" implies, that it is something temporary. But all women know that this is not the case. Menopause is an irreversible state. From then on, it's no more monthly discharge, no more monthly period of being fertile. No more female essence.

Men on the other hand, well they can procreate almost until the day they stop breathing. It may not be advisable to father a child when you're 80, but you do have the option.

Women, past 50 – don't.

But here's the interesting thing. When women are no longer fertile, their sexuality changes. Some women lose interest in sex altogether, whilst others find an immense freedom, in not having their sexuality tied together with possible procreation. Men don't have that opportunity, because you can pretty much still procreate, even after you've reached middle-agedness, and testosterone levels start to go down. It may not be as easy, but it's still possible.

Some women, report that for the first time, after their menopause has started, they have been able to enjoy a more spiritual form of sexuality, because they realize, that as women they are more than just "mothers" or potential mothers. They are also beings of drivenness towards intimate connections and pleasure.

Of course, as a woman, one need not wait until menopause to gain this realization. Because in reality, we are all, men and women – transgender, gay, straight or bi - beings of drivenness towards intimate connections and pleasure, all the while also being human animals with the desire to create, co-create and procreate.

Procreation is only one of many ways of creating. A pretty damn fundamental one, but still. It is not

“Procreation is only one of many ways of creating. A pretty damn fundamental one, but still. It is not the only way in which to express our desire to re-create ourselves in co-creation with others.”

the only way in which to express our desire to re-create ourselves in co-creation with others.

As human beings, we create and co-create our existence, our life and construct our reality in co-creation with other human beings. We constantly create and re-create our own experience of existence.

When we adapt and learn new skillsets, we are creating new levels of opportunity for ourselves. When a shift in our fundamental paradigms occur, we are re-creating the possible ways in which we interact with the world around us.

We co-create reality, constantly –though interaction. We create life as we breathe.

TRUE SELF-AWARENESS

Cultivating mindful masculinity is being aware of the basic life force energy that penetrates every living being, and allows us to be co-creators of life. With every breath you are penetrated in your very essence by the basic life force energy.

Did I just say penetrate? Yes, I did. We tend to think of “penetration” as being something inherently masculine. But in reality, penetration is

merely the action of something moving through or into something else. It just so happens, that penetrating is also what the male sexual organ is designed to do, when we engage in sexual activity.

Of course, this is not the only thing the male sexual organ can do – but it has pretty much evolved to do this one activity very well.

But what does it mean, that we are all constantly being penetrated in our very essence by basic life force energy? It means, that just by being alive and breathing, creation is happening constantly within you until the day you stop breathing altogether. We know, that new cells are constantly being created and re-created in our physical bodies. Our minds are constantly forming new patterns and connections. We also know, that at the same time, we are dying a little bit every day, every hour, and every second.

Have you ever thought about the fact, that when you are 30, most likely at least a third of your entire life, has already passed?

Probably you have. Most of us, from time to time, stop and think “damn. Another year has passed. Now I am one year closer to the day I will die”.



Oh, happy birthday btw. Now blow out those candles, and make a wish. But if you say it out loud, it won't come true.

We think, that by not acknowledging the fact, that we have already died a thousand times, and when the lights do go out for good, we have in fact not reached the time of our death, but rather we have reached the time where we can no longer die anymore.

Accepting, realizing and taking seriously the very real fact of life, that it will end – is at the core of creating a life of living your fullest potential.

The forces of life and death are constantly at play within your very beings. There is no solidity to life. The only constant is change. Your body is not solid, your body is constantly creating and re-creating itself.

Your thoughts and your sense of “self” is in a state of constant flux and movement.

Your “self” is no more solid and permanent, than your physical body. Although very conveniently, our sense of “self” is experienced as being separate from other “selves”.

Paradoxically, our sense of “self” is what allows us to connect with others. We cannot co-create without a sense of self and other. We are driven

towards intimate connections, because within the experience of an intimate connection with another “self” we are co-creating an experience of reality where the whole is larger than the sum of its parts.

If we did not have this sense of separation, or our “ego” - we could not interact with others. We would not be able to experience empathy. By the way, this is one of the reasons, why people who suffer from autism, are often incapable of understanding,

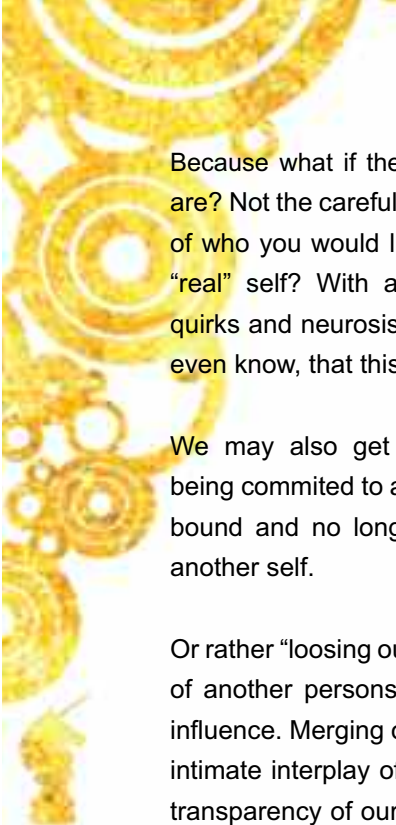
that other “selves” may not experience the same reality as they do. Because autism is, among other things, a state of low self-awareness.

“Your Self is no more solid and permanent, than your physical body. Although very conveniently, our sense of ‘Self’ is experienced as being separate from other Selves.”

Intimate connections have the power of transforming our consciousness, we gain a heightened sense of awareness, when engaging in acts of intimate connection. Sex is one of the ways in which we can relate intimately with other selves.

And sex is one of the ways in which we can connect with our own selves - our sense of self is reflected in the other. Or rather: our reflected self is co-created through the action of being connected to the other. Which I suppose is why sometimes, being connected to another person in a more structured form, in a relationship, can be both a desired but also terrifying thought.

**“We may
also get terrified at
the possibility, of being
committed to another
person. Being bonded,
bound and no longer
free of boundaries set
by another Self.”**



Because what if the other, realizes who we “truly” are? Not the carefully crafted and created persona of who you would like to be more like – but your “real” self? With all its flaws and oddities and quirks and neurosis? Well, first of all, how do you even know, that this is your “real self”?

We may also get terrified at the possibility, of being committed to another person. Being bonded, bound and no longer free of boundaries set by another self.

Or rather “loosing our Selves” when becoming part of another persons sphere of consciousness and influence. Merging our “selves” with another in the intimate interplay of two separate selves, lets the transparency of our own egos be seen for what it is. A convenient illusion.

Within the warm fuzzy feeling of security and freedom from loneliness that comes with commitment, can also be the fear of not being completely free to do whatever you want, whenever you want and with whomever you choose to do it with. Are we ever really free to do that anyway? Of course not, it requires a level of cooperation from whom ever we want to – you know, do.

Both men and women experience these terrifying thoughts, when entering a committed relationship.

Only most women, only talk about this with other women, and some don’t even want to do that. Our cultural memes have told us, that women are really not supposed to have these kinds of basic human emotions, of being afraid to be limited in our choices and variety.

