

Paradigm Shift

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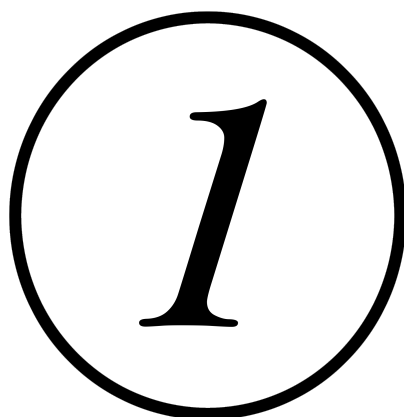
a note to the reader...

This text consists of three parts. The only thing that I ask of you as you dive into this project of mine is to please read them in the order that I have presented them.

As for the rest? Well, the rest is the rest.

Why don't you come in and take a look for yourself? It's quite cozy in here :)

Enjoy



A Problem

Ahh... the beginning. Where to begin, oh, where to begin. All big ideas start small I guess, so there's really only one place to begin at; the beginning.

The beginning is difficult, because you don't know about me, and I don't know about you. You don't know what I'm planning on writing, and I don't know how you respond to what I plan on writing. Your mind doesn't know if it should prepare for what I am about to say, or relax, and let any and all thoughts just come and go.

It's a hard spot, the beginning. And it's up to the author of the story to make this hard spot, well.. not so hard. So, in an attempt to ease this transition into a brand new relationship between your brain and mine, I'll start off with something that we can all understand; a story related to each and every one of us.

I want to start with a story of the mind.

Building a Model

Let's say that one wanted to model how a human mind works—something that we all have and are able to understand to some extent. How might they go about it?

The mind is a complex piece of machinery, and any attempt to model how it works will have to account for such. But the more complex the model becomes, the greater the chance for there to be inaccuracies within it. And, it seems as if our understanding of the human mind changes every decade—with the advancement of available technology being introduced into our society at a rate never seen before—making the idea of creating a complex model even more convoluted.

But, just because the mind works in a complex way doesn't necessarily mean that the model has to be complex as well. In fact, there's a very simple way to model how one might think about the functioning of a human mind; one that contains a minimal amount of components and terms. And it goes like this.

First, we start with a definition. The mind, what is it? The mind is an abstract sensation that continuously takes place in human beings—starting from the age

of 4-5 years old, and continuously taking place until the day that we die—in what we perceive to be somewhere in the front of our skulls. This sensation called the mind has the ability to do what we call “think,” and “remember,” and “compute,” and “imagine,” and countless of other abilities, to what we perceive to be limitless possibility. The mind is exemplified by the space that holds a weekly grocery list, the space that remembers a loved one’s upcoming birthday, and the space that visualizes the answer to $x - 3 = 0$.

With a loose definition in place, we can start building the model. It starts with the building blocks. A building block; *a thought*. A thought, defined to be anything that exists to any frame of reference, happening in the nonphysical space brought forth by the mind.

Thoughts exist in spots. Different thoughts exist in different spots; spots that are always changing and are dynamic in size. The amount of spots that we each have is going to depend on a lot; genetics, health, environment, nurture, nature, the whole she-bang. Sometimes 3, sometimes 10, it really just depends.

Thoughts can be short-lived, thoughts can be long-lived. I can think about the outfit that I am going to wear tomorrow just as well as grieve over the passing of a loved one. Thoughts can lead to any emotion, as well as lead to any behavior. Thoughts can be benign, malicious, obsessive, invasive, painful, joyful, any combination of those, and so much more. But they always come and go, with some coming back.

There exists a natural ordering on these thoughts that enable us to talk and reason about them in the first place; the order in which we perceive them.

Thoughts have an inherent ordering to the perception of the human mind; a one-two-three. First I see the car, then I see the chipped windshield, then I think about my own chipped windshield. A one-two-three, happening in a row, not all at once.

Thoughts, happening in the mind, with some order, give rise to a stream of thoughts, happening over some length of time. A stream of thoughts represents something more than just an ordered set of building blocks, it represents data. Data for the mind to learn from.

This mind of ours, super-intelligent as some might say, has the ability to do one very powerful thing in particular. It has the ability to recognize things that we call “patterns” given a set of data.

A pattern is recognizing what comes next before it comes. Recognizing patterns gives rise to predictability in a system, with us usually picking up on some repetition happening in the behavior of that system. We pick up on patterns related to when the mailman is going to come, what times our bodies get hungry, and the range of behavior that people who are known to us are likely to exhibit.

Patterns of thought: predictability in the sequence of building blocks. These patterns of thought related to the mind, exist within a mind. A mind that is

picking up on patterns with the ordered set of behavior that is being produced by itself; a pattern of a pattern—a meta pattern.

This is what the first story of the trilogy is all about, a pattern of patterns. One that some of you might find useful. In particular, a group of people that, in the twenty-first century, have been given the overarching label of “neurodivergent;” a term used to describe any mind that strays away from the average.

In modern society, those who are deemed neurodivergent are given a bad rap; and, understandably so. On average, those who are neurodivergent are likely to experience a plethora of mental health issues, making them less than ideal workers in a society that’s revolved around work. But, I have something else to say about this group of people; and not just a sentence or two.

For me to say what I really want to say about this group of people, it’s going to take some setting up, and, quite a bit of it. So, if you think you might land somewhere on the neurodivergent map, and are interested in a different viewpoint that you can use to look at yourself, unfortunately for you crew, you’ve got quite a bit of reading to do before you can get it. And, skipping to the end is only going to do you so much. But, not all is bad news bears though, for, if I’ve done what I’ve think I’ve done, getting to the point that we’ll reach together is going to be a fun journey, not a boring one.

So then... it’s time to continue on with the model. What pattern is it that I would like to discuss? Put simply, the pattern of obsessive thought. What is obsessive thought? The concept is best explained through the use of an example rather than a definition.

Thoughts have an ordering, a one-two-three, this has been established. What we call “normal” thought might look something like, one-two-three, four-five-six, seven-eight-nine. What we might call “limited” thought could look something like, one-two, three-four, . . . three-four, four, four. What we might call “impaired” thought might look something like, two-one-three, one-three, four, one-one-three, two. And finally, “obsessive” thought would look something like, one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three.

Except, with obsessive thought patterns, one-two-three, one-two-three, time plays an important one-two-three role. Specifically, if we look one-two-three at what happens over one-two-three time, quickly, the full effect of one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three the obsessiveness is one-two-three shown. And how much one-two-three of a disruptor it one-two-three, one-two-three becomes for one-two-three everything one-two-three else to take one-two-three one-two-three place.

If one tries to let it go, one-two-three one-two-three one-two-three . . . one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three, . . . one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three, . . . one-two-three, one-two-three, . one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three, . . one-two-three, . . it never goes away. And if one-two-three they instead focus really one-two-three hard on one-two-three it, one-two-three, the one-two-three, more one-two-three, it one-two-three, seems, one-two-three one-two-three to one-

two-three happen one-two-three, and one-two-three with one-two-three greater one-two-three, one-two-three, frequency.

This is what I define to be the problem. The problem of obsessive thought.

Here's a bold claim coming from somebody who you've never heard of before... what if I told you that I solved this problem? That I, Dominic Vicharelli—somebody from nowhere—solved the problem of obsessive thought; a problem that has existed in psychiatry for the past couple of hundred years, at just the ripe age of 24?

Would you call me crazy? Call me a liar? A bullshitter? Mentally-ill? Wrong? Or maybe, hopeful? Optimistic? Arrogant? Detached from reality? Which bucket does your mind choose for me?

Before settling on a bucket just yet, can I just say that I find it a bit unfair that your judgmental mind is so quick to find a bucket for me without even first hearing what I have to say. But, here we are, living in an unfair world as judgmental creatures.

I'll start by saying that this solution is a bit different from the ones given as 5 second ads on YouTube videos, the ones where they only work if you subscribe to some channel first. This solution is different because it requires exactly 0 resources.

No money, no car, no energy, no shirt, no shoes, no problem. This isn't something that you have to take my word for; it's something that you can try all for your own. What I aim to propose is a reliant method for one to change their own reality; a returning of the control to the hands deemed worthy of control—taking it back from what modern society has ripped away from us.

But, before getting on with this so called solution of mine—for those who want to hear what a madman has to say—it's important that I first finish building my model. Luckily for the ones getting bored, not to fret, for there is only one other aspect of the model that will be important for later on. The concept that I will refer to as grooves.

A groove is a pattern with the thoughts; predictability within a certain set of one-two-three's. A groove isn't just one instance of a one-two-three, it's the instance of a one-two-three happening over days, over months, over decades.

Grooves are carved out by repetition, enforced by habit. The more a series of thoughts takes place, the easier it is for them to be thought of again. Repetition strengthens grooves, and the amount of instances that a groove is entered into is a good indicator of the ease of future accessibility to think or act in that certain way again.

Put simply, the more that we are swayed in certain directions, the more likely we are to be swayed in those directions again. Once a groove is born, its presence is known about; once and forever. The initial digging of a tunnel that gives rise to a mental pathway that is likely to be visited again.

Being hand-wavy is only going to get us so far though, so, I come equipped with examples.

Example #1; the work groove. Let's say that you live in a city. And in this city, you have a job. And to get to this job, you have to take the bus, for you are not an automobile owner. But, before you get on the bus to get to this job—the one that's in the city—you must eat a meal, for the calories are necessary for you to do your job without feeling like you're going to pass out the whole time that you do it. But before you eat, you like to shower first thing, in order to rinse off all the night sweats you get from the previous night, due to the nightly concoction that you have to ingest in order to knock you out from the thought of having to wake up to a 9 to 5.

