When seeking inspiration or something new to learn from, I’ve noticed people seem to go about it as if they are at the market seeking that perfect piece of produce. At the store I can understand this, ensuring the fruits of your labor yields groceries you’re happy to share and happier to munch on is time well spent. Yet once you take that mindset out of the produce aisle is where problems can arise. Instead of deciding if a tomato is worth the price, a person can get picky about what is worth learning from. This discretion seems like a good idea, and it *is* a good idea most of the time. But life is a lot more complicated once you leave the market.

“Thank God that I'm alive (woo) (Yeah) (…) It's like my birthday every night (woo) (…) Thank God that I'm alive (woo) I am so grateful I am so grateful I'm in da club vibin' And I'm so thankful”

—Lil Jon, *Alive* (2018), featuring Offset and 2 Chainz, Ultra Records

Wait! I know this Essay is already off the rails.. but bear with me for a moment longer, I have a nice bow to tie this up with right here.

So there I was in line for the pump and Costco, playing my tunes when all of a sudden this Song comes on, I had never heard it before. I liked the beat and was enjoying my time with it, Then Mr. Jonathan Smith, (more commonly known as Lil John) starts yelling at me about how happy he is to be alive. His positivity was contagious and I wholeheartedly agreed with him.. on this point. Not only that, but I also felt empowered .. uplifted.

If I was to tell you that Lil John helped me learn about mindfulness, you would think I need an ambulance. Sitting here now

optimum looking for the the sky and to their heroes and to smart people for inspiration and for things they can learn from everything that is going on around you.I was in the car listening to Lil Jon and he came on with the song called "I'm Alive" or "Thank God That I'm Alive," and it was the most positive thing I've heard in a really long time, and it wasn't what I was expecting. I'm just listening to some music and then Lil Jon comes out of nowhere telling me to love my life, be happy about shit. I don't know what he was talking about in the song, I don't know what he was trying to express, but what I'm arguing for is that this does not matter. What matters is what you get out of it. It sent me on an internal journey making me remember all the little things that I've learned from the most inconsequential interactions or experiences. Most of the stuff that I've learned, most of the way that I get my thoughts, come from little digressions in my brain that turn out to be things that I will think about for years and years to come. When I first think of Lil Jon, I think of club music, I think I'm getting pumped, I think, you know, being happy, which is cool, but

 Getting down to the nitty gritty about why I'm happy… that's not what I was thinking. And that doesn't matter because what it started thinking about was how happy I am that I am alive. And not because of what was going in the the present.. I was sitting in my car waiting to get gas! But.. the song wasnt why I am glad I am alive. And I decided to really think about it.

 It's a gift. Life is a gift and we can't state that enough. People don't say it enough. My whole schtick, is appreciating stuff that is often taken for granted. And whats nuts, amd not what I planned on. But My life's fundamentally better because of how I approach, because of how I learned to approach.. to see the things that happened to me, that are happening to me. Noticing my own responses is not just simply navel gazing, or searching for justifications for your actions. its taking time away from reactions and experiences you expect to have in the future, and instead investing back into yourself, \*\*Note! This needs lots more thought and is an essay in and of itself\*\*

 If I only wanted to learn from school or textbooks, I would be limiting myself to things other people already have decided are important enough to teach, and that's a shame because there's not always teachers around, but everything is a teaching moment when you let it.

Give yourself permission to not take anything too seriously.. BUT! Its not just giving yourself a pass. Dont take things too seriously? yet at the same time give these things the respect they deserve.  Many things are serious enough to give real thought to. If you allow yourself this duality, It's surprising what can come of it. My sense is that the “good” or “positive aspects of things, contain many colors that we cannot see.  A good teacher isn't just good teacher because of what they've put in their lesson plan. A good teacher is a good teacher because they have showed you what you can find out on your own. They've given you permission to look at life in ways that can benefit you.

A good friend isn't a just good friend because you enjoy their company and make you happy. A good friend is a good friend because they can show you how others see you. They also  give you permission to be who you already are within yourself. They can see whats parts of you could be better, and let you know with love (this is true for all good relationships in your life)

A good parent isn't a good parent because they had the best rules that made you a model citizen or pushed you to go to the best schools and get the best jobs. A good parent is one who makes you see who you are and what you are to other people and how to cultivate that to keep making it and yourself better and better.

 A good book isn't a good book just because it makes you forget your troubles or transport you into a new space or teaches you a new thing. A good book is a good book because it shows how you can use your own brain to think about things, and when you think about things you're making it your own. A good game, a good sport isn't a good game or a sport because you're enjoying yourself or because you're getting better at things or because you're winning.

A good game shows you what you can do. It allows you, it gives you permission to act in ways that makes your future better: better through  more confidence, better from healthier body, better with quicker mind, better with interpersonal relationships. A good meal isn't a good meal just because it satisfies you or makes you, gives you the endorphins from a delicious combination of ingredients. A good meal is a good meal because it is a confirmation of what you really like, and at that moment that meal is exactly what you really like, and that's why it's satisfying.

 A good job isn't a good job because it pays well or because it gives you respect or because it takes your mind off your life. A good job is one that gives you opportunities to work on things that you enjoy working on, providing a service and being in a win-win situation. A good partner, a good girlfriend, a good boyfriend, a good husband or wife, life partner isn't a good life partner because of what they do for you but because of how they allow you to be and how they allow you,how they give you permission to become a person who enjoys being a part of their life and helping them while also enriching your own life.

A good pet isn't a good pet just because you need something warm to sleep by or because it gives you a purpose, or something that cares for you.. having something that you need.  a good pet will show you things about the world that you wouldn't have noticed before, and it's an outlet for you to express your gratitude and your care for other things. A good positive mental attitude isn't just good because of how it lets you navigate through life or how it keeps you from being sad or let you see the positives.

A good positive mental attitude allows you to appreciate everything that is going on even if it's not something you want to do or want to experience. You can still see some aspect that you can take away from it. A good song isn't a good song because it gets you pumped or it relaxes you or it focuses you. A good song gives you a chance to enjoy things that other people enjoyed enough to create. I can go on and on.

 The attitude we have about *why* things are good, or what we enjoy.. is just as important as the *feeling* those things provide.

When I listen to Lil Jon, I'm enjoying my day and I'm listening to this music and it's so cool. I could just leave it at that. just go to the next song..  but by taking a moment to find the oddity that is Lil Jon as a motivational speaker, my mind is just blown.

 because he wouldn't, couldnt.  he didn't expect some random dude,  years later to be thinking about how true his words really are to an individual. Now we don't need to get all meta and I don't need a naval gaze and just appreciate the fact that I can think about things differently. That doesn't matter at all. Nothing I've said, nothing I've written is novel, genuinely. Its all been said.

 but im thinking like this because how all of our hobbies and enjoyments, are not only hobbies and enjoyments due to of the way they make you feel in the moment. A hobby is a choice.

Me meditating and sharing my thoughts on these little moments.. is a bigger thing, more important..  than me  wanting to get your thinking aligned with my own. Fuck that. I dont want that at all. I just want to share a neat way I find novelty in the mundane. That is by believing that NOTHING IS MUNDANE

 I'm quite sure that anyone reading this has gone on a couple trains of thought that I would never in a billion years of expected, and that is precisely what I'm trying to make us all appreciate.

It opens up my mind to realize that you know, pick a song you like, anything, it really doesn't matter. The only thing that matters is