WHAT DO WOMEN REALLY WANT?

Women all want relationships, remember? Or so the theory says, and most women believe, that there must be something wrong with THEM, not the theory or the cultural meme, when they panic at the altar. When they look at their prince charming standing there, holding the ring that symbolizes that from now on, this is it.

This is the face that you will be waking up to, every fucking single morning for the rest of your life. It’s a nice face, but every single morning? Good lord what have I done. And they look to their single friends, sitting there with their high heels and the anticipatory smiles on their faces, because after the ceremony there’s the reception. And every girl knows, that wedding receptions are always great places to hook up with single guys for an evening of pure undiluted fun. No strings, no rings, just a string quartet, some canapees and a condom in her fashionably sequined clutchbag.

Oh sure, some women just cant wait to “get married”. Some women have the entire production planned out, and the string quartet booked three years in advance, the second after the guy she met for coffee said “I do” when she asked him whether he wants to meet her Friday night for dinner at eight.

Yes, they exist. But just because she’s in a hurry to walse down the aisle in a big poofy whirlwind of white, does that mean she aint getting off to fantasies about the guy who’s going to clean the pool at the house she’d like her future husband to finance? Of course not.

Does it mean, she’s never going to actually DO the guy she just met at the local coffeeshop, striking up a casual conversation with the question “who lies more – men or women?”. Of course not.

“As human beings, we all desire to experience that most intimate of connections that will allow us to LET GO of our sense of self-seperateness, in the reflection of another.”

It just means, that she longs for belonging to a part of an intimate connection with someone else. And she has bought the cultural meme, of marriage being the vessel that will once and for all facilitate and secure the future of that intimacy.

As human beings, we all desire to experience that most intimate of connections that will allow us to LET GO of our sense of self-seperateness, in the reflection of another.

Some realize, that when that first rush of dopamine, adrenaline and oxytocin has faded, and the reality of everyday life emerges in all its saggy-assed underwear and smelly socks glory, it can be a little challenging, to re-ignite that sense of new territory being explored.

It can be a little challenging to your “ideal Self”, to see your “Monday Morning Self” being reflected in that other person. Fortunately, or unfortunately – depending on your perspective – that is exactly what is needed for an intimate connection to really deepen and expand...

THE LESSER KNOWN SECRET OF GETTING ONE-NIGHT-STANDS

So it may be, that one chooses to seek only the good parts, the first part – and leave, when the night is over, and the light returns, and if you stay, you'll see that the vibrant shiny glossy surface of



the girl you pulled at the club, looks every bit like a Monday morning, and Friday is only five nights away, so... you go for another night in shining amour, where you dont have to worry about the girl ever seeing your “true Self” and you sure as hell dont have to worry about seeing hers.

Or you may choose to adapt a lifestyle of “no-strings-attached” casual girlfriending, where you can feel like a real Man, because hey, they all know, that you’re not exclusively theirs, and they dont mind because you have “set the frame”. Or so you may delude yourself. Because in reality, a lot of women, who aren’t in the market for “anything serious” enjoy having the option of gettin’ some

with a guy they know can provide the goods for her to get off, without her having to be tied down to that one single option herself.

And is that not completely wonderful? Think about it. There are women out there, who just want to have fun. They don't care about your "genes" or whether you'd be a good "provider" or whether you'll remember her birthday, favourite flower or even the colour of her eyes. They just care about whether you can penetrate her reality for as long as it takes for her to forget "herself" and just seek pleasure in the moment. You don't need "special game" in order to get with these girls.

You don't need to apply some secret killer "hard-wire short circuiting onenightstand routine".

You just need to acknowledge the fact, that ALL women love good sex and some women prefer to have good sex without a string-quartet playing somewhere in the background of the near future.

At least not with you...

"c'mon lets go".

But other than that – there is no "secret" to "getting one-nightstands" or ONS.

Oh yeah. There is one. Don't fuck her again. Because if you do, it's no longer considered a one-nightstand. And if you're looking to get your score-count up as high as possible, then you'd better stop doing them again.

HAVING STANDARDS AND ASKING WHY

You may not place much value on having a "high score count", in which case there is no reason as to why you shouldn't get with random girl again, after all – if she meets your standards for someone you would want to exchange bodily fluids with, she's probably good enough for more than ehm – one GO. Right ?

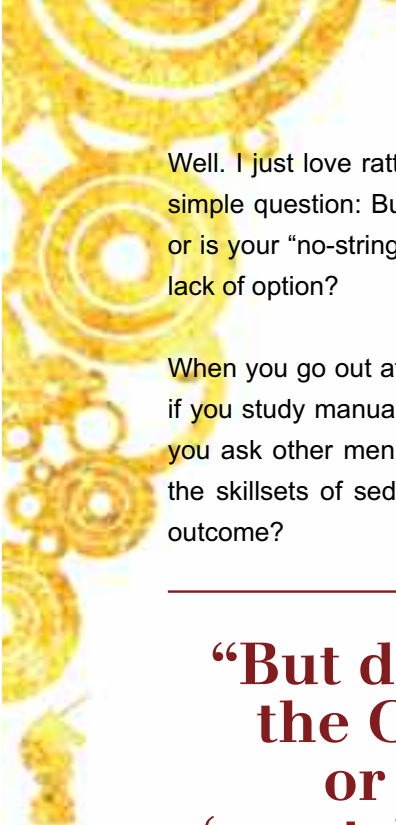
Or do you apply different standards for ONS and others for long term material? Do you even have standards for ONS?

“You just need to acknowledge the fact, that ALL women love good sex and some women prefer to have good sex without a string-quartet playing somewhere in the background of the near future.”

And then, you need to know how to recognize her when you see her. You need to be able to capture and lead her imagination, so that she chooses to play with you, before the next random guy comes along with card-tricks and a big fluffy hat.

You need to be able to utter the three magic words:

Guys who like to brag about how many ONS they are "getting" and how adept they are at "escaping the trap of commitment" by managing to sneak out the door before she wakes up, or just be the kind of guy who "sets the frame from the beginning", so that the girl knows, that there will be "only sex".



Well. I just love rattling their cages by asking the simple question: But do you have the CHOICE – or is your “no-strings policy” just another word for lack of option?

When you go out at night, looking to “hook up” or if you study manuals on “how to pick up girls”, or you ask other men for advice on how to pick up the skillsets of seduction – what is your desired outcome?

“But do you have the CHOICE – or is your ‘no-strings policy’ just another word for lack of option?”

Is it to “be a Man” and show the world how much of an “Alpha Male” you are, because you can pick, choose and dump at your will?

Is it to get immediate pleasure and satisfaction from shooting your load down some girls throat and not have to use your hand?

Is it the playing aspect of seduction – the flirty vibe and the not really knowing whether it’s on, before you’ve gotten off?

Or is it a deep yearning for that intimate connection that allows you merge your consciousness in co-creation with another human being, reflecting your own “female essence” in the moment of

surrendering in the arms of a woman whom you adore?

And if you answered YES to the first two – can you honestly say, that you have “standards”? (other than “having a pulse”).

Or, are you merely performing an act that might as well be fulfilled by a oblong piece of latex, with or without vibration?