So, every single day that you have to work, it's the same routine. Alarm clock goes off at 8:00, in the shower by 8:05, eating breakfast by 8:20, preparing self for eight hours of torture at 8:45, and get to the bus stop by 8:53. Catch the same bus at the same time every morning, sitting in the same spot and getting to work at the same time, where you'll spend all your work time thinking about only work things. Then, ride the same bus home after eight hours of spending work time thinking about work things, stopping at the same stops, seeing all the same sights, all at the same times.

Like clockwork, the same set of events happening every single work day. Shower → eat → prep → bus → work → eat → work → bus → eat → rest. And, with every iteration of this sequence of events, a strengthening of the sequence of actions occurs; the easier it now becomes for that exact sequence of events to happen again.

When looking at this string of repetitive actions through the lens of a model that only consists of two parts, it presents a pattern with the building blocks; a groove. A groove that, by the nature of how I'm partly defining it now, has both a trigger and an ending. In this case, a trigger that was the sound of the alarm clock every morning, and a set length of time that ended when the day was over.

A groove is simply this; a pattern with the thoughts in the spots, that is triggered by something and lasts for some long. Thinking about certain things, in a certain way; nothing more and nothing less.

Example #2; the friend groove. We humans are social creatures. We interact with others, share experiences with others, and grow in the presence of others. Despite us being social butterflies, we also have unique individuality. Things that separate us from every other living creature out there. Asymmetries, handicaps, stylistic choices, and so much more, all coming together to create a unique instance of a human being.

When we spend time around others, a bit of our uniqueness is swapped for a bit of the uniqueness of others. This is very noticeable when becoming friends with someone new. As the friendship develops, a few of their idiosyncrasies become your own, and vice-versa. Some of their lingo becomes your own lingo, and vice-versa. A part of them becomes a part of you, and a part of you becomes a part of them.

Every time you are around each other, your mind prepares itself for the tomfoolery that is about to come. All of the jokes, all of the pranks, all of the shared good times, primed in the forefront of the mind, and activated as soon as their presence is near. In this way, this pattern of thought fits into the definition of a groove; predictability with the thoughts in the spots that has some trigger and lasts for a certain duration of time. Here, the trigger being the presence of the friend, and the ending coming about once their presence is gone.

Example #3—and the last of them; the Brussels sprouts groove. For this example, I'll need to introduce a character; good ole uncle Tommy. I was going to choose a female in order to fill the whole sexist cooking role thing that I plan to present, but then I thought to myself.. how about, no? So, uncle Tommy it is.

Uncle Tommy has no kids of his own, and, God forbidding, won't, any time soon. Let's just say that, uncle Tommy isn't one for sitting in on parenting 101 classes, or, life skills 101 classes, or even, how to take care of a basic house plant 101. He's a traditional Italian Catholic with his only real skill sets being related to his abilities to acquire cash, and take care of his mother. But tonight, uncle Tommy has been tasked with babysitting your 7 year old ass while your parents have a night to themselves to hit the naked boogie.

Now, between you and me, uncle Tommy is a fairly atrocious cook. But he doesn't know that, and neither do you, you're just a kid. Nothing way out of the ordinary, just, under-spiced, overcooked, low heat, smells like feet, sort of a situation. He's cooked a variety of meals for you before, but on this one particular occasion, he has decided to tackle Brussels sprouts. Ah, the brave soul.

He cooks them as flavorless as possible. Straight out of the bag, freezer burnt, soggy, out-of-season, pesticide pumped, factory farmed Brussels sprouts that never had a chance in the first place, mind you, but a decree to the method he used nonetheless. You try uncle Tommy's world famous bagged plants, and, surprise surprise, they taste exactly like the garbage that he is going to make you take out later that night in an attempt to teach you what his own version of manners look like.

You spit them out, throw your little tantrum, but get forced to eat them anyway by an uncle Tommy who thinks he's doing the right thing by shoving vegetables down your gullet. You see if you can out-grudge him . . . you get out-grudged, eat the Brussels sprouts despite wanting to vomit the whole time, and begin your bout of pout.

You finish dinner, brush your teeth, change into your pajamas, and the whole thing is forgotten about before cartoons at 8:00; but, the effect that uncle Tommy has played on you is far from forgotten.

Now, we fast forward to your mid twenties. You haven't consumed a single Brussels sprout since leaving uncle Tommy's greasy, temporary nest for you when you were a kid. But, unknowingly to you, that's going to change, be-

cause, on this particular night in the future, you get invited to go out to a fancy restaurant with a couple of friends for one of their birthdays.

Among the small talk that happens at the table before everyone orders their meal, speculations as to what everyone is going to get bounce back and forth.

“Swordfish with lemongrass aioli or the mahi-mahi tacos with mango salsa?”

“The charcuterie board or the shrimp and crab bisque?”

“The spicy tuna roll or the wagyu beef with sautéed Brussels sprouts?”

The thought of uncle Tommy’s Brussels sprouts pops up in your memory. “Definitely not the Brussels sprouts, Brussels sprouts are disgusting.”

“What, no way! You have to try them at this restaurant, I hear that they make a mean Brussels sprout here. I heard that they even have old man Brussels himself growing the sprouts in their garden in the back.”

The peer pressure from your friends, alongside having a couple of drinks in the system, wins, and the Brussels sprouts are ordered. They’re brought out to the table, with trepidation being felt during the entire wait. But, you end up finding the (liquid) courage to break out of the invisible cage that uncle Tommy set forth on you when you were a child, and, as your brain prepares itself for the possibility of having to kill off previously learned neural pathways, you try one.

Absolutely delicious. Sautéed in garlic infused olive oil on high heat to get a nice crisp on the outside, and seasonings galore that made it more closely resemble a sweet treat than that of a vegetable. And so, on that day, you find out that you actually love Brussels sprouts, and your perceived notion of not liking them solely came from being at the hands of an incompetent cook when you were younger. What else have you been lied to about?

An inactive groove of 20 years, completely disbanded in the matter of an instant; an interesting point that might be of particular use later on. A groove that had a trigger of being presented with the option of Brussels sprouts, and had an ending that was brought about in the presence of a capable chef.

Grooves exist until they don’t, with it often being the case that their endings are unforeseen. Repetition that exists until the last repetition, sometimes sneaking up to us in such a way that its presence is only known about after its effect has already been played.

And with this, the full model is complete. One that comprises of just two parts; the building block, and the patterns with the building block.

With this in mind, the next step forward is to think about an average model. Surely, I’m not the only person that this model works for as a framework for thinking and the mind and behavior and what have you, meaning that we can compare individual models to other individual models. Looking at all the models, an average presents itself; a clustering of like-behavior.

In this average, there are patterns that emerge that enable us to even call this group ‘an average.’ We see that, in the average, a few principles apply

to the majority. To start, there exists bounds on mental activity within any window of time; e.g., those in the average can't think of everything they know all at once, and, no matter how tired or exhausted they are, they always possess the ability to focus on a bare minimum of one thing.

Secondly, in the average, it seems that thoughts move smoothly between one and the next. It's much more common to see, one-two-three, four-five-six, seven-eight, nine-ten, than it is to see, one-two-one-two, three, two-three, three-four, one-three-two-four. Going from one to two and from two to three is expected; anticipated. There is no hesitation when going from thought to thought, and why would there be, when it's always been this way?

Smooth transitions, bounded by above and below, and one other thing that is a distinct mark of the average. They experience more emotional stability relative to those outside of it. Thoughts flow smoothly, and emotions do too. Abruptness of either only happens in infrequent occurrences. For those in the average, happiness is anticipated, felt, and reflected upon with the same smoothness that exists when advancing thought, only with the addition of more gradualism sprinkled in.

The average model is a happy model; a healthy brain. Thoughts, feelings, and experiences all come and go as they do, with little deliberation spent on them after-the-fact. For those in the average, they might not even realize that something outside of it exists. But alas, there's an entire group of people alive today that have been dished a whole slew of labels for their known positions away from it. A group of people that have been given the overarching label of neurodivergent; those who stray from the average.

There's been a whole bunch of narratives forced upon these so called neurodivergent folk, with a whole lot of them having some sort of negative connotation. Something along the lines of, those who are neurodivergent are less reliable as employees vs those who are in the average. Or, they are more emotionally sensitive than those who are in the average. Or, the depression and anxiety that they are likely to experience are essentially handicaps that must be accounted for in the workforce—handicaps that don't necessarily have to be accounted for by those in the average. In any case, some reason as to why the neurodivergents aren't fit for the society that's been hijacked by those in the average. And so, classically, we are to believe that any stray from the average is unhealthy.

Because of this, one of the patterns that emerges when looking at this group of so called neurodivergents, is one that correlates them with a high intake of pharmaceuticals. Staying away from causation, and sticking to correlation here, it's without a doubt apparent that someone who has been given a diagnosis that falls under the huge umbrella of neurodivergent is way more likely to be taking medication—either diagnosed or recreational—compared to those who fall in the average.

The story for this bunch of people is much different from the one told that is told for those in the average. For, even if the never-ending grasp of society can be escaped momentarily, the pressures placed upon the outliers by the ones

in the average must eventually be succumbed to. Pills are gulped, poison is sept, minds are ruined, and lives are lost.

The story for this group has common themes of depression, anxiety, and trauma; not ones of smoothness, continuity, and gradualism. Ones of hurt and ruggedness and survival, not of choice and luxury and lavishment. There are too many of these stories to hear. People upon people upon even more people that have spent the majority of their lives in endless suffering, with some of them ending just as horribly as they started. My story, the story of my own suffering, is nothing more than a drop of water in an ocean of despair.

