# \*\*[Video Games Hold the Secret of Life, the Universe, and Everything](https://screwthezoo.com/video-games-hold-the-secret-of-life/)\*\*

While Forrest Gump may have seen life as a box of chocolates, in reality it’s more like a bunch of sheep on a big farm.

We live in a world full of sheep, err, people, most of whom are perfectly comfortable, or at least sufficiently complacent not questioning their Shepards, or the purpose of the farm.

The world seems simple. Constrained. You can clearly see the limits of “reality”.

But what you see, like the people in [Plato’s Cave](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RWOpQXTltA), is just an illusion.

And when some curious, rebellious motherfucker comes along and says things like “what’s beyond the bucket?” and maybe “let’s go take a peek”, all those other comfortable/scared crabs are like “fuck you get back down here” and “don’t rock the bucket bitch, you’re making us look bad”.

As Naval Ravikant so eloquently stated, “Life is a single player game”.

!http://screwthezoo.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/naval-tweet-single-player.jpg

While this may sound simple, and a little out there, there are 2 critical ideas to unpack here: the single player bit, and the game bit.

First, anyone who has played a single player video game gets this. Everyone is, fundamentally, out for #1. Everyone else in the game is an NPC (non-player character).

Some NPCs are there to help you, some to annoy you, some to entertain you, and some to hinder you. They can’t think for themselves. They’re scripted, rigid and inflexible in their responses and actions.

Kind of like most people you encounter in the “real” world. Caricatures, archetypes. Jocks, bullies, mouth-breathers. Crazies, conspiracy theorists, religious zealots.

You get it.

It’s not their fault, it’s just how they were programmed. Nothing personal, even if sometimes dealing with them sucks a bundle.

And then of course you have the enemy NPCs. These are the deliberate hindrances and gatekeepers of the game, put in place to challenge you, focus your attention, and in some cases to keep you from moving forward until you’re ready.

Or maybe just to fuck with you, if the game devs are particularly devious.

Of course, without obstacles of some sort, there are no challenges, and thus no victories, so having enemies to defeat is really a core part of the gaming experience.

When you die in a boss battle in a game, you don’t bitch and whine and give up. You start again, try again, get better equipment, more experience. You try and try until you succeed.

And then you feel fucking awesome

So what does all of this have to do with life?

Everything.

Everything we perceive begins with the underlying sense of what it’s like to be us, our sense of our own existence and awareness.

And since everything we know or think we know begins with our senses, which are processed and perceived by our own body and mind, for all intents and purposes we are each the center of our own universe, with all aspects of perceptual reality beginning in our own minds.

And the only thing we can ever be 100% certain of is that sense of “I Am”, of the feeling of what it’s like to be you, to be conscious.

Cogito, ergo sum. I think, therefore I am.

Solipsism.

You can never be certain that anyone else feels what you feel, sees what you see, or perceives what you perceive, because you only truly know what it’s like to be you.

I mean, it \*\*could\*\* be a full sensory MMORPG, [Sword Art Online style](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sword\_Art\_Online) (best Anime ever), but there’s just no way to know for certain.

We really do appear to be in a single player, first person game. Literally.

Sound nuts? Watch this:

There’s a growing body of evidence, particularly in quantum physics, that [seems to indicate](https://www.amazon.com/Simulation-Hypothesis-Computer-Scientist-Quantum-ebook/dp/B07M81F1KG) this may truly be our reality. The observer effect. Quantum entanglement.

I mean, it may well turn out that Newtonian physics deals with the physics engine of this game world, while Quantum physics is actually us bumping up against the actual code behind the game.

In a way, that would explain quite a few of the oddities we’re seeing at the quantum level. But I digress.

Whether you’re a crab trying to get out of a bucket, or a rocket trying to reach escape velocity to launch into space, or just a player in the Game of Life, you need to build up enough momentum to overcome the forces that are trying to hold you in place.

You need to level up.

But gravity is a bitch, and so are crabs.

So how do you do it? How do you reach your own personal escape velocity?

The first and most important part is to accept that it’s all a game.

You don’t take a game too seriously, right? You enjoy it, you explore, you learn and try and try again. You have fun with it.

It’s a fucking game after all. Play.

!http://screwthezoo.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/game-of-life.jpg

The people who seem happiest and have the most fun in life are those who approach it like that, a game to be played, enjoyed, and mastered.

They understand that life should be enjoyed, not just endured.