“Oh but wait – if I have to be mindfull of who I mix my bodily fluids with, and not just jump anything in a skirt, because she is there, willing and able - does that not limit my choices?”

Yes. It does. And any self-respecting Man knows, that true masculine power is not about how many women he can “get”. It’s about how FEW women he actually would want to surrender to, because he knows that he is much more than just a walking dildo with a pair of hands.

The Mindfull Male knows, that part of truly appreciating a woman is paying homage to her nature as a sexual being, not being a slave to it. And in doing so, he pays homage to his own being. Knowing how to walk the line between devotion, desire and dominance. Balancing appreciation, aggression and adoration. The Mindfull Male is passionate, but never possessive.

The seduction community talks about “being the Prize” - and playing “hard to get”. You only ever need to “play hard to get”, when you in reality are too easy. You only ever need to tell yourself, that a woman is “lucky to be with you”, when you dont really believe that to be the case.

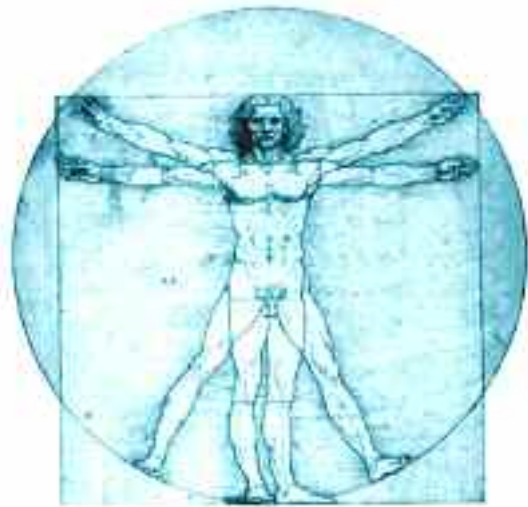
When you are balanced in your own sense of Self, know where you are going, what kind of woman you are compatible with and perhaps even why – you don’t need to worry about “how to get more

girls". Study communication and seduction, by all means. Those are valuable skillsets to have as a Man.

Just dont be fooled into thinking, that knowing how to talk women out of their clothes and into your bed is going to provide you with more "self-esteem" or sense of "self-worth" than you have to begin with.

“Just dont be fooled into thinking, that knowing how to talk women out of their clothes and into your bed is going to provide you with more ‘self-esteem’ or sense of ‘self-worth’ than you have to begin with.”

And it is certainly NOT going to teach you how to truly appreciate women, if your starting point is that of secretly hating women for not "giving you any". If anything, the myths, memes and mindsets of of the "pick-up artist" movement in its most miserable forms, is only going to provide you with "proof" of the assumption, that all women are sluts – it's just a question of using the right opener, the right "technique" and making sure, that she never sees your "actual self".



IN CONCLUSION

I actually like the word "player" because to me, seduction is very much an **inter-play**. If it is not fun and flirty, what's the point ?

But playing can also mean "game" - and game is another word for the target of meat with legs or wings you point at with a riffle, when going for a good hunt. This is why, I dont like the term "gaming a woman". But the term "inner game", however does make a lot of sense, when viewed from the perspective of interplay between inner male/inner female.

In both Jungian psychology and Tantric philosophy, the idea of the inner male/inner female is a key parameter in understanding human relationships, as well as understanding ourselves.

Understanding and daring to explore what "female archetypes" you as a Man are mostly attracted to, is key in understanding your patterns of relationships and understanding your Self.

“What if, whenever you were ‘seducing a woman’, in reality, you were seducing your Self?”

TRY THIS ON FOR SIZE: What if, whenever you were “seducing a woman”, in reality – you were seducing your Self ? What if, the way in which you choose relate to women as a Man, could provide you with valuable insights on the way you relate to your Self?

Think about it. It is a matter of perspective whether you choose to view women as “targets” that need to be “hunted down” and the memory of them kept as trophies in your mind to boost your ego, or you choose to view women as beings of co-creation

and reflections of your own “inner female”.

The perspective and mindset you choose, will determine the level of happiness you experience and achieve in your relationships with women, whether they are longterm, brief or both.

And like everything else, it all starts from within. Do you truly appreciate women? If you are the least bit unsure, start by appreciating LIFE and celebrate all the ways in which you co-create your existence in relation with others...

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Download the mp3 version at
undercover-coaching.com

Are you a text ParagonA magic seeker?

Are you trying to find the right exercise program, diet or miracle pill that will give you a fit body tomorrow?

Are you looking for that magical potion to make you look lean and healthy and possibly 10 years younger while you are not even concerned with eating right and moving your ass to the gym several times a week?

How about expensive cosmetics? Do you think all those creams and lotions will make your wrinkles disappear overnight? Or your cellulite go away for good?

Do you read shiny lifestyle magazines for their "great advice"?

Do you read books that promise to teach you how to make a fortune? Do you subscribe to financial newsletters with those great investment tips à la "Plus 300% in ten days! No Risk involved! Guaranteed!" *Legal Disclaimer: This is not a guarantee."

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, well, you are a magic seeker.

It seems to me like the vast majority of people is constantly looking for miracles, magic potions and shortcuts.

The truth is that there aren't any.

Let me give you an example from my personal experience as a strength and nutritional coach. Most people are in complete denial that exercising and eating right consistently over a long (pronounce it: loooooooooong) period of time is the only way to be fit, and to have a stunning body that looks good naked.

They either try fancy diet programs back to back, which work exactly three weeks before you rather shit into your

cabbage soup instead of eating it, or they continue stopping at McDonald's several times a week, they skip breakfast and only have a bowl of Kellogg's Special K's at night. Sure, it is very possible to lose weight eating crappy food, or to maintain your weight while eating crap. It is very well possible to maintain a certain scale number and actually look like a bag of shit. Jeeebus, the scale just gives you a number. Skinny models very often have very high bodyfat percentages. This is why I call them skinny fat.