But, my story has one unique element to it that props up my motivation behind wanting to share it with everybody. It has been my mission to spread a set of ideas in the same way that I found them: untouched by the average. In my story, the ending is quite different from any ending that I have heard of before.

In all of the stories that I have heard of before, they all seem to end in one of three major ways. On one of the far ends of the spectrum, the villain of the story wins as the adversity is too challenging to overcome, and, in what we're told is a sad set of circumstances, a tortured soul is lost. On the other far end of this spectrum, healthy coping mechanisms are achieved and are habituated to until the point where all previous symptoms that once caused so much damage essentially become null and void. Or, lastly, somewhere in the middle, where the problem is always present, but is managed to some extent.

But I have yet to hear of a position outside of this spectrum. That is, until I found one for myself.

I wish to present another scenario that exists. One that isn't talked about in psychiatry offices, or family interventions, or even around buddies smoking a joint. A structured way of thinking that eradicates unwanted thoughts once and forever without consistent work required. A relabeling of a problem to something that becomes much less significant than a problem.

But, this is a loaded tale, the one of how to solve a problem as large as this one. And, before I get to the punchline, I think it's important that we all get on the same page; the average and the non-average, that is. How do we achieve this? Through relatability.

A Story About Joe

Instead of using the same, seemingly powerful, yet somehow empty words that are commonly used to describe an experience of the non-average to one in the average—things like, *soul-sucking* depression, or *crippling* anxiety, or *chronic* fatigue—I want to share my experience by not sharing it at all. Instead, I will

tell it by way of a fictional story. A story about a guy named Joe.

Meet Joe everyone. Joe, say hi.

“Hello everybody!”

Joe here is going to be the main character of the stage for the next little bit, hopefully aiding me in my endeavor of trying to relate a common experience of the non-average to the average without them having to go through it for themselves. For those of you in the average, you might not have ever felt what it’s been like to be something outside of it. Luckily for you guys, Joe here is going to demonstrate it for us. Joe is going to show us what it’s like to go through a bout of depression.

Okay, so what are we in the story? We’re just observers, observing Joe and his situation. We’re observers, but not human ones. You and I? We’re gods of time. Gods of time sent to study Joe so that we can report back to our supreme god boss, back in our mother universe. Why have we been sent to Earth to study Joe? That’s not important right now. The only thing that matters right now is that we study Joe. And by watching Joe, this is what we see.

Every week, Joe goes to the store to get groceries. Joe isn’t a picky eater, he mostly just sticks to the basics. He gets good produce, not too many processed foods, and a variety of meat and seafood. He shops with a visual scale in mind of quality vs price, and tries to get food that evens his scale to be right about in the middle.

He gets his groceries every single week; in fact, he goes on every single Sunday. Every Sunday, he does his groceries and his laundry. Joe is a minimal man, a safe man, an easily pleased man, and prefers to stick to just what he knows and needs. And so, every single week, on every single Sunday, Joe goes to the grocery store to get the basics, and does his laundry every time he gets back.

Something that used to take him half his day, Joe now does in just a couple of hours. The aisles of the grocery store have been memorized, the weekly grocery list has stabilized to the same repeating items, and he goes to the store during a time of day when traffic inside the store—and on the streets—is minimized.

But at some point, as does inevitably happens, some adversity hits Joe’s life. Money becomes tighter, bills become higher; less comes in while everything else goes up. Not to worry though, for Joe is a veteran when it comes to life’s struggles, and knows how to handle himself through it. Compensations are made, adaptations are to be had, but, without fail, he does groceries and laundry every other Sunday.

Every other Sunday, he does groceries and laundry. But prices seem to keep going up, while wages seem to keep going down, and so, as Joe’s hand is forced,

more work must be had. More work which leads to more stress which leads to more rest which leads to more work.

More time working and more time resting, but no matter what, groceries and laundry every other Sunday. Every other Sunday, without fail, groceries and laundry, every fourteen days. Less on groceries and less on laundry, but, he has yet to worry, because, every two weeks, he has yet to miss.

He works and rests and works and rests until he slips up on the rest, which turns a little rest into a whole lot of rest. More work and more rest and somehow even more work and somehow even more rest. This doesn't make sense... how is more work leading to even more work? How is more rest leading to needing even more rest? Something feels off. But, there's no time to think, for it's time to get back to work.

Purchase a treat; card declined. Card declined, but how? Must be not enough work. But where's the time? There's no more time for more work. It must come from somewhere else... it must come from rest. Ah that's right, it's more work and less rest and more responsibilities and bloodshot eyes are okay and pressures are to be succumbed to and load is to be carried; how could Joe be so silly to think otherwise?

More work and less rest, more stress, it's quite the test. Need more time working, need more time resting. Need more time working, need more time sleeping. Need more time working, need more time recovering. Need more time working, need more time working. But no matter what, groceries and laundry, on Sunday, every single month.

More work and less sleep and some eat and more work and shitty sleep and struggle to eat and calling in sick and now only sleeping and still not eating.

No more working, can't work, need sleep, too tired. Rest is needed and rest is to be had. Just a nap this one, repeating in Joe's skull as he quickly fades off to snoozing.

A pleasant dream, a break from the fatigue. Energy, boundless energy. Exploration, boundless exploration. Routes to be discovered, beasts to be examined, a new sandbox for endless categorization. Joy oh joy, boundless joy. What Joe wouldn't do to stay here fore-BEEP BEEP BEEP

Alarm clock going off, it's a time that makes Joe shake his head. How was it only that long, it felt like forever? Until Joe checks his phone and sees the date.

It's tomorrow. An entire day had passed. He took a 22 hour nap. A grumbling belly, a quivering chill, and nothing in the fridge for poor old Joe; it must have been too much time resting, and not enough time working.

Eight missed calls, oh no, work is in danger. Worry, worry, worry, quick, quick, quick, call them back, and explain the situation. No answer. Call again.

No answer. Call again, no answer; leave a voicemail.

Quickly prepare for work, go to work, compensate mistake of missing work with even more work. Ooh, that's it! More work, keep the pay. Just don't let me lose the work, I need the work. And the offer gets accepted and thus is so; more work to compensate for not enough work.

More work, less sleep, and more screen. More screen and more work and more screen and still hungry, but no matter what, a ride to the grocery store from Joe's roommate every single month. Not always Sunday, and doesn't always line up with the laundry schedule, but it's the only way for him to make it to the store.

"Are you okay Joe, you don't look so good?" He's fine, tell them you're fine Joe!

"I do my groceries and laundry every month. Once that goes away, then I'll know I'm not fine. But until then, I'm fine, I have to be. I have to work. Work so that I can rest so that I can work again; don't you understand?"

Ugh, how could anyone understand? They haven't been given the label that I've been given—by a doctor no less. Ugh, silly people and their ignorant minds; if only they were aware of—BEEP BEEP BEEP—oop, shift is getting ready to start, time to get back to work."

More work and some sleep, more work and some sleep, more work and only some eat.

And, after all of his working, Joe finally gets some earned time off. Ahh, a breath of fresh air, a relaxing of the pain; how Joe appreciates just his few couple of days.

As he's taking his few short days to rest and recover before getting back to the endless grind, Joe takes a moment to think to himself... you know what? Maybe it's finally time to do less. All the work and all the rest has payed off and I can finally do less. Relief is felt, the chair back squeaks, and a sip from the drink is finally had.

Joe makes a phone call, request in hand, smile on face, for the first time in what feels like ages. He gets patched through, a chance to speak his mind. And, upon his courage to take his health as a priority over his work for once, he gets his expectations shattered as he's denied for a drop from full time to part time. Wait what, denied? Yeah, denied. There's not enough workers, not high enough wages, all requests for a drop in hours denied on the spot. And, so it is to be.

More work and less eat and less sleep and more screen. More work and more cope, more work and more cope... why? For more work, of course.

More work and some eat and less sleep and onward and onward and onward, everyday, slowly rotting Joe's poor little soul into a desolate void of despair, as he gets his innocence ripped away from him layer by fragile layer.

More work and less rest, and more fatigue and more frustration, but definitely more fatigue. More work, no care for eat, barely sleep, adrenal fatigue, can't wait to sleep. But not quite yet, for there's more work to be had, more anxiety to be felt. Muscles that need to tighten, moods that aren't going to lighten.

Waiting for the fatigue to set in. Waiting for collapse to happen. More work and more waiting and more stress and more fatigue. More work and more waiting. More waiting, more waiting, more waiting, until... that's it! Enough! No more work! No more waiting! Only sleep, with some weep. Compromises will be made, backs will be whipped, but first, rest will be had.

Rest is had, and again, longer than a nap, for chronic fatigue won the battle that it was oh-so very equipped to do so, and upon waking, it's a similar situation to the first. Missed calls and angry managers, but this time, with a permanent mark to his record that wasn't present before; a strike one and a strike two.

But see, that's just the thing about chronic fatigue; it's chronic. It doesn't just go away with one good snooze, it's a habituated series of events; a groove. And so it doesn't take long before Joe falls to the hand of the invisible once more, having to call in sick for a shift that he wasn't allowed to call in sick to before; strike three.

Something that was motivated by his subconscious even though it was feared of by his conscious, Joe loses the one opportunity that he thinks is holding up his entire life. And, with work leaving, it sure does seem to remove a whole lot with it. Thus, so it goes.

