



Facing Demons

I keep questioning myself as I write this. **Am I being honest and true to myself or are these fabricated demons and solutions to fake problems?** I don't know but, for now, I'm gonna keep writing and believe I'm being honest with myself and the memories of those that have gone before and been affected by my actions. But whatever it is, writing it down helps me accept it and deal with it and move on.

As I'm moving forward through this pandemic I'm also coming to terms with things I've avoided thinking about for a long time, decades in some cases and maybe even longer on others.

It has also forced me to accept some things that have happened in my family and how they've affected me, both good and bad. I'm just starting to learn how those traits have defined and changed me over the years.

Dad

Dad was a high functioning alcoholic, there... I said it. From where I sat growing up that man could put booze down like a champ and not be affected by it in the slightest the following morning when we were going to school (where he taught and I studied).

It wasn't until now that I've realized how his passing affected me. I've quit most of my self-destructive behaviors: I quit smoking in July of '09 after 23 years and ending in a carton a week, I haven't touched anything with nicotine since. I've quit drinking for the most part... I will still do a beer or two in social situations but no more drinking to get wasted... that's what killed my dad.

Some people laugh at the notion but I can't help but believing that there is a genetic component to addiction and I don't want to end up like him.

I can't let go of the feeling that I could have done more to help dad from here. I've always told myself that the only thing I had to do was call his sisters who lived in Santiago and have them check up on him... but I didn't. Of course, I have no way of knowing if that would have made a difference or not, but the guilt was more about not trying than about any result.

I guess for the longest time I resented my dad. I've always thought that death

is harder on the ones who are left behind than the ones who die... sure, it can hurt like hell, but it's a finite proposition, once you're gone you're gone and the pain is over. Not so much for the ones who are left behind after you die

Live beyond what's possible

One of the hardest lessons I've learned is to continue pushing no matter what? The easy way out is seductive because it doesn't require immediate effort on your part, it doesn't require you to be uncomfortable or be in pain, whether physical, emotional or mental distress.

But you can't be strong if you don't learn to push yourself beyond what you think is possible and what you're comfortable with.

I remember when I was finishing the bike at IM Augusta... to this day I don't know what happened or what caused the pain, but I did have to decide if I was going to rack the bike and go out on the run or if I was going to quit and let the pain win.

It wasn't fun... I took so long that by the time I finished (still within the race time limits, I think) they had run out of finisher medals and I had to have mine shipped home.

But this all depends on knowing your body and knowing how hard you can push and be aware of where your limits are so you can decide if you want to / can push past them.

Home, sweet home?

for the past 27 years, and even more so since dad passed 19 years ago, I've chickened out about going back and dealing with the consequences. I've heard my mom say that I should have taken the money but that meant accepting he was gone and I wasn't ready to deal with that... I still don't think I am but...

There's a saying I heard a few years ago. ***If home is where the heart is, then where is home?***

Yes, I was born and lived in Chile until I was 19 and a half. I have lived in the US since (March) 1994 and in California since Christmas, 1997 (feels like 100 years ago). I've spent a grand total of 30 days over the last 27 years in Santiago, Chile.

Another thing that has kept me from going back until a couple years ago is the fear of being a stranger in the place where I grew up. It's different when I made it to Europe or other places in the US... I was a stranger and I didn't have to fake it. In Chile I know a lot of people, at least as much as you can really know someone after 20 or 30 years since you've last seen them.

It's terrifying to think how much and in how many different ways we've changed and how little in common we have today.

In accepting these differences I'm also accepting that nothing I knew there remains the same, or at all. It's also learning about the changes and how to adapt to them... if that's not a frightening thought, I don't know what is.

It's also accepting that Europe and other places in the US I've never been to are easier for me to be in than Chile is. In those other places I don't have to fake that I'm a tourist because I am one. In Chile I have to fake it because I'm not a tourist, at least people won't see me as one. But maybe that's what I need to be to get some objectivity on what I see there.

Mom

I guess it's because I lived with her exclusively until she moved to the US in 1990 that I got a lot of my mom's behavior patterns.

You never stop learning

I ask myself... what did being Evan McAuley teach me?

If every life is a chance to build on what was, a chance to press forward to the best of what could be why will some of us have to pick up the sword and fight again while others discover a new beginning?

It's hope. That's what I've learned.

Yes we fall. Yes we fail. Yes, sometimes we screw up everything we touch. But each moment we live is connected by a belief that the actions we take will, next day, next week, next life add up to something more, something bigger than

yourself.

Evan McAuley — Infinite

There's something that dawned on me that I should have learned decades ago. Growing up in Chile, I tried to attach myself to a certain group, the weed smokers, the late night partiers, the "bad kids". I could never lie worth a damn so they'd push me away so I wouldn't know what they were doing and I wouldn't have to lie about it if someone outside the group asked me.

At the time I was dumb so I backed away from that crowd without really understanding why I did. It wasn't until a few weeks ago (and 30+ years later) that I finally understood why I did it. I care about people and I won't change... it's who I am and if you don't like it then screw you.

Change is the only constant

I think that the hardest thing of all this period of life is answering three questions:

- What do you want to do?
- What do you want to be?
- Why?
- How?

Just when you think you have the answers, someone (yourself or someone else) changes the rules of the game and you're back to square one.

I don't handle rejection well, perhaps that one character flaw I share with my dad. It sends me back to the drawing board and try to figure out what it means when they tell you "you're not a good fit" and how you can fix it.

Working at Google (or Facebook or Apple) is a double edged sword. The money is good, but it also sets expectations that may be unrealistic and hard to match elsewhere, even elsewhere within the same company... so the questions are what do you want to do? Is it time to compromise? We'll come to the answers later, right now I just want to let them simmer for a while as I reflect on them.

I'm also coming to terms with the fact that I've lied to myself for a while. I'm happy single but I'm single because I'm tired of getting hurt in relationships. I've been burned once too many times and I'm not sure I want to put myself through the grinder again.