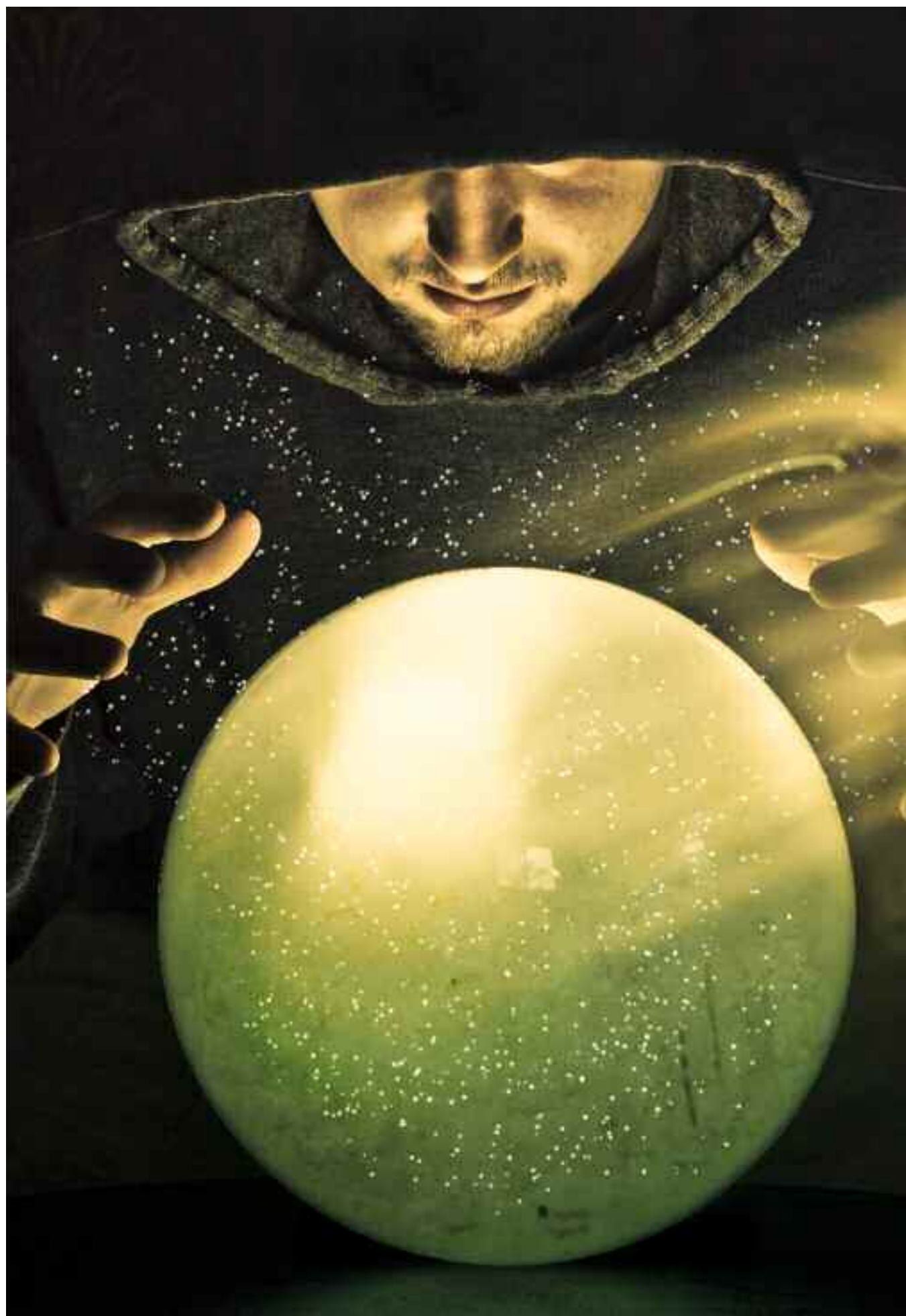
The only way to get a great body, an efficient, healthy, powerful, beautiful body is to be very, very consistent with

diet and exercise. Eat lots of healthy foods and nothing but, hit the weight room 4 or 5 times a week and trade your running shoes with a gym membership with good conscience. Jogging will make you a better jogger. And not much else, really.

Don't ask a fitness coach for advice, by the way. They are all full of shit. "Do one set of ten reps for each bodypart" is not even in the vicinity of good advice. It's horseshit.

What do we call this? An inconvenient truth. Or the ugly truth.

Oh, I already hear people complain that



working out regularly, doing intense cardio work, and eating grilled chicken every day is so very boring...

This is the stupidest excuse not to eat right or lift weights or do interval training sessions ever, anyway!

Oh really? You poor little baby are bored working out? You are bored downing a can of tuna every night? Well, no shit, it is boring. I've done so many exciting things in my life so far, like long trips with my motorbike in foreign countries, fantastic adventurous vacations, and, one time or another, some pretty exciting things in the bedroom, too. So many thrilling, joyful, bodacious things. Working out is certainly not one of them. This is something I do on a regular (for me this means daily) basis to keep myself healthy, fit, happy and sane.

But I digress...

Let me tell you something else: You'll never be rich. You'll never be pushing the Bentleys like P.Diddy does (Diddy? Daddy? Don't know how he's calling himself these days), you'll never get Will Smith's paychecks. You want money? Work. Want some more? Work some more. Study some more. Get better at what you are doing. Try harder. And please, stop the bloody lamentations.

Try to be happy with what you have, rather than frustrated about what you haven't.

The grass is always greener on your neighbour's side of the fence? Well then, stop bullshitting and honking on your own lawn!

Don't invest your money in fancy financial products, don't let yourself be blinded by some alluring promises of very high returns. You'll lose. Your

money, your sleep, your happiness, and in the worst cases even your friends, job, family, or even your life, or the way it used to be.

If something sounds too good to be true, it usually is.

There are two main human sins from which all the others derive: impatience and indolence.

Let's face it, most people are lazy. They live in their comfort zones and don't realize that this, in fact, is the most uncomfortable place to live. Most people complain about having too little time for exercise, and spend more than 20 hours a week staring into the boob tube.

We don't read or educate ourselves more than we have to. We don't move or sweat more than we have to.

How about patience? These days, if you can't get something within 30 seconds it's not worth it, right? How long do you think it'll take you to gain 5 pounds of muscle? One year if you are a total newbie to weight lifting, make it 3 or even 5 years if you are an experienced lifter. How long do you think it will take you to lose 20 pounds of fat and finally see that well-hidden six pack? Well, if you do everything right and follow a perfect nutrition and exercise program: 16 weeks. Make it never if you don't. How long do you think it'll take you to become a millionaire? Calculate yourself: If you put 10 000 bucks in a savings account every month, with an interest rate of 1.25% it will take you... Like... Forever!

Just the other day I read an article entitled "Fail fast!" in an American "life style" publication. The author was basically stating that if you start doing something and don't immediately get great rewards



from it, stop doing it. Let it go. Fail. Try something new.

Where for fuck's sake have all our values gone?

Nobody seems to know the meaning, purpose, or value of principles anymore. Everybody wants everything, at the same time, immediately. Our generation is more concerned with money, shallow Hollywood morals, hubris, fashion labels, and convenience food than with values. With divorce rates at an all-time high, surrounded by an army of quitters and testicle-less wannabes I see it's very easy to tell people to fail fast. That's what everybody is doing already anyway!

I am not saying you should bury any of your dreams or even stop trying new



stuff. Much the opposite, in fact. But don't adopt that whatever-attitude. "I tried [half-assed!], somehow didn't work out so well. Whateeeever..."

Don't be ignorant, either. If you did something a hundred times before in your life, like trying to lose weight with a stupid Hollywood diet, and it has never worked so far and always left you with even more jelly on your belly after all, why should it work the 101st time?

That is my exact definition of an idiot: someone who does the same damn thing over and over again, but expects a different result every single time!

Don't think that the good things come overnight. You want something? Work for it. Go for it. Be consistent, be passionate.

The fact that the whole world seems to be in search for miracle pills and magic advice as dogged as King Arthur and his gang was for the Holy Grail seems to be symptomatic for our time of lost values, and a society that forgot what it had originally been built on: principles. It's pretty ironic, if you think about it. There is no pill or lotion, hint, cheat or tip in the world that will make you a real man. A good man. A valuable, virtuous man. There are no shortcuts to building inner strength. Blindly following trends, shallow advice, or stupid rules won't make you a man. It will make you a robot, or better yet, something spineless, like a worm...