No more work, way less eat, okay sleep, but no matter what, groceries and laundry whenever his roommate offers to take him.

No more work, way too tired, but somehow barely sleeping. That's weird, Joe thinks. Way more time, way more tired, but somehow less sleep. Peculiar indeed. Oh, but look, it's that time of month again. Time for groceries and la-card declined? Uh oh.

Can't work, too tired. Can't sleep, don't have work. What is to be done? Money from parents? No, not an option in Joe's case. Money from the government? On what grounds, "being too tired to work"? Money from a rich relative? Ha! For Joe to be so lucky. Which snaps Joe back to reality; uh oh.

Cope is consumed and options are stirred upon, and then, that's it! A plan! A plan from A to C with directions on getting from A to B and from B to C. Hope is restored, faith is found, and a tiny flame of energy is found inside of Joe's otherwise vacant soul. And with this, it's time for him to get started on A.

All that has to be done is this thing that Joe's done before? Easy. He gives it a go.

Failed attempt

Huh, that's strange. He's done this before, plenty of times actually. Maybe if he just tries it again.

Failed attempt

Huh. Maybe just try it a few more times and see if that works.

Failed attempt

Failed attempt

Failed attempt

"Ya know, if only—"

Lights go off. Power bills past due.

No more heat, running low on food, behind on money, and soon, even without shelter. And, boy oh boy, Joe does not want to feel that cold winter air each and every night without warmth. Unfortunately for Joe, the one piece of advice that rattles around in the hive mind of current society related to something along the lines of, "just try harder!" is useless to him. Joe has nothing left to give; he is chronically fatigued, biologically speaking just as much as mentally. He is no longer able to do what he was once capable of doing, no matter how trivial of an activity.

And so the days pass. Mail unattended to, voicemail box full, knocks on doors go unanswered. Can't do any work, need more sleep. Can't do any dishes, need more sleep. Can't do any cooking, need more sleep.

Sleep and sleep and sleep and sleep, with only some eat. Only some eat, but he somehow develops an ulcer? Peculiar as well. But, no matter, for there's no time to think, only time to sleep.

More sleep and little eat and a check of the phone and holy shit, two months have passed? Quick, check the mailbox and listen to the voicemails.

Services to be dropped, scores to be adjusted, and warnings turning into actions-taken. Joe's already devastated heart drops just that much lower as he realizes the severity of his financial situation that he was forced to throw under the rug because of the severity of his biological condition.

Joe thinks he has hit rock bottom; he has ruined the relationships he once had with his friends by ignoring their communication, he has ruined his financial status in today's modern society by skipping inevitable payments needed to sustain life, and he has ruined his body which is in very poor physical shape with it bordering the line of being malnourished... a rock bottom that he can't imagine getting any lower.

Joe has no option left but to take the one even worse than the pre-determined-to-doom family “borrowing.” He decides that he must borrow from the greedy; the bank. Big bank; big money. The hand-shakers in suits sitting in cubicle offices playing the game of money in a fashion that hurts other participants; with intentions of the transactions being far out of reach from the well-being of the people involved in them.

Joe is prey to these sharks, with very little concern of his well-being showing its way through any sort of their behavior. Joe owes a whole lot of his struggles to this group of predatory hunters living in today’s concrete jungle, but that’s a discussion for another time. The only thing that matters now is that groceries and laundry now happen with the help of a credit card. Splendid.

With this tiny boost in morale due to the bump in his immediate financial status, combined with his realization that if he doesn’t get his shit together soon then things are going to get even worse than they are now, Joe is given a single milligram of usable energy for him to be able to play the game of pretend as he convinces himself that the jobs that he’s now applying for will be the stimulus that he needs in order to get him back on his feet. And thus, so it goes.

Work is sought, work is not found. More sleep, no eat.

Work is sought, work is not found. Some sleep, no eat.

Work is sought, work is not found. No sleep, no eat.

Bills are due. Weather is getting colder. Work is sought, but can’t even be bought.

Some is sleep, less is eat, more is stress, less is time. Less is sleep, no is eat, more is stress, even less is time. Mind is racing. Racing, racing, racing. All of the sudden, very stressed, oh no, very very stressed. Heart rate is up, heart rate is up up up, oh no oh no oh no, here we go, heart rate is up up up, uh oh, very stressed, just breathe, just breathe, just breathe, heart rate is up and breathing is fast and heart rate is up and breathing is fast and oh no what do I do, oh no, oh no, oh no, what do I do, what do I do, quick, someone help me, what do I do?!

Heart rate is up and breathing is fast and part of the mind that hasn’t gone completely under yet tries convincing the other dying part that things are going to be okay, and that you just have to breathe, but things are not going to be okay, things are far from okay. And without money, support, nourishment, sleep, or material assets, things aren’t going to get better anytime soon. In fact, even worse.

The dire thought of this, this feeling of not being able to catch your own breath over a situation that was no more than simply thought its way into, is a scary thought for Joe to experience to say the least.

Breathing is erratic, heart rate is through the roof, Joe is on the verge of something very bad happening to him, until... it does. Something happens; the pot boils over. A breakdown. A pit of despair lower than what he was even able to conceive of as being possible before taking a swimming in it for his own. A feeling so raw and vulnerable and terrifying for a human being to experience; the shattering of a glass floor, only for him to be left screaming in free-fall with nothing to grab onto.

And so, rest is needed. And rest is had. And when Joe rests, he has time to think. Time to think about what, all the ways that he can work his way out of this putrid hole that he's in? If only his circumstances were that giving.

No, instead, he's had time to think about what a shitty human being he is for making the shitty choices that brought him to this point. He thinks about all the effort that he put into something that was off in a direction that didn't pan out to anything, or, all the energy that he didn't put into the things he knew could've panned into something.

He thinks about how getting out of his situation now is going to be similar to trying to run up a muddy hill in the rain, day after day after day, while fighting the nausea and fatigue of the flu as he does it, and how he feels like he has no energy to even get himself to get to the beginning of the hill—much less climb them consistently.

He thinks about all the monkeys in suits at the top of the hill, under shelter, drinking champagne as they watch peasants try to climb it for their own enjoyment.

He thinks about a lot, and this thinking takes a toll on him. You see, there's an aspect of the behavior that his mind is exhibiting that's much more permanent than the moment that it is exhibiting it in. As Joe goes through this process of self-doubt and shame and guilt and the sort, he builds the grooves associated with negative self-talk. Over time, as these grooves get dug—so to speak—the likeliness that they are visited again increases. Abiding by the way that grooves were introduced, the more that he thinks about those certain things in those certain ways, the more likely he is to do so again.

The real damage of going through this sort of mental adversity isn't related to the bruises, or even the scars that come with it. The real damage comes from the digging of a groove that didn't exist before going through that experience, that now has the potential to last for a lifetime even if it's never visited again. And the longer that the adversity is endured, the more that that groove gets dug.

This is a concept that is so extremely prevalent in the case of people clawing their way out of the grasp of depression. Except in the extreme cases, majorly depressed people don't kill themselves. It takes way too much energy; and with chronic fatigue being a huge burden, everything becomes one. But people getting out of depression? Then there's danger. Because as soon as any adversity is felt again, no matter how small, the mind defaults to the groove that it knows best; the one that it just recently accessed in a similar situation,

the one that's already been dug. And, in the case of a deeply dug groove that's associated with negative self talk, small adversity can lead to drastically bad mental states almost immediately.

But enough thinking Joe's mind thinks to itself, for, there's no more time for thinking. It's time to get back to what's more important; surviving.

Health is better, not much better. Mind is bad, very bad. Something has to change. And there's one very easy change for less than \$20 a month (with insurance, that is); pills. Anti-depressants. SSRI's, SNRI's, SDNRI's, SARI's, tricyclics, tetracyclics, MAOI's, anxiolytics; whatever you need, they got. And so it is to be had.

More sleep and more pills and more sleep and *way* more eat.

More sleep, more worry, more pills, more sleep, more eat.

More worries, more reasons to worry. No money, no heat, no job, no health. More pills, more serotonin, *l e s s* of a worry. And so it's learned; **more pills, less worry.**

Weather gets colder, way more eat, way more sleep, still no heat. Cold days and cold nights, short days and long nights. Work becomes more important than food for Joe, for, he feels that freezing to the death is less preferential than starving to death.

He lowers his standards that have just been raised, and, with pills now serving as the backbone for what little energy is being spoon fed to him, Joe eventually finds an immediate pickings job that is finally caught. Shitty work and bullshit pay, but being a warm slave is better than the cold grey.

Work is had, heat is bought, work is had, food is bought.

More work, more cope, more sleep. Did he take his meds this morning? Better take some again just to be sure.

More sleep, more eat, more cope, more sleep.

And, when the day rolls back around for Joe to go back to work, as he's putting on his boots to get ready to slave away once again, he immediately stops in his tracks. In just a single moment, Joe has an experience that feels like it spanned over years of time.

Joe has a flashback of doing the exact same thing that he's doing now, and the path that it lead him down on the first go around. He remembers more pain and less sleep, more rain and less eat. He remembers more work and less rest, and he remembers chronic fatigue and a stagnating mind. He remembers every

step that lead him down the path towards getting his soul slowly ripped away from him that has left his mind with unforgettable scars that still bring him anxiety and discomfort.

As he's snapping back to being present in the moment, he's stuck. He's in the middle of tying his boots and as he's having this powerful sequence of thoughts, he can't get himself to finish tying them.

He can't bring himself to finish tying his boots because he knows of exactly what comes after. The pain, the misery, and the suffering, all from an experience that he used to be able to brush off so promptly.