Growth mindset people, explorers, adventurers.

Gamers.

The people who are most miserable are those who treat everything as life and death, urgent and important. Those who can only see the negatives, who get easily frustrated, who think it’s all real and take it too seriously.

Fixed mindset people. Stodgy, stuffy, NPC-types.

If you don’t approach life like a game, you’re screwed right from the start.

At this point, before we go any further down the rabbit hole, we face a divergence.

For this, I prefer the analogy of a dream.

We are all, in a very real sense, asleep. Dreaming. We think we’re awake. We think the dream is real. But it isn’t.

And once you realize you’re asleep and dreaming, there are three paths forward.

Path #1, you begin to Lucid Dream. You know you’re dreaming, and you take advantage of the fact to seize greater control over your dream and to enjoy the ever living shit out of it.

This is a good path, an enjoyable path. It’s probably the right path for most truth seekers to follow.

Path #2 Of course I'm going back to sleep. You had a brush with reality, found it scary, grabbed your security blanket and your ba-ba and conked back out.

Bad dream, sheesh, give me that blue pill baby.

The entire game is designed to keep you asleep, to keep you trapped in the dream world. You’re probably not supposed to be aware it’s a game/dream, and there are surely systems in place to prevent such awareness.

All the best games have some guide rails, things to prevent cheating, and game boundaries you aren’t meant to cross. Limits.

Life is no different.

But like Cypher in The Matrix, some people think ignorance is bliss. They just want to be unaware, because the truth is terrifying.

FUCK THAT.

If that were your path, you wouldn’t be reading this, so you can safely discount that one.

Last but not least, there’s Path #3…to wake up.

Enlightenment.

Leaving the dream.

Adios motherfuckers, I’m checking out of this roach motel. Peace out.

\*\*This is not a path you choose. This is a path that chooses you.\*\*

You can’t seek Enlightenment. You can’t force yourself to Awake. You’re either compelled down this path, or you’re not.

A lot of people go wrong here, thinking they’re choosing Path #3, but really just being tricked back down Path #2.

Fucking game guardians. They are some seriously devious motherfuckers.

As the Buddhists would say, Maya is one tricky bitch.

Now, you pretty much have to be batshit crazy to go down Path #3, since it’s the ultimate form of Nihilism. Self-destructive in every sense of the phrase. Which is fine, if you feel so compelled.

But you probably don’t.

Very few do.

Path #3 is not my cup of tea…at least for now. I’d much prefer a nice lucid dream, please and thanks.

If you think that path is for you though, read [Jed McKenna’s book Spiritual Enlightenment: The Damndest Thing.](https://www.amazon.com/Spiritual-Enlightenment-Damnedest-Thing-Trilogy-ebook/dp/B003AKZBL0/) But don’t blame me if you end up locked in a loony bin after, you can’t unsee that shit. (It’s a great book, don’t get me wrong; I loved it. But it could probably fuck some folks up in a very real way. You’ve been warned.)

And Path #2 is for the Sheeples of the world, and you’re not one of those…right?

So, Path #1 it is.

I love games, always have, especially puzzles, and I personally want to enjoy and get the most out of the game of life. To have a fan fucking tastic lucid dream. To fly, fight, fuck, feast, and whatever else floats my flipping boat.

And to do that, one must learn the rules of the dream, the rules of The Game.

Assuming of course there are actually rules…and I’m not certain there are.

As every gamer knows, whenever you start a new game, there’s a learning curve. Sometimes shallow, sometimes steep.

Sometimes VERY steep.

Some games have tutorials, some don’t, but there are almost always rules. And if you want to enjoy or beat the game, you need to learn the rules.

However, it’s important to divide those rules into two types: universal rules (say, the physics engine underlying a game), and local rules (game mechanics, story structure, in-game laws, etc.)

And as Morpheus said in The Matrix, “Some rules can be bent, others can be broken.”

As far as we’re aware, we can’t break the universal rules (physics; though to be fair, we still don’t fully understand these rules and their limitations), but you can find ways to surmount the limitations we’re aware of to some degree (say, overcoming gravity with thrust, or using quantum entanglement for computing, etc.).

Local rules however can be both bent and broken. Sometimes in pretty insane ways.

I’ve yet to encounter a game that didn’t have wiggle room, some intended, some unintended, and life appears to be no exception.

Andrew Carnegie said it well, “Reality is negotiable.”

So it would seem.