What makes you a man is making use of your backbone, and following your values and principles no matter what, given you have any! I tell you right here not to fail fast, but to be consistent, patient, humble and passionate.

Did I tell you about my 3-C-rule yet? It is universally applicable and leads to generally good, in the longer run even great results and profound satisfaction. Here it is:

- Consistency, consistency, consistency.

I have a 3-D rule, too:

- Discipline, discipline, discipline.

Works pretty well.

Since I'm throwing around striking phrases right now, and I don't see myself going back to any less emotional way of writing, here is another thing that is universally true:

- Basics are really best.

Stick to the basics. Be it a basic training program, a handful of basic moral principles, or even some very basic rules for a happy relationship. The basics will hardly let you down. Ever.

Don't seek for miracles. In life, the truly miraculous, majestic things happen to those who stand tall, are honest and don't bend. Do you know why? Because those are the people who eventually realize that the miracle is life itself, and that "happens" in every single moment. If you let it.

Life is very funny construct. It's more of a mental construct, rather than a physical one. People tend to see the world as a reflection of themselves, and, in a world of a tremendous amount of a steady flux of information - good information, very bad and wrong information, and just an unbearable bulk of general information - the world seems to be a better and more peaceful place to live, if you stick to some very basic cornerstones within yourself. Call them values or principles, beliefs or whatever you feel comfortable with.

Do stand for something. Have integrity. Love the one you're with, in good times, and in bad times. Do feared things first. Honour self-promises. Be passionate about something. Speak with purpose. Listen. Enjoy every day. See the beauty in the world surrounding you. Youth is happy because it has the capacity to see beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.

Forget about expensive facial treatments or miracle pills. Forget about shortcuts.

Dreaming is what makes people smile, hope, and thrive. Miracle seeking leaves them restless, weak, and frustrated. Live instead.

Live every day.

Live like you mean it.

Yours, ParagonA

The ABCs

of the Approach

text EVAN MARLOWE MD
Founder of Man School
www.manschool.cc

Quite honestly, when I reflect about the mind-boggling multitude of girls I've dated and slept with over the years, I can't recall any of the words I had spoken when we'd first met. And yet, the pick-up industry is absolutely obsessed with teaching guys how to approach women.

As if it matters.

Most likely, it doesn't. In the grand scheme of things, the words you use to initiate a conversation will be dwarfed by the rest of your relationship, whether it ends in marriage or a smarmy one-nighter out by the dumpster. That particular combination of words really doesn't matter all that much.

What *really* matters is what happens next.

That said, the approach remains a skill that many – if not most – men never master, intimidated by the potential for rejection or crippled by anxiety. And so, there is no "what happens next," merely "what if...."

So let me spend the next few pages shedding some light onto the subject of the approach. Admittedly, this subject has already been explored to death by others, and yet it still deserves consideration. Because I don't want you to be that dude kicking himself in the ass for not approaching. I want you to be that scumbag out behind the dumpster.

The ABCs

When I think about what most of my approaches have looked like, I can break them down into three phases which I'll pithily call A, B and C.

A. The Approach. Walk up to a girl, open your mouth and make words come out.

B. Spike her Buying temperature. This is lingo brought to you by the pick-up community, meaning get her feeling good emotionally.

C. Chiiiiiiii. Take a break, lean back against the bar and let her start doing the work to win you over. And away we go.

The Approach: Direct vs Indirect

Again, before I tell you how to approach, I'll remind you that IT PROBABLY DOES NOT MATTER. One of the biggest crimes perpetrated by the pick-up industry is making guys believe that it does; the thousands of elaborate openers that have been concocted attest to this. If you're the kind of guy who hesitates before walking up to a girl, then I'd rather have you say, "Hey, where's your wide monkey?" than spend one second pondering this matter.

There are two main categories: direct and indirect.

Direct approaches tell her that you like her, cherish her, want to be inside her, et cetera. Everything else is an indirect approach. Simple enough. The direct route can vary in intensity, from über direct ("Hi, you're hot...let's go bang") to weakly direct ("How ya doing, cutie?").

One of my favorite and most-employed approaches is what I call the *playful direct*. It's a way of stating your intent in a way that's not too serious. Examples:



"I couldn't help noticing... You have really sexy elbows."

"You're adorable, but totally the wrong altitude for me."

Indirect openers can be of the opinion type, the situational ("Do you know which band this is?"), and anything in the "what's up?" genre. Yes, boring, but again if it'll mean the difference between approaching and not, then by all means use it.

The Non-verbal Approach

You don't actually have to say a word to start an interaction. Often, you could find me in bars simply waving at girls from across the room. As they waved back, I took it as an invitation to approach. For those guys with anxiety about the approach, the wave is a surprisingly effective way to sidestep this.

Similarly, you can simply smile and make eye contact, or jostle her earrings, or grab her and make out with her. There's no rule that says you have to say *anything* the first moments you meet a girl. Mind-blowing, huh?

Calibration

Your approach must make sense with regard to the energy of the room, of the group of girls, of that girl you want to talk to. If you find yourself on a loud dance floor, it may be perfectly fine to come up from behind and start grinding on her. But try that in a Starbucks, and you'll most likely get a much different response.

Calibration is key. The loudness of your voice, the animation of your facial expressions, the wildness of your sense of humor. All these factors are dictated by your surroundings, and to approach without considering your environment is miscalibrated and ill-fated.

So step one: feel the vibe of the room. Step two: sense the energy of the group of people you're about to approach. And step three: check the mood of the girl you want to interact with. You don't necessarily need to match her energy; simply acknowledge it when you approach.

Approach Anxiety

The effectiveness of your approach has

a little bit to do with the words you use, but an enormous amount to do with the energy you project, your belief system, how you feel, all that crap. As such, let's turn now to the most important aspect of approaching: your psychology.

When I got into the pick-up community at the age of 37, I couldn't talk to nobody. Not the 16 year-old girl at the grocery checkout, or the hotty sitting on a park bench, or even the little fucking dog on the sidewalk. Couldn't make eye contact, couldn't open my mouth, couldn't produce sounds.

At this point in my life, I have no anxiety. Get the picture? I thought it was insurmountable, and yet with hard work I got past it. It's been one of my most liberating experiences, no longer feeling a prisoner to approach anxiety. But it doesn't come for free.

I *know* what it's like to be paralyzed with fear. Those who merely hesitate but aren't gripped by dread don't have true approach anxiety. It's not something that usually goes away in a single night, and



it's not something you can melt away logically. It's deeply rooted in your subconscious and very tricky for most guys to extract.