He can't do it, he won't do it. He looks up at the clock, another few precious minutes gone. If he's going to do something he has to do it now. He's crouching here, stuck, staring at his shoe, experiencing a post epiphany hormone wave, thinking about how he has to go stand in the same spot for 8 hours and flip burgers and fry potato clippings, or sit in the same spot for 8 hours and punch keys and read emails, or whatever it is that's so mind numbingly basic of an activity set that he has to do for 8 consecutive hours of his time, with a 30 minute lunch smack dab in the middle.

In an impulsive decision, he takes off his boots and stands in his hallway for a minute as the internal storm happening within his mind is trying to find some solid ground to reason about what to do. He knows he needs the money from work, his livelihood is quite literally on the line if he doesn't get it; but he also knows that going to work in the state that he's currently in is going to feel like a lifetime compared to if he was healthy. In an attempt to quiet the storm, he quickly goes upstairs and crawls under the comforter on his bed in an attempt to ease the incredible discomfort.

As he's curled up in the fetal position under his blanket, he checks the time on his phone. Two minutes before he's going to miss the bus. And he already has to sprint to make it. Too late, right? He should just call in, right? It's basically impossible for him to make it to work now. Surely, it's too late, see there's only—oh, see there's only one minute left. Surely impossible.

Joe thinks about what he's saying. Part of his mind is trying to come up with any reason as to why staying under this comforter is going to be the best move, while the other part knows that a) he needs the work, and b) even though there's only one minute left, it actually *is* still possible for him to make it. And, the angel on his shoulder wins, as the sequence of events needed to get ready for work now are quickly played in the forefront of his brain.

Oh fuck. There's only one minute left. Fuck. Are we really doing this? We're really doing this. Fuck.

Off in a subdued sprint, Joe jumps out of the bed that he just crawled his way into, as fast as his crippled nervous system lets him, in order to get ready for work with the few seconds that he has available. Clothes on, keys and wallet in pocket, Joe throws his boots on and sprints out the door in order to catch the bus. And after he barely catches it, he's hardly able to breathe a sigh of relief, for his mind can't help but envision what the next 8 hours of his

time is going to look like; pure misery.

Joe gets to work, body and mind feeling like they've already worked for 16 hours, and now is expected to perform in the presence of others on some task that means nothing at all, but at the same time, somehow everything there is—to his manager, at least—with rest only able to be taken at predetermined intervals. That's four, two hour blocks, with a couple ten minute breaks, and a 30 minute lunch sprinkled in; generous if you ask the rule-makers.

Now, two hours to someone in the average might not seem like it's all that big of a deal, but, as someone who lives in the non-average, let me step in for Joe here and say what his decaying mind can't fully put into words right now. Two hours can feel like a lifetime when energy levels are in the negative and sleep and diet are right there alongside of it. Imagine the sickness that the flu brings to the body, and the exhaustion that comes alongside of it, and then imagine having to feel that feeling, on your feet, for 8 hours, doing the same bullshit thing, all while having to smile and greet customers that are often times assholes. Imagine being so anxious that your nervous system literally couldn't handle even the slightest bit of confrontation; feeling like you're about to break down crying when someone complains about napkins not being put into their bag, when there's a fucking napkin dispenser right next to the drink machine. And, imagine being so depressed that the only activity that you can do well is the one where you shut off your body and mind and have them do nothing—and even that, you have a hard time doing. And then imagine having a mind filled with all of these thoughts as it exists in a setting that requires adaptive problem solving and active listening to be able to not get yelled at for not doing your job correctly.

All of this to say, time is relative; and to the exhausted subset, time is *l o n g*.

Joe suffers through his four, two hour chunks by suffering through eight, one hour chunks by suffering through thirty-two, fifteen minute chunks, by suffering through four hundred and eighty, one minute chunks. As hard as every second is to get through, Joe knows that he can make it by the minute. And so he does.

More work, and need sleep, shitty eat, only here for heat.

And as Joe suffers through his blocks of misery, over and over again, he begins to think again. He begins to think about the ones with the power, and what sets them apart from the ones without it. A clarity of thought fueled only by a glowing rage of frustration and anger towards the misery that he must endure, as he watches the clock tick by the minute to rest his heavily fatigued nervous system.

During his ten minute rest from hell, he continues to think about how he belongs to a group of people that are being herd like cattle by another—much smaller—group of people, and how this upsets him. And how his life doesn't have to be this way, slaving away his time only to make enough money to slave

away more of his time. He thinks about a balanced world, one at equilibrium with its own set of ecosystems, and how this image is being torn apart and burned by the greedy. And how—BEEP BEEP BEEP—ohp, break's over, time to get back to suffering; thinking isn't rewarded here.

Joe reaches into his pocket to pop another anxiolytic to cope with his existence, and as he's pulling the pill bottle out of his pocket, his heart drops. He looks up with eyes wide and starts to breathe heavily. His worst nightmare. His pill bottle is empty.

Oh no, oh no, oh no, fuck, fuck, fuck. What am I going to do, I completely forgot to get this refilled, fuck, what am I going to do? I can't go without this right now, fuck, this is bad. Oh no, oh no, oh no, here we go again, oh no, oh no oh no oh no, fuck fuck fuck.

Heart rate is up, way up, pupils are dilated, heavily dilated, he's sweating from the face, his muscles are activated, and his nervous system is trying its best to prepare for disaster; Joe is having his second panic attack. Except this time, it's at work.

Joe falls to his knees, trying to catch his breath so that he doesn't die, with his heart rate going back and forth between 150bpm+ and 35bpm-. Upon seeing Joe fighting for his existence, his coworkers are forced to call an ambulance.

Joe blacks out but manages to stay alive, as he's transported by way of a \$1,000 taxi service to the nearest hospital (yes, even with insurance). Joe wakes up in a hospital bed and leaves the same day with newfound damage to his reputation, his mental health, and, most importantly, his wallet (Go USA!). On his feet, but looks as if he shouldn't be, Joe shuffles his way home with time off of work to rest and recover.

And so it goes. Sleep is more, pills are more. Sleep is less, pills are more. Sleep is even less, pills are at the most. Eat is no, stress is up, what day is it again? Headaches are yes, cope is maxed, tobacco is new, caffeine, you too.

Joe fights his way through days that only seem to be throwing punches, only to find himself in a situation similar to the one he found himself in before. In an attempt to stay alive, Joe ends up losing his second job—the one that was only being held up by the 250 mg pill he was taking every morning—through a similar case of needing more rest when it was instead time for more work. Joe slowly spends his time falling further and further down a pit that he will feel to its fullest in not too much longer, and, at some point, the now doubled down, chronic fatigue catches up to him, and his hand is forced to take yet another drastic route. It's time to call his grandma-ma.

Broke, job-less again, credit card debt, medical debt, and addicted to SSRIs, benzo's, tobacco, and a handful of other mild recreational drugs, the true damage is still the one done behind the scenes. With the process of shattering glass floors, the consequence for all the next iterations of falling is that Joe is no longer going to stop at the layers that he once did before. Every time that Joe is faced with adversity—as he's currently in an adverse attractive state—he

goes all the way to the new bottom. A tunnel that leads to the same spot that it just did lead to last time, except, this time, dug just a little bit further out; the bottom, just a little bit lower, and the tunnel, just a little bit wider. By workings of his mind, Joe is now forced to feel the full effect of his negative experiences upon every new instance of any little thing that sets him off towards a downward spiral.

And, being in such a fatigued and vulnerable state, Joe is very excitable, for his nervous system is constantly unhinged. So how does Joe cope with the shitty state that he's found himself in, when he's already coped-out? Simple, he ups his dosage.

At home with grandma-ma, Joe takes his time trying to recover from something that becomes increasingly harder to do as the days pass him by. He goes to get his SSRI dosage upped in an attempt to gain any source of well-being back, and receives news that triggers him on yet another downward spiral... "We can't go any higher. Doing so would be too dangerous for your health."

Oh fuck. And here he was, thinking that the acute case of not having medication available was bad. Now, he's being told that there's nothing else for him to take today, tomorrow, or the next day that will ease his passage into a decrepit state that represents the rotting of a once prosperous, innocent child's soul. These pills serve entirely as the backbone of strength and energy for people to perform what they need to do just to get by in their daily lives. If it's the case that someone needs to up their dosage, it's likely that they're already in a bad state when they figured this out; otherwise, the dosage wouldn't need to be upped. And so, in a bad state already, hoping that there exists something that makes that bad state just a little less bad, you can imagine the feeling of losing this tiny drop of hope in an otherwise hopeless time.

The effects of this permeate through Joe's soul as if he has just received news of a passing of a loved one. Joe is now forced to cope in the exact way that was trained out of him by ingesting a prescribed pill every 24 hours; by coping without one. He doesn't know how to go about dealing with more stress in a way that doesn't involve taking more pills. So, where does he turn? To the Buddhist monks? To the DMT drug lords? To the church? Fuck no. He turns to a stronger drug. Except, not a prescribed one; a recreational one. And, the easiest pickings? Alcohol.

The less sleep and shitty eat and way more drink catch up to him and he acts out in a way that also makes his grandma-ma responsible—both monetarily and emotionally. A stupid stunt that lands Joe in the hospital yet again, his grandma gets called there to pick him up and take him home; a case of acute alcohol poisoning that demanded a stomach pumping.

As Joe is laying awake in the hospital bed, thinking about how he can't afford any of this help, waiting to have to explain his situation of being "too tired" that's causing him to act out to an old lady who carved her own path from nothing—through the great depression and world war no less—he feels an extreme amount of guilt and regret for getting his innocent grandma-ma in-

volved with his bullshit. It pains him, but not enough to find the energy to get up and do the actions required to start getting healthier.