This game we call life, unfortunately, doesn’t come with a tutorial or rule book. You have to figure the rules out as you go, by trial and error, piece by piece.

Sure, you could try to learn from someone who has played the game and understands what’s what. Guides. Morpheus-types.

However, when searching for a Guide, you have to be very, very careful to watch out for Agent Smith’s, the guardians of the game.

Enemies. Bosses.

They can, of course, take on any form. Some may even appear to be Guides, and those are the most dangerous.

What do those look like in our world?

Teachers. Gurus. Religious leaders. Parents. Peers.

The secret to knowing a guardian is that they will tell you they “know the way”. They will give you prescriptions, which you are told to follow, often “or else”.

!http://screwthezoo.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/dangerous-to-go-alone-300x170.jpg

You thought this guy was being helpful didn’t you? But no, just some old guru in a cave telling you what you have to do and using fear to motivate you

They’ll deliver said prescriptions with lots of emotion.

Maybe they’ll give explanations. Maybe they won’t.

If you follow their prescriptions, you’re part of their group. You’re in.

If you don’t, you’re out, ostracized. Punished. Damned, Doomed, whatevs.

Beware anything or anyone that uses fear to motivate you.

This is not the way.

Fear is not the way. Prescriptions are not the way.

A true Morpheus, or a Bodhisattva if you prefer the Buddhist terminology, can only tell you what is not the way.

They won’t help you hide from your fears. They won’t tell you comforting stories. They won’t spout platitudes.

Why?

Because the “Way” is not additive. It’s not a place you go, or a thing you do.

The “Way” is reductive. It’s the identification and removal of all Untruth. It's an individual (single player game, remember?) and a path that is always walked alone.

The secret to The Game appears to be finding and destroying illusions.

Can you identify and strip away all untruth?

Well, perhaps not all. To strip away all untruth is to awaken, and as already covered, you probably don’t want that.

Probably.

But going down that path, at least to some degree, can give you greater control over your dream.

So, Illusions. There’s really only one, but like Shrek, and onions, it has layers.

First, there is the illusion of self. You, as a distinct, separate entity from everything else out there.

This is the root illusion, and for very obvious reasons one of the most difficult illusions to pierce.

Sounds crazy, I know, but a LOT of people throughout history, through various means (meditation, psychedelics, asceticism, etc.) have arrived at the same conclusion.

The Ego is the greatest illusion of all, and it’s a damn persistent one.

Second, the illusion of perception. As Morpheus said, “What is real?”…”Do you think that’s air you’re breathing now?” If we are indeed in a simulation or game of some sort, and we very well could be, then “real is simply electrical signals interpreted by our brains”.

!http://screwthezoo.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/morpheus-quote.jpg

Hell, even if we’re not, real is still just electrical signals interpreted by our brains, lol.

Our reality, our entire Universe, is just composed of information. Energy, in various forms, phases, waves, particles, etc. The [Holographic Universe theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holographic\_principle) in physics is all about this.

And our perception, or rather our range of perception, is incredibly limited. We process only the tiniest percentage of the information that exists around us…which is kind of how rendering works in games to save on processing power, interestingly enough

Lastly, and of great significance to our Ego, is the illusion of death.

All fear is derivative of our fear of death, our fear of ending or ceasing to exist.

But in truth it is the silliest of fears, because of illusion #1. If there is no self, and we are part of an infinite Universe/Simulation/Game, then there are no individual endings, because there are no individuals. All there is, is change. Information moving from one form to another.

Shit, for all we know, when we “die” we just wake up in an arcade a la Rick and Morty:

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Every time I watch this, I get an overwhelming sense of…reality. It resonates, rings true, lines up with everything I’ve found in my search for Truth.

If your mind is feeling well and truly blown at this point, well, sorry not sorry.

Knock Knock Neo.

Which path you follow is up to you.

You’re more than welcome to go back to sleep. It’s tempting, really, really tempting.

But, if you’d rather try get the most out of an awesome dream, then it all boils down to this:

- Stop taking everything so fucking seriously.

- Enjoy life, each moment, and treat it more like a game…just, test it out, and see how things go.

- Be present, focused, in flow; you can’t excel at a game while constantly distracted, and life is no different.

- Start poking at reality more, as much as you can bear, until you really start to unravel the mysteries of The Game. As questions, dig deeper, check your assumptions.

- Help others to do the same, if you feel so inclined

Sweet dreams.