Dealing with the Fear

As such, here are several concepts to keep in mind:

1. If you have approach anxiety, accept and admit it. Some guys feel stigmatized by their anxiety, but it really is a ubiquitous emotion and nothing to be ashamed of. You will want to make excuses to avoid approaching: "She's not my type" or "she's with a guy" or "she's sitting down." All excuses, all irrelevant. Instead, just tell yourself "I have anxiety." Embrace it.
2. Set these excuses aside. Don't argue with yourself or beat yourself up. Don't create rationalizations. Don't validate your reasons for not approaching. Simply step back from that voice, realize your excuses for what they are and then place them to the side.
3. Approach in spite of the excuses. "Yeah, that's probably her boyfriend, but oh well...here goes nothing..." Trust me, if you allow that internal noise to start dictating your actions, you won't accrue enough approaches to get past this. The more girls you approach, the faster your anxiety will dissolve. So nothing in your mind should be keeping you from a single approach, because that's one less interaction that will chip away at your anxiety. I realize this takes enormous will
- power, but you have it in you. Find it.
4. Recognize creative avoidance and stop it. "Let's bounce, it's dead in here." "I'm not in state yet." "People are watching. I don't want her to feel embarrassed." Nope. All bullshit. Approach. Any and every set you come across.
5. Avoid wings who have approach anxiety. Fear is contagious. If you hang out with sociable guys, it'll encourage you to be sociable. When you roll with guys who are just as locked up as you, then everyone goes home frustrated. At the other extreme, stay away from dudes who insist on approaching all the girls and pull you in after. That's cheating.
6. Create a routine stack, or basically a

list of short stories and sound bites you can use in succession. Open with a question, then have a plan for each possible response she might give you. Continue this until you have a few minutes of dialogue ready. It can be hugely comforting to know that after you approach, those first few minutes are already in the bag. It's the unknown which can cripple you.

7. Don't give a fuck. This is something I can't teach you. You'll have to acquire it, one girl at a time. When I approach, I honestly don't give a fuck whether I hook or not. Doesn't affect my self-esteem or my desire to approach more girls. You develop this mindset by approaching a shitload of girls. Again, if you hold yourself back from starting conversations, it'll take that much longer to get this abundance mentality.

8. Start small. Walk up to a girl, give her a compliment, then walk away. Or ask the time, or the directions.

EXERCISE

Find a few malls near you and do the following two or three times a week. Walk around to the various shops and talk to the girlies working there about their merchandise. Say for example, ask them if they carry cowboy hats. Then without

actually gaming, eject and move on to the next store. These chicks are obligated to be nice to you, so blow-outs rarely occur.

9. Keep going til it's obliterated. Don't take a break until that day. I have a theory that approach anxiety is biochemical. As in, you have brain receptors which get down-regulated as you continually bombard them with approaches. But then after a couple weeks away from the field, those receptors resurface and the anxiety returns. Now, after a year or more of going out several times a week, you should be able to take time off and not have the anxiety return. So at some point, those receptors vanish. But it takes constant effort to make that happen. I'd say no less than three nights a week at first if you're very bad off, week after week.

10. Don't drink. My receptor theory also suggests that nothing can be in the way to interfere with the down-regulation. Alcohol temporarily facilitates the approach, but you don't affect the regulation of the receptors when you drink. When the booze wears off, you have the exact same level of anxiety.

11. Challenge yourself. If you can approach unattractive women with ease,

it's time to move on to hot girls. Recognize when you're taking the path of least resistance, and stop it. Go for the impossible sets. Your eyes will bleed, your ego will scream, you'll have piss in your shoes, but you will live. Nothing is worse than going home after a night of not approaching the hard sets. You will beat yourself up and feel like shit. Better to submerge yourself in the pain than to never even approach.

12. Approach anxiety is about your psychology, so any bootcamp or instructor who doesn't address this aspect isn't gonna meaningfully alter it. Being pushed to talk to girls one night might help you for the night, but it won't likely result in any lasting improvements. You need to sit down with someone and start rewiring your brain. Whether this is an NLP practitioner or dating coach or hypnotherapist or spiritual guru... That's up to you.

13. Not all anxieties are created the same. You can master a loud club environment, but then step into a shoe store, and your anxiety is once again crippling. I spent almost two years doing solely night game, but then when I tried to approach during the day, I couldn't do it. Hot girls might be harder to approach than buttfaces. Lone wolves easier than

large sets. All-girls no problem compared to mixed sets. Girls standing: easy; seated: tough. Direct more intimidating than indirect. Identify which variables bring on your anxiety, and then address those until they're no longer a problem.

Alright, I think that pretty much covers most of it. Let's move on...

Spike her Buying Temperature

Step two. It's now time to get her feeling good emotionally. We in the pick-up community call this tactic "spiking her buying temp." Girls are emotional creatures, and so anything that peaks their emotions helps win them over.

On the other end of the spectrum, these are the territories you typically want to avoid:

Creepiness, fear, boredom, logic, hostility, annoyance, sadness.

In short, be the fun, cool guy she wants to get to know better. Not the weirdo staring at her tits and talking about locking her in a trunk. Now, actually *being* that desirable man can itself be a struggle for many guys, but the point is, this is your goal to shoot for.

So how does one "spike BT?"

Touch her, trick her, tease her.

While touching girls sounds easy enough, there are landmines along the way. Many guys don't know how to touch a woman; they may be too rough, may feel awkward doing it with a stranger who hasn't given explicit permission, and may have anxiety about "pulling the trigger." Getting physical is

an art, but if done correctly, can put a girl in the right emotional state.

When you trick a girl, you are interrupting her logical thought process and hitting her with the unexpected. Whether the surprise is big or small, that feeling jars her emotions. It's the same element that makes certain punch lines so effective. You know, the ones where the story suddenly shifts and takes on an entirely different reality. Bang! BT through the roof.

A concept was introduced into pick-up lexicon many years ago, called "the neg." When you neg a girl, you are verbally pushing her away. "Nice nails... Are they real?" More interactions went down the tubes as a result of miscalibrated negs than any other cause. When you *playfully* tease a girl, you gently push her away verbally. Gentle is good. Harsh is bad. For now at least, until you ingrain the tease into your personality. Pepper your approach with light teases about stuff that is unlikely to offend.

EXERCISE

Begin a game of thumb wrestling with her. You can do it totally out of the blue in the first few minutes of meeting her. Don't worry; she'll be okay with it. Take her hand. This physical contact can be enough to spike her emotional state, since girls love being touched. Aside from that, you're giving her permission to act like a kid, another way to get her charged up. As you thumb wrestle, use your other hand to hold her thumb down so you can pin it with your thumb. That's cheating, and by tricking her you've caused her emotions to zoom even higher. Now that you've pinned her thumb, jokingly accuse her of cheating.

Girls love that sort of absurd teasing. It drives their emotions wild.

Your touch must be well-calibrated; slapping her ass can spike her BT if done at the right moment, but can send her fleeing if done creepster style. Tricking her into paying the bar tab doesn't do much to get her into her happy place. And teasing her about her yellow buck teeth isn't typically seductive. The key to spiking BT is in the timing and use of these techniques. Which will come with experience.

Chilllllll

You've approached, and you've got her laughing and feeling super. A few minutes of this is really all you need. AT MOST. Now is the time to kick back, relax into the sofa sitting next to her and down shift.

An energy vacuum will result. It'll do two things. First, she'll feel compelled to fill that gap. Second, it'll make room for the next phase of your interaction, one where charm and seduction can work their magic.

I'm not advocating that you stop talking altogether, or that you move into some boring, logical, "comfort" line of conversation. Blech.