But it does pain him enough to begin his coping before she gets there. He looks around for his benzo's that he's been popping like jolly ranchers, but they seem to be nowhere around.

"Nurse?"

"Yes?"

"Where is my Xanax? I've been taking Xanax for the past X months, I need to take my Xanax."

"I'm sorry, but I can't give you that. You're going to have to wait to speak to the doctor."

"Can't give me that? Oh boy, one of us is about to be in serious trouble."

Joe tries explaining simply... "Look, if I don't get my Xanax, we're going to have a problem. I will start going through withdrawal. No one here wants to see me go through withdrawal."

"Look, I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do for you. You'll just have to wait."

Oh fuck, here we go again.

Joe begins acting out, seriously acting out, enough so to where the guards are called. But Joe here, despite having a malnourished physiology, is able to easily recall the wrestling he did back back in school—back when he was a healthy individual—when he's fueled by rage de withdrawal. It takes more than just a couple of pesky security guards to hold him down as he has a newfound fire inside of him to keep his global one still lit. The cops are called, and as they show up, at about the exact same time, Joe's grandma arrives at the hospital to pick him up.

Joe's grandma gets the pleasure of watching the spawn of her own spawn go through a fit that no parent should have to see *any* child go through—much less any human. Joe is thrashing and flailing and screaming and trying to do anything to subside the pain from the rift that is beginning to form and tear apart deep inside of his body. In the car, Joe's grandma was planning on the talk that she was going to give to Joe during the car ride back to try and help him get his life back on track. Now, she's thinking about if she has enough liquidity to bail Joe out of county jail.

Joe, on the other hand, is going through a process so painful that it can induce suicide, and is now being put behind a set of bars so that he can suffer on cold concrete for being the pesky degenerate that he is. He's being shoved into the back of the cop car, screaming and spitting and cursing, while Joe's poor, innocent grandma is having an officer explain to her how she can go visit him and bail him out; all with tears in her eyes and a part of her soul, tainted forever, having to see the boss fight that is cops trying to detain a drug user going through withdrawal.

Joe, in the back of the cop car, is now in a story that no longer favors the main character. If we analyze Joe's state, we see just how bad it actually is. Besides the obvious things like no money, no job, lots of debt, mental disease, and now, going to jail, there's even more goodies packed within for lucky ole Joe.

On top of all of that, Joe has developed serotonin syndrome on top of his already existing depression. Just thinking about this combination of symptoms makes me want to kill myself. That is a reduction upon a reduction of a very much needed neurotransmitter and hormone, one that affects mood no less. By fueling into the never-ending cycle of consuming more of a cope that was only meant to be a band-aid, Joe's endocrine system is what pays the final price.

Serotonin syndrome isn't like the common cold; it doesn't come and go in the matter of a couple of days. Serotonin syndrome is something that gets developed over the course of months and months and months (except in the acute case of something like molly or ecstasy), and likewise, is something that is gotten out of over the course of months and months and months. Maybe as I might convince some of you later, the body works in a very gradual fashion, with buildup for certain diseases happening long before the chink in the armor is actually shown.

So, before Joe is even able to function as a human being on his own again, he has to deal with the situation that is his maxed out medication vs his serotonin withdrawal. Where, delaying the first is only going to delay the second. So, before he even considers finding another minimum wage job and eating better and sleeping better and taking less drugs and living a healthier life, he needs to get to the point where he feels comfortable being able to wipe shit from his own asshole; a process that, in his case, is going to take at least a few months, but, more likely closer to a year, if not more.

When thinking about the length of time it's going to take for Joe to "pull himself up by his own bootstraps," it's enormous. Joe somehow has to figure out this beast of a monster of mental dysfunction, and has to figure out a consistent way to stop him from wanting to crawl up under a blanket all day long. He thinks about the years that it's going to take him working bullshit jobs and climbing bullshit ladders, all for bullshit pay, and how, during this whole time, his body and mind are going to constantly feel like they're on the verge of shutting down on themselves, and upon thinking about all of this, Joe has a very hard time seeing the good in his life for the next couple of years at the very least.

For, now, during the entire process that Joe fights for his life as he climbs out of this very deep hole that he has dug himself into, every single setback that he experiences on his journey out of it is going to be akin to falling to the same level as the times that it was the worst. The precedence of the bottom has been set to the absolute lowest that he has ever felt, and for Joe, this is pretty damn low.

Years and years of climbing a muddy hill, just for every single slip to send you to the very bottom of the hill; how depressing of a scenario. And, of course,

this is all on top of a situation where chronic fatigue is still a factor, and energy levels are at all time lows. The body is doing nothing other than trying to recover its damaged systems with the little nutrition that it's getting, combined with the poor quality of sleep that it's also getting, making the process even more cumbersome.

As Joe thinks of all of this in the back of this cop car, it sets off the beginning of another panic attack. Except, this one is immediately too much for his taxed physiology to handle, and he passes out similar to last time. His body goes into rapid recovery mode in the back of this cop car, all while the cop is just looking forward to be finished with paperwork, and, after just a short while, Joe gets woken up by the dong of the church bell that the car passes; the stroke of midnight.

And, as he hears this church bell ring, he's struck with a very powerful memory. Joe is snapped back in time, to 12:00 noon, when he was doing his groceries and laundry, every week on Sunday. Oh how stable that time was; how predictable everything was that came and went. Joe longs for such a time. He snaps back to being present in the cop car as they hit a bump, and he gets hit with a wave of sadness and nostalgia.

How he wishes he could go back, before all the pills, before all the medical debt, before he was forced to get a credit card, to when his only worries were which one of the routes was the fastest way to get to the store every week. He thinks about the thousands that he's down, what it's going to do to his grandma, and if she's even going to let him live with her again or if he'll have to suffer through his laundry list of conditions inside of a homeless shelter.

And then, Joe has a thought that he's never had before. One that gives him hope, but because it gives him hope, it also unsettles him. Joe realizes something that's very scary for the novice mind... he realizes that his situation would be much better off if he was dead.

He realizes that he can skip the years of hard work and pain and suffering and misery to himself and his poor grandma-ma by just putting an end to it now. That he doesn't have to go through the whole process of getting better if he just nips it in the bud to begin with.

As he has these thoughts, it's going to be very natural for an instinctual part of his brain to bring the wishing mind back to reality. Whether it be a memory, or a relationship, or some love of something, something will be done to pull the soul back to the light once this initially happens.

But unfortunately for Joe, this isn't going to be an isolated occurrence. Because now, now that this thought has been had, oh boy, is there danger to be had. Every single time that Joe comes across adversity when climbing this muddy hill and all—a moment that will occur quite frequently—his mind is going to default to the groove that tells him that he should kill himself. Upon every failure, upon every setback, upon every missed opportunity, the first line of defense: suicidal ideation.

Years and years of having to fight adversity head on, feeling shitty the whole time you do it, and having thoughts of suicide every single time you make a tiny mistake—mistakes that are doomed to constantly happen. Can you imagine the feeling of this scenario? The pain that this could bring to a tortured soul?

Joe sits with the fact that he's going to get no vacation from himself for so many months to come; no break from his hopeless pre frontal cortex that just wants to be heard. An internal storm, trying to be rectified by spoon-fed serotonin, one that doesn't pass upon simply waking up to a new day. Worse than nightmares, worse than headaches, worse than fatigue, as it is all of those and more; this isn't something that passes with chance, not even with luck.

This, this feeling, of hopelessness combined with suicidal ideation combined with chronic fatigue combined with grief of the damage that you've caused to the loved ones around you, combined with a mind that is constantly relaying the most negative thoughts that it can come up with to you, this, this is what depression feels like. And, for those of you in the average, for the ones who will never feel it... you have been blessed by a God that I don't even believe in to have gone through a life without ever feeling this feeling.

This feeling isn't one that comes and goes like all other feelings. It's an all encompassing darkness that culminates in silence, slowly tearing apart someone's life piece by piece, as they actively watch themselves become a shell of the person that they once were. This is not a disease that plays its role and then goes away. It's one that morphs to the role until it becomes the role. It's a demon of a beast that only exists in the shadows of one's reality until it has found its way to completely envelope their entire physical and mental being, at which point it latches on with a bite that doesn't miss. Scary enough to get people to think about suicide, and painful enough to get them to actually do it.

Depression is a unique son of a bitch because it has a couple of things working for it that makes it quite the effective disease. For one, similar to that of cancer, it's one's own body against itself. Except, instead of just having the body to deal with, the mind gets involved as well; compounding any negative experience that's felt. No bacteria to kill, no tumor to take out, no problem to rid. Just a body that's fighting to stay afloat, and a mind that is under so much siege that it's willing to take the final option, the one that goes against every instinctual gene in its body, just to stop the madness.

Combining with this, depression also cripples the mechanisms required to get rid of it. For someone to get out of a depressive slump, it takes consistent hard work and effort over a lot of consecutive days. Depression isn't something that a shot can get rid of, it isn't something that someone can do for you, and even the pills given to treat it aren't meant to attack the disease, but rather, to give the person the platform that they need to instill healthier living habits. Demanding proper flow of hormones and neurotransmitters in a state of extreme distress isn't going to come from systems that are completely crippled by a disease that doesn't manifest itself as a foreign invader.

