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❤ Little Steps to a Larger Life – Part I

1 message

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Fri, Nov 15, 2024 at 8:06 AM

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THE 3 RELATIONSHIPS

MATTHEW HUSSEY



Dear Alaina,

Konnichiwa!

I'm writing to you from a cafe in Tokyo, the beautiful city where Audrey, Stephen, Lauren, Billy, and I—plus some other friends and family (including George, who was Stephen's university roommate back in the day)—are stationed for most of the month. Forgive me for mentioning the whole cast, but I know many of you know all these names from attending the Retreat.

Japan is one of my happy places. Maybe the happiest. I come here as often as my schedule will allow, to switch off, be carefree, and, well, eat. I have not mastered the art of doing Japan in a healthy way.

Before you say, “But sushi! Fresh fish!” Yes, but also, Yakitori, Yakiniku, Ramen, Okonomiyaki, Tonkatsu, Udon, Shabu-Shabu (can I say McDonald’s? It’s just so damn good here.) I could go on . . .

Eh, I’ll work it off when I’m home.

I hope you’re doing well, and if you’re not, today’s a good day, because it’s *The 3 Relationships* newsletter day.



The narrow alleyways of Omoide Yokochō with Stephen, George, and Audrey.

Let's Go

“Little Steps to a Larger Life – Part I”

Don't we all want a life rich in moments and experiences we could talk about forever? Here are some of the simple-yet-profound ways I get myself to live a bigger life. They work; I hope you'll try them—especially in moments when you don't feel like leaving the house. (Trust me, I basically live in this state, despite all the things I do.)

1. “You Can Always Go Home”

If I'm invited to some event or activity I'm not sure I want to be stuck at for hours, this absurdly obvious statement often does the trick: “*I can always go home.*”

It reminds me that I *can* leave. Instead of deciding prior to heading out that I'm going to have a bad time, or that it's not going to be worth the energy, I can go and see for myself—safe in the knowledge that I'm in control.

To some people, it may seem laughable that I need to infantilize myself in this way. But aren't we all grown-up children in one way or another? That's part of the problem. We look, talk, and act like adults while forgetting that sometimes we need to be spoken to like children, because there's an anxious, sad, hurt, or scared child inside us who's looking for someone to take her or him by the hand and gently guide them outside their comfort zone, or at least, the front door.

But unlike a child at the mercy of superiors who decide when it's time to leave, I'm an adult, and if I get somewhere and decide it's not for me, I can leave, albeit with the newfound confidence that I gave it a try.

2. Make a Micro-Mission

Around the age of 25, I began touring with my events. Doing this in America was the fulfillment of a dream. Only it wasn't like it is now, where I usually get to take a small crew with me (which includes Audrey).

Back then, it was just me. And when my "show of one" would arrive in New York, San Francisco, or Los Angeles, I would once again find my shy and introverted nature kicking in. It would tell me to order room service in the hotel and chill inside my 500-square-foot surrogate home for the night.

I would get around this impulse by giving myself a micro-mission. Why? Because part of the problem was that I was making it too big of a deal. The stakes were too high in my head. In my mind, I was supposed to go out and have the night of my life in New York. Overwhelming phrases like "hit the town" and "explore the city" reverberated in my reluctant mind.

What I realized was that I needed to lower the stakes, keep it simple, and make it easy. So I would tell myself, *"OK, Matthew, let's find the nearest recommended bar or lounge, go there, have one drink, then come back."*

That was my rule: one drink. And it worked. When I made it a micro-mission, my mind eased up, and when it eased up, I was free to go and experience that moment without the burden of expectation. I would also build on micro-

missions by adding new layers. One layer I added was making it a rule that I had to sit at the bar, where conversations were more likely to happen, rather than sitting at a table away from the action. I also added the layer that during the drink, I had to engage someone nearby, even if it was just the bartender after I'd already ordered my drink.

I'm well aware of how pathetic this sounds. But I know myself, and I don't lie to myself about my nature. It's something that has marked my growth: genuine awareness of myself, and an acceptance of the ways I need to work *with* that self. Without this, my nature is free to take the wheel unobstructed by me, the parent who's supposed to be in control. Ignoring a child's issues—or pretending they don't have any—may feel more comfortable in the moment, but it won't when we receive a call from the school saying they haven't been going there for the last two weeks.

Sometimes these micro-missions proceeded perfunctorily: I would sit for 30 minutes, have my drink, and go back to the hotel. Though even then, I'd be proud of myself for doing something instead of nothing. Other times, my micro-missions led to entire unexpected evenings I still treasure today.

I went out, I was open, and the city—feeling generous that night—did the rest.

(Keep an eye on your inbox in a week for the second half of this topic!)

Key Takeaways

1. Reminding yourself that “I can always go home” is a great pressure valve for getting yourself out of the house. It reminds you that you are in control.
2. Rather than feeling like you have to conquer a city or new place and try to maximize every moment of your time, keep the stakes low, simple, and easy.
3. Use micro-missions to “gamify” small actions so you don’t feel like you’re biting off more than you can chew.

What About You?

Which of these options would you like to try out this week? Do you think that you’ll feel freer in the reminder that it’s OK to go try, and simply “go home” once you’re there if that’s what you want to do? What are some micro-missions you can set for yourself—whether in your own hometown or venturing out into someplace new?

Want More?

Early Black Friday offer:

Our exclusive **Black Friday special** starts today! If you’ve been wanting to try Matthew AI, now is the perfect time to give it a go. Over the last few months, people have already asked it almost 1 million questions—from dating and confidence advice to specific texts they can use to spark interest. And for a very limited time, you can now try Matthew AI for 50% off your first month! This

is like having me in your pocket 24/7 . . . 17 years of advice on call any time you need, and ready to speak to your specific situation.

(If this newsletter has sparked any questions for you, use Matthew AI to get MY answer!)

A conversation with ‘J.D. and Turk’:

I’ve been a Scrubs fan for many years, so I really enjoyed this conversation with Zach Braff and Donald Faison on their podcast, Fake Doctors, Real Friends. You can listen to the episode on [Apple Podcasts](#) or watch the video on their [YouTube page](#).

New video:

Ever found yourself obsessing over someone you recently started dating? When someone seems to tick all our boxes, it can be hard to NOT become flooded with thoughts of a possible future together . . . which can inadvertently start pushing them away. In my latest video, I share 5 things you can do to stop falling for someone too quickly. If you haven’t watched it yet, be sure to check out [“How to Stop Obsessing in Early Dating.”](#)

Thanks for reading *The 3 Relationships*.

Till our next moment of connection . . .

Love life.

Matthew x

P.S. Don't forget to hit "reply" and send me a few lines with your thoughts on what I shared in The 3 Relationships this week. I look forward to reading them!

Your comments last week meant so much. This particularly moving—and unexpected—email I received made me so grateful we created Matthew AI in the first place:

I wanted to express my most sincere and profound gratitude for Matthew AI. I just began investing in my dating life after having recently achieved remission from blood cancer.

Unfortunately, life took yet another turn. My parents' home burned to the ground a few days ago in Southern California due to the ongoing wildfires. As an experiment (and being in desperate need of making sense of this), I consulted Matthew AI for help. I asked for psychological insight regarding the painful emotions and trauma I am experiencing, having lived at that house during cancer treatment. I also asked about how I can support my parents after they witnessed their home burn while their dog was trapped inside, who didn't make it.

Matthew AI blew me away. I shared the insights with my parents, and it brought them to tears. They are both incredibly grateful, for Matthew AI helped them feel seen in their pain in so many ways.

Thank you. Much love,

Anna from Camarillo, California

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