To get into the "chill" attitude, always look for ways to relax. Why stand when you can lean? Why lean when you can sit? Why sit when you can lie down? Always set your drink down somewhere rather than hold it. You get the point. Chill mode is a time to look like you're at home after a long day of work.

And that's it. You've approached. It wasn't *that* hard, now was it?

Norway Terror Attack & 5GW

The atrocities committed against innocent civilians in the recent terrorist attacks in Norway show how much harm and disruption one person can do against an unprepared society. Is this attack a precursor of a general transformation and individualization of terrorism?

According to the evolution of military theory, advanced surveillance, intelligence and sophisticated weaponry are useless against terrorists like Anders Behring Breivik (ABB from now on). This was confirmed by the chief of the Norwegian chief of internal security (PST) admitting that even the STASI secret police could not have stopped the attack.

The use of the Internet, improvised explosive devices (IED), ambushes and random attacks on military infrastructure caught the US military, the most expensive army of the world off guard. After 9/11 the term "asymmetrical warfare" became all the rage and 4th generation warfare was born. Ten years later a new breed of warfare is dawning on a still clueless police and military.

Modern warfare has become more like an orchestrated media propaganda operation and less like traditional gut wrenching and bloody warfare. Are we observing the birth of the next generation of unrestricted warfare? Is this the birth of a 5th generation of terrorism and warfare?

Terror suspect ABB seems to have many characteristics of your intelligent, well-

integrated super-empowered individual. Planning alone for 7 years ABB infiltrated both political parties (FrP) and the Freemasons without detection. His disappointment with these organizations seems to have further radicalized his world view.

Social and ideological isolation seems to have fueled his hatred for society. ABB used rudimentary chemicals for the production of a weapon grade fertilizer bomb. After blowing up the government HQ he proceeds to the youth summer camp of the ruling Labour Party and kills 69 innocent teenagers and young adults: the future leadership of the party.

This cynical double-edged attack against the soft "systempunkt" of the unprotected government HQ and the future political leaders at Utøya is chillingly calculated in its planning and execution. The police still have no indications about the involvement of other individuals, in contrast to ABBs statements of "other cells". Aside from police incompetence there are no obvious signs of a false-flag operation.

The first manifestation of distributed network-based attacks against military units came with the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. The resistance to foreign military powers arose from the loose knit international networks of Al-Qaeda consisting of mostly under-privileged individuals without formal military training.

The characteristics of ABB seem to be that of a "super-empowered individual" driven by the lack of recognition and attention while feeding on the delusion of a global anti-immigration and anti-Islam movement supporting his "cause". In this incident "the cause" is the defense of Judeo-Christian culture against a supposedly looming Jihadic annihilation.

Norway has lost its innocence and has woken up to a new global reality threatened by a new breed of terrorism. The proliferation and development of synthetic biology, robotics and DIY techniques demand a new approach by the intelligence community. This is the age of the homegrown low-tech self-radicalized ideological super-empowered solo terrorist.

References:

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3 lessons in text JAKE Not Giving A Fuck

The phrase, "stop giving a fuck" has a lot of different meanings to me. Mostly, it's a place of not worrying so much about what other people think. It's about letting go of fears, fears of failing, fears of rejection, fears of being wrong; all kinds of fears. To sum it up in one classic word, it's acceptance. To me that's what it really means, to completely stop giving a fuck. It's to stop caring about everything to such a degree that you no longer even feel the need to even tell people that you don't give a fuck.

Lesson 1: Get Comfortable

If you really and truly want to stop giving a fuck, just decide that you are going to learn how to be comfortable with yourself. Make that your primary goal for a month or two, maybe three. Simply focus on learning how to be completely comfortable in your own skin. Whether that's at church, a bar, the movie theatre, a restaurant, even in your own home; focus on being as relaxed and as comfortable as you can be. It really is a skill. Just like any muscle, it takes some practice and some time to develop, but if you make that your primary goal for even a month, I think you'll find that your life will drastically improve.

For example, if being alone at a restaurant gives you some kind of discomfort, then focus on relaxing in that environment. If talking to attractive women makes you uncomfortable, focus on learning how to become more comfortable in that situation. The same goes with social scenes, being alone, or in crowds, the list could go on and on.

Unreasonable fear is one of the most restrictive things a person can have when it comes to their personality. When you let go of the fear, or at least learn to be comfortable with it, you'll notice a real change in all aspects of your life.

Lesson 2: You're a fucking loser!

Here's a personal story about a lesson I had to learn the hard way. Even though I'm about letting go of fears and insecurities and learning acceptance, another part of my personality is being a high achiever. I'm always making goals; usually goals to overcome things that make me feel uncomfortable. I work to achieve those goals in order to keep growing and getting better with what I enjoy doing, living life.

A year or two ago, I had experienced something of great impact to me. I was at a bar one night and was in a great social mood this particular evening. I was out on the dance floor with many different girls. I was chatting people up, having fun, and drinking. About an hour before closing time, I was hanging out and saw a group of girls. As I walked by I said, "Hey" to them. I wasn't really interested in any of them and at the time I thought I was just being friendly, having a good time. This one particular girl screamed out, "Get away from me you fucking loser!" as loud as she could.

And what happened next just completely shocked me. I'd been working on myself, dealing with different fears and insecurities and learning to be social. I felt I had achieved all these different goals I viewed as important or "significant". Well

what this young woman said to me hit a button so deep inside of me and brought something out that I was never consciously aware of. Whatever it was that she hit just enraged me to a level that I had never seen myself go to before.

The next thing I knew, I got in her face and said, "What did you just call me? Listen here you fucking cunt!" And if that wasn't humiliating enough, what came next was 10 times worse. I started to list my accomplishments, the things I felt I had done in life that made me better than her. I was fucking pathetic. Somewhere down the line, I completely stopped and became aware of what I was saying. I paused as I thought, "where the hell is this coming from". At that moment I probably looked like a deer staring in the headlights of semi, about to get nailed and completely oblivious to it. Then I realized something... "She's right, I am a loser."

You see at this moment, a young no more than 21 year old woman, 105 pounds, probably 5'2" had complete power over me. With just a simple word, she had the ability to control me. I looked at myself completely disgusted and walked back to my apartment. When I got home all I could do was ask myself, "what have I become? What have I done with my life? What was the point in all this?"

Thinking about this lasted quite a while. I realized everything I had done in my life was all based on a lie. I realized from that point, nothing I did do would ever

bring me what I was really and truly seeking; significance and admiration. I realized that no amount of money would ever bring it, no amount of women, no amount of accomplishments or adventures would ever bring me this thing that I was searching for.

That process brought in a new level of understanding to me. No matter what I achieve or what I accomplish, a complete stranger can still have an opinion about me, and it might be an opinion that I don't like. I realized a young woman can still walk up to me and call me a loser and there's nothing I can do to stop it.

This opened up a whole new world to me; a world of more freedom and more understanding. I still like to accomplish goals and achieve things, but it's coming from a different place now. I realized that doing things for significance or admiration is a pointless goal, because if it is for that reason, a complete stranger can come and with a few simple words, completely rip it away. And just like that, all the meaning you put into it is gone.