As time goes on, this becomes harder and harder to do. It's not like you get depression and then you just deal with having it. It's a road that only leads one way unless deliberate effort is used to get out of it. Like a slow descent into quicksand that speeds up when it gets close to the neck, what other disease is completely curable but becomes harder and harder to get rid of with every passing moment?

This presents people that are going through a depressive episode with a truth that brings an incredible amount of grief. That they are the ones that must do what needs to be done, and that no one else can do it for them, and that the longer that they wait, the more likely it is that the groove that leads to suicidal ideation gets realized into reality at some point.

On top of all of this, even if the depression is to be defeated, its mark in the form of an undiggable groove now has the potential to last for a lifetime. Meaning that, if you are a person who is predisposed to feeling the weight of negative experiences heavier than, say, someone in the average, then you might have a real tough time stopping the trains of thought that you once knew so well from taking over; except, this time, faster.

As they say, what's dug can't be un-dug, son; and you better believe that the mind is going to have a hard time forgetting about an experience as substantial as a depressive episode.

Depression is quite the beast, and any attempt to downplay its ferocity is ignorance to what it can truly do to a human being. Currently, our best solution to fighting such a disease is a masking of the pain by playing god with our endocrine systems—an already godly creation—to distract from the feeling that one is living their life under a wet blanket as well as dangerously armed with the knowledge that they will be for quite some time. A massive oversimplification of a massively complex system, with our best train of thought being something along the lines of, serotonin leads to happy, so more serotonin must lead to more happy; a band-aid at best.

Depression presents a complicated problem. One that I believe has a very simple solution. In a world where we go back to living in the environments that we were bred from, living in the best way that we knew how, depression is not something that commonly exists within tribes of humans. In a world where we live off the land, by the land, for the land, instead of taking it all into our own hands, cases of depression would be few and far between.

The problem is complicated. The solution is not. But we will never have the solution. At least, not any time soon. Because there seems to be some attachment to the idea that human progress is linear and unidirectional, and how, going against the grain of technological progress is akin to de-evolving as a species. Those of us who want it so bad, who need it so bad, will never get it, for the hands of the vile, greedy few at the top are vile enough to keep us from having it.

Because of how simple I claim the solution to depression is, it is not the problem that this first story is revolved around. Because, in short, we can easily solve depression by introducing a natural, from the land, for the land

diet, with 8 hours of sleep on a circadian rhythm and daily exercise, and a responsibility within a tribal-like setting—one rich with social connection and bonding; so simple, that anyone can do it.

What I mean to say is that the theory behind solving a problem as complex as depression isn't actually all that complex. In a world where we live so far off from the conditions that forged us, it's easy to speculate that, hmm, maybe it's sitting in a chair for 8 hours a day, and staring at screens for 14 hours a day, and consuming any mix of seed oils, refined sugars, and pesticide sprayed flour as the main constituents of our diets, and scrolling endlessly on social media feeds, and living alone and separate from our families and friends, and lack of exercise, and everything else that is making us all collectively feel like shit.

Not the medication that's not being taken, but nevertheless is being advertised to us on TV in between downs of watching our favorite football team play. The antidepressants that are gulped are effective enough to keep people from killing themselves, so we collectively shift our attention to more pressing matters at hand; like whether the color of the dress is blue or gold.

But I did have to start somewhere to get those in the average acquainted with a different reality. One where time isn't spent choosing between options, but instead spent surviving as the only one. No, the problem that I wish to talk about is a related one, but a different one entirely. And to understand this problem, it's best if we shift our attention back to Joe.

There's a reason that you and I, gods of time if you remember, have chosen to study Joe. You see, our situation is a little bit different from that of Joe's.

Off in another universe, you and I belong to a unique race of gods; ones that can control time. Forward, backward, we control it all at the snap of our fingers. We live amongst other gods of time, off in an ethereal cloud of space dust—one made up of the same stuff that heaven is made out of—in a universe different from the one that humans live in.

Along with our control of time, we possess a lot of other abilities that a human might call "godly;" too many of them to name. But, one in particular, is that we possess the capability to travel back and forth freely between universes, just as freely as we can travel back and forth in time.

Amongst our species, or more particularly, our local tribes, there exists dominance hierarchies similar to the ones that we observe on the planet Earth. You and I exist somewhere in the middle of this hierarchy, taking orders from the *supreme* gods of time above us, and then taking orders from the *gods of the supreme gods of time* above them.

You and I are trying to get our wings, the ones that will promote us to being supreme gods of time, thus unlocking a whole new range of capability and power. In order to do so, our supreme god above us has given us a list of

problems that we must solve. If we manage to solve all of the problems on the list, we get our wings.

For, in this universe of ours, the only currency that is recognized by all the gods is knowledge. If we can all go backward and forward in time freely, visiting other universes and timelines as we please, anything of material becomes worthless, for its accumulation can easily be had by any of the gods.

But knowledge is different. Because even though these gods can travel anywhere and any-when they want, finding specific knowledge still requires that they observe the *right* places at the *right* times. And so, if we are able to find solutions to the problems that we've been given, by either crafting the results for ourselves with direct influence, or by finding the moment in time that produces them naturally, we give our supreme god above us a leg up, so that he can work his way towards being a god of the supreme gods of time.

You and I have chosen to study Joe because we believe that he is going to help us solve one of the problems on our list. You see, there is a part to Joe's story that I didn't give on the first go around that was crucial to understanding the downfall of Joe's life into the pits of depression. Joe has a predisposition; a very important one.

Whether it be an uncontrollable looping neuronal network, an unstoppable endocrine disruptor, a learned behavior pattern, or simply a maladaptive thought sequence, it's unimportant what the exact mechanism is, so long as one exists (and, because this is my story with my characters, I birth one into being just by saying so). What's more important is that, whatever the exact mechanism may be, the manifestation that bubbles up into his reality is one that makes depression (and anxiety) more likely than someone without this predisposition; Joe is a stray from the average.

Joe's predisposition makes its presence known about to him in the form of something that is directly related to the problem that we must solve. In fact, Joe experiences the exact thing that we must solve. Joe has the problem of obsessive thought patterns; constant and consistent one-two-three's.

This chronic repetition of thought in the human brain proves to be one of mystery to our community of gods, one with a bounty for whoever can solve it in the form of an increase in reputation amongst the other gods. With the motivation behind solving this problem being double fold, we are quite keen to be the first pair of gods to solve this problem. And to do so, we have chosen Joe to be our subject of study, for better or for worse for Joe's sake.

You and I, we knew that Joe was going to become depressed way before it happened. In the process of looking at different humans to pick which one to study from, a lot of time was spent studying a wide variety of creatures experiencing this same issue before a selection was made particularly on Joe. During that process, a lot was learned on the patterns that exist within the human race; and more particularly, the patterns that emerge from humans that experience a chronic case of obsessive thought.

We've seen case after case of people fall to the throes of depression, the ones who experience the worst of the obsessive thoughts, way more often than those who exist in the average. There's something about either the physical (with neurons) or nonphysical (with something we don't fully understand) looping method that correlates heavily to neurological distress, which leads into physical distress. A correlation that we can't help but pick up on as we look through the library of lives.

We stopped particularly on Joe because he possesses a characteristic that is perfect for testing the plan. My plan. My plan on how you and I are going to solve the problem of obsessive thought.

Joe has a very poor memory. Not a case of dementia, but much more likely to be a case of an underdeveloped brain region related to his long term memory (his mom was a drinker). But as to the exact cause and reason why, they're unimportant. All we care about is the fact that he has a hard time remembering things in the long term, but is still able to function on a day to day basis just like anyone else (maybe except for a few bumps along the way).

It's perfect for the execution of my plan; you're going to love it. I think it might be the one that gets us to be the first ones to solve this problem so that we can get one step closer to getting our wings. And if it works, drinks on you afterwards.

What it is you ask? Well, why don't I just show you in action instead of telling you. Let's go introduce ourselves to Joe.

We spawn in front of Joe, at the period of time picking up right where the depression story ended, with Joe in a very poor physical and mental shape. We make ourselves visible to Joe as floating clouds of glowing dust and speak to him in the friendliest tone that a god of time can have with a mere earthling.

"Hello Joe. No need to worry, we come in peace. Allow us to introduce ourselves. We are gods of time, coming from a distant universe that is unknown to you. We are all powerful, all capable, and are only somewhat merciful gods that have come to discuss something with you."

Joe is clearly shaken up by what's happening, but eventually pulls himself together to be attentive to what we have to say.

"We have a gift to offer you Joe. But this gift doesn't come for free; it comes with a price. The price of time. You see, you won't receive this gift until after we are done with our work together, something that might take a long time. As much as we wish we could give you the gift upfront, we're afraid that this just isn't possible.

So Joe, what do you say, do you decide to work for us in exchange for a substantial gift that you will receive when we are finished?" we offer him, as if he has a choice.

Joe mumbles out a "sure" as he tries to not shit his pants, and we go ahead and take it as binding.

"Fantastic! Well then, let's get started. To begin, we're going to need you to take this." We use our fine control of gravity ability to inject Joe with a syringe

and plunge the plunger. “This, Joe, is water from the fountain of youth. Not literally, but essentially. You see, you humans turn out to be very intelligent. It turns out that your race, the same one that eats potato chips in lay-z-boys while watching Storage Wars, progresses medical science enough to figure out indefinite cell immunity from all pathogens and cancer cells, essentially creating an mRNA vaccine that allows humans to skip the whole aging process. So congratulations Joe, you’re now going to live for forever!”

Joe, still confused as to what’s going on, initially is fearful upon hearing such a statement, even though it was something that kid version of Joe would have always wanted. His thoughts now aren’t ones related to how much freedom he’s going to have, but instead, how much pain he is going to have to endure.