Instead, do it for you, don't do shit in this life because you think some kind of way it's going to make people love, admire or think highly of you. It's your life, live it for you. That may be an old cliché, but I find it to be true.

Lesson 3: Seek to understand

I get a lot of calls from people working

on socializing. They are seeking points on being more open and comfortable in group settings and how to have conversations to make friends. One big tip that I give people is instead of worrying so much about what to say, start concerning yourselves with how to listen.

Everyone on this planet says the very exact same thing to themselves, "No one understands me". It isn't just you, and it isn't just me, it's every single person in the world.

If you start seeking to understand, you'll have the world in your hand. It's a skill just like anything else and it takes practice and discipline. It should be a normal humanistic thing in this life during a conversation, but we don't really listen. What we do instead, is try to think of the next thing to say, a comment, a question, a cooler story, or a story that is similar to what we're hearing. Our ego or self interest gets in the way. Listening is a very real thing and it takes constant practice to get good at the art of listening.

You have to put your ego to the side, open up and pay attention to the moment. It's not about gaining information about the person, it's more about where are they coming from in this moment. All those things and more will come during this process, but it's a different kind of communication. Instead of it being an interview, it becomes a connection.

When you get into this type of listening, you can get to a point where your intuition kicks in. Though your intuition might not always be right and you have to be OK with that, I've found when you get in tune with this type of communication, more often than not, this intuition will be on to something. This kind of communication really opens people up. It's not easy though, you have to be very in the moment, aware of not only their words, but their tonality, their body language, the things around them, how fast or slow they are talking or walking.

Stop talking and start listening. When you lock into this state of mind, I call it the flow, it's like everything flows, even the words out of your mouth. There's no thinking involved, it's just a matter of being there; that's all.

For More

You can check out my website at www.StopGivingAFuck.com. I focus mostly on life in general and share ideas that have helped me or others in becoming a more comfortable, relaxed, and easy going person in life. If you are interested in my thoughts about dating, be sure to check out www.DatingInTheZone.com. My friend Rosebudd and I are working together to help people with dating, overcoming fears and obstacles that people face in that area of life and how to effectively communicate and connect with the opposite sex.

Success and Caveman muscle

text KYLE NEWELL

"Opportunities multiply as they are seized." Sun Tzu

Are you the type of person that believes you create your own destiny? I am going to guess that if you are reading this, then somewhere inside of you, you believe that. I often tell my students and gym members that you can either be like 99% of the population and go with the flow, kind of being pushed along the river of life or you can be a 1%er. The one-percenters are the people that are going to stay up all hours of the night and work tirelessly to achieve their dreams. The worst thing to be is average or mediocre, yet most of the world is just that. The things that follow are very simple to do, yet very few make them a daily habit. If you continue on, I will teach you how to climb to the top of your own personal mountain and have a killer body to boot.

Discipline is a must if you are going to achieve anything worthwhile. As I said, I do compete and have competed in a number of bodybuilding shows and there is no sport in the world that requires more discipline than bodybuilding. Perhaps this is why I chose bodybuilding to compete in once my college years were done. I am often amazed at the lack of discipline that I see in adults and teenagers alike. Discipline is not some-

thing that just happens or that you are just naturally good at. As humans, we are all inherently lazy and we all want to be taken care of. We want to be shown the road to Easyville (keep looking, it doesn't exist).

As far back as I can remember, I was making mental lists of what I had to do each day and the following day. Things really took off for me when I decided that the worst pencil is better than the best memory, so I started writing down what I had to do daily on the night prior. This change alone can take you so much further than you ever expected. The act of taking a few minutes to jot your to-do list down will seep into your subconscious as you sleep, creating a snowball effect. More importantly, your subconscious brain will work on those ideas and things that you have to get done while you are

sleeping. Many of the greatest "thinkers" of all time including Thomas Alba Edison and Benjamin Franklin were notorious for waking up and jotting things down because answers had come to them in their sleep. Another important point about writing these things down is that your brain will seek to accomplish these things and complete the list by the end of the day. If this is new to you, start off easy, maybe writing one to three things down per night.

As you get better and more efficient at working on your list, you can add a few more things. I am an avid reader (we will get to that in a minute) and I have heard Dan Kennedy say that every overnight success has taken at least 12 years. Think about that for a minute. Too many people want to create their list and work on it for 3 or 4 weeks and when they don't see anything materializing, they give up. Those people just don't get it: if you are planting a garden of greatness, the crop will take some time to materialize (I recommend *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell for an in depth look at this). Make a list!

Second thing: become a voracious reader. I remember back when I started



on my own personal journey to achieving my dreams that Tony Robbins said he read 700 books before he "made" it. He was an avid reader, just as you must be if you want to achieve greatness. I am to read one book a week. Maybe you can start with 20 pages a day. At a recent seminar I was at, the speaker said if you read an hour a day for 3 years, you will be a leading national expert in your field and if you read an hour a day for 5-7 years, you will be a world authority. Doesn't seem like too much of an investment to me.

Show me someone that doesn't read or claims they don't have time to read and I will show you an average person (average is an obscene word to me). It all depends on how badly you want to be great. Read books on self-development, in your chosen field and by great thinkers past and present. Reading is so powerful that it is actually scary. As I am writing this, I am sitting next to my library of books in which there are now over 400. I would be the first to admit that I would be average if it weren't for my books. This principle, along with the one above are so simple to implement and yet very few people do. Will you make time for these things or will you put them

on the shelf until tomorrow and then the next day and so on? The responsibility is yours and yours only to bear, and until you realize that, you will be stuck in neutral. This topic of success is so broad that you could fill dozens and dozens of books with it, but this should get you started on the right path. Hope to see you at the top my friend!

Now, on to my next passion: fitness. I am the owner and creator of Newell Strength. I train athletes and men. My business is booming and has been for a number of years despite the fact that I used to run it out of my basement (I am now in a warehouse). Besides the facts mentioned above, I know the success of the business is directly linked to the results I get with my athletes and the knowledge I possess about the human body. I will make this short and sweet so you can put it to use today!

Too many people are still using outdated training methods such as bodypart (bodybuilding) training and/or they go the gym and walk or ride the bike for a half hour. (This irks me to no end because the fitness of America is currently disgusting, but I'll save that for another article and

another time). The human body was designed to do 5 things, 6 if you want to stretch it. In no particular order, here they are: push, pull, change levels, locomotion, rotation/anti-rotation and it can carry things. If you start designing your training program around these six movements, you will possess an exercise program that will take you to the highest level you could ever imagine of your own personal fitness. The beauty of it is that you can use this knowledge to create a program for strength, fat loss, sports performance, conditioning and you will cut way down on nagging injuries. The other variables to think about would be order of exercises, will there be complexes, how much rest time, how many sets and reps and so on. Do not stray from the fundamental human movements. In addition to this, stay off machines, eat Paleo/Keto for 90% of your meals and you will have a new body within 3 months. Again, simple, yet most people don't do it. Be a game changer, don't wait for others. Combine this with the success principles above and you will be a serious force to contend with!

You can find out more about Kyle at his website: <http://www.newellstrength.com>