“We need you to be able to live for forever, so that you can experience the same boundlessness of time that we experience on an every-single-moment basis. We wouldn’t want you croaking in the middle of our science experiment now would we?”

Joe, wide-eyed, gulps.

“No we wouldn’t. So... it’s time we get started. We—”

“What do I have to do?” Joe interrupts as he finally finds the courage to speak. “It better not be something up my ass” he jokes, in an attempt to lighten the load on his nervous system.

“Relax Joe, we’re not porn producers. And besides, if we wanted something up someone’s ass, we could do a whole lot better than ole Joe Schmo. No, we want you because we know that you suffer from a problem that we happen to be very interested in. We hear that you suffer from having to go down the very dark roads that obsessive thought patterns have lead you down.”

Joe’s heart drops just a hair, and his eyes widen just enough to show how much he is interested in what we have to say.

“We want you to help us solve this problem, for solving it is in both of our interests.”

Joe’s interest is piqued.

“All we need you to do is to answer some really simple questions for us Joe. To start, tell us... what are you thinking about right now?”

Joe takes a few seconds to respond as he doesn’t know how, and eventually mutters out an “I don’t know” to buy himself more time.

“Joe, we’re going to need you think harder than that. Just answer the question as simply as you can... what are you thinking about right now?”

Joe takes some time to himself but can’t think of anything due to the fact that his body is still fighting shock. After a short bout of silence, we decide to light a fire under Joe’s butt by demonstrating our godly capability.

“Well, maybe you just need some more time to acclimate.” We back out of the picture and snap our metaphorical fingers and just like that, a year passes from the perspective of Joe’s obsessive mind.

We travel back to be in front of Joe and announce our presence once again.

“Hello there Joe. Remember us?”

Joe freaks out a bit, and then freaks out a lot a bit, as he remembers us giving him hope a year ago and then disappearing without warning or a return date. Initially fear, now a little bit of agitation, Joe decides to speak up about what we did. We, being understanding and somewhat merciful gods, let him say his piece even though we couldn't give less of a shit. Then, after the dust settles and his hormones get absorbed, we ask him the same question that we're still looking for an answer to.

"Now that you've calmed down Joe, it's very important that you answer this next question for us very carefully. Tell us Joe, what is on your mind right now?"

"This again? I don't know, I'm still shaken up."

"Would you like another year to think about it?"

Joe immediately begins to put his tail between his legs and apologizes for his actions.

"We don't need an apology Joe, we need an answer. And so, it's back to the year old question; hopefully you've come up with something better for us this time around. If you don't want us working with someone else instead, tell us Joe, what are you thinking about right now?"

"Uh, uhm," Joe's mind panics. "Uhhh, uhmmm.. apples. I'm thinking about apples."

"Apples?"

"Yes, apples."

"Apples. That's what you're thinking about, you're thinking about apples?"

"Yes."

"Well, I guess we have to start somewhere. Okay fine, excuse us for a second Joe."

We back out of the picture and I get filled with excitement to finally be able to share my plan.

Okay you ready to hear my crazy plan? Okay, okay, hear me out... what if we got rid of all the apples?

You look at me with a scorn of bewilderment, as if I'm just as crazy as Joe when he first said apples.

"That was your plan? To get rid of all the apples? That's what you think is going to get us our wings, by removing all the goddamn apples?" you tell me.

No, but hear me out... it could work. Maybe not in the immediate sense, but in the sense of what it can lead to.

"How? What universe do you want to travel to in order to prove to me that removing all the apples from Joe's existence is going to end up solving the problem of obsessive thought? How are those two connected in anyway?"

No, trust me, I'm on to something. We remove all the apples and then whatever is next, we then just remove that, rinse and repeat, all the way until there is nothing left; then, problem solved.

You take a moment to respond as you internally begin to question my competence as a god and how you ended up getting stuck with me in the first place to solve this list of problems.

"You do realize how long that's going to take, right? Much less, if you're even capable of removing whatever new thing that he's thinking about after you get rid of all the apples, not even considering if you're even able to completely get rid of all the apples or not. What sort of plan is this? How about you let me come up with a plan that will actually work."

And I, being confident in my approach to remove all the apples, put my foot down to how we proceed with the case of Joe.

We could do that, let you come up with the plan and all, but, you know what? We *always* do your plan. I want to do my plan for once. And even if it's stupid, I'm asking you... let's just do this stupid plan just this one time. You don't even have to do any of the work, I'll do it all. You can spend the whole time picking your teeth and twiddling your thumbs, I'm just asking for the opportunity to do it my way.

You take a moment to think about my request, and in a moment backed by a little bit of remorse and a lot a bit of aloofness towards to the issue, you reluctantly agree even though you're not thrilled about it, and I take off with excitement. "Wait here," I exclaim on my way out.

I spend the next 18 earth months setting up traps and plans and schemes to completely remove all apples from the entire Earth. I burn all trees, ruin all seeds, raid all the stores, dismantle the company, and even somehow manage to start a campaign to change the common saying to "eating an orange a day keeps the doctor away!"

I come back, metaphorically huffing and puffing as I'm filled with godly excitement to finally be able to boast my accomplishment to you.

I've done it, I've finally done it! All apples, completely gone. The chances of Joe ever thinking about apples again are slim at best.

You, unimpressed, congratulate me on my useless achievement. "What have you achieved? Like we both already knew, you're just going to have to rinse and repeat a few more billion times as he'll just keep coming up with new things."

Yes, but now we know that he won't be thinking about apples again.

We spawn in front of Joe once more, who hasn't seemed to change much from

the last time we saw him 18 months ago. He's still depressed, but hanging on to life with the little hope that we've given to him with the promise of our gift.

"Hello again Joe! I hope you remember your godly, science experiment partners, for we're back for more data collection. Tell us Joe, out of all the things in the world that you could be thinking about right now, what are you thinking about?"

Joe responds without initial deliberation. "What am I thinking about? How am I supposed to answer that when I'm looking at what I'm looking at?"

"Joe, we really would like for you to get on with answering the question. Need we remind you that for both of our immortal souls, the difference between 1 year and 100 years is trivial. But, for your human mind, the experience is far from."

Joe's eyes get wide as he has a sudden, rare memory of the year of prolonged, dwindling hope that we caused the first time we met. Upon reliving this feeling, Joe's mind snaps to the quickest thing that it can think of to answer the question.

"Oranges, I'm thinking about oranges."

If there was a way for an ethereal cloud of god dust to show defeat, it would be written all over my space complex. There's silence between all three of us as you are getting ready to pounce on the opportunity for a good ole 'I told you so,' and Joe is trying to figure out what him saying oranges has to do with us acting so weird.

Obvious to us now, when under acute stress, Joe's brain defaults to similar pathways of thinking that give rise to similar behavior. In his particular case, somehow simple fruits have been coupled in his brain with the idea of needing to pull information from a highly accessible source of learned knowledge very quickly. Maybe fruits was one of the first things that he learned of as child, maybe they were the first thing his mind was able to visualize, maybe it's something else, but whatever it is, it's unimportant.

What's more important is the fact that we're 18 earth months into working towards a solution and we're only 0.0000000001% of the way there. At this point, we could have also just been gods of human physiology and simply plucked the problem out of existence. But I'm adamant with my choice of continuing on this oh-so-silly path, much to your continued dismay.

You ask me what my genius plan will be this time; to get rid of all the oranges? Just to keep rinsing and repeating for a few more billion times? And I respond with something even crazier.

What if we got rid of all the food?

A moment of silence had from you who is now considering if my so called 'godly' brain actually belongs amongst the ones we're studying now. "Remove all food? How? Why? Did you even think about that before you breathed it into existence (metaphorically breathed of course)? How are you going to take away all food from an organism that is dependent on it to live?"

I told you at the beginning that you don't have to do any of the work, and besides, time is of no concern to us; so, bitch, let me vibe (I say, appealing to my godly ego of wanting to do it my way; and yes, I would argue that gods have egos—I mean, are you going to tell me that Zeus couldn't have used a therapist? But I digress).

It's my burden to bear so go back to twiddling your thumbs or taking a nap or holding your dick or whatever it is that you want to do with your time while I get back to trying to solve the problem my way.

You do a metaphorical eye roll and buzz off to leave me to it. And I, I get to thinking.

Hmm, removing all food... this one might be tricky...

85 earth years pass on by, at the blink of an eye for you and I, and I come back to you even more excited than the first time around.

You're not going to believe this, but I solved it. I actually came up with a way to remove all food from Joe's environment, once and forever.

"Bullshit. Show me."

Gladly.

We go and visit Joe and you see the creation that I have been working on for the past eight decades. We're in the middle of a valley with a river flowing by and plenty of trees on the outskirts and open fields in the middle. There's a small population of people living in primitive houses in the middle of this valley, untouched by anyone besides those who live inside of it. Upon entering the village, you notice that everyone inside of it is wearing a backpack for some reason. You ask me what the backpacks are all about it, and I instruct Joe to come over to us so that I can unzip one of them.

Wah-lah! Behold, my creation. So, I did some research with the aid of some nonethical human testing (only somewhat merciful if you recall), and I found something quite interesting. As it turns out, humans are able to survive solely on a mixture of bull shark stem cells, blood from the elusive Siberian tiger, koala semen, and the original fruit punch Jack3D, all the way until the end of their life cycles. Every single person in this village is wearing one of these rigs, with someone coming in at unknown intervals during the night to refill each of them with more of the life-sustaining fluid. On top of that, the people that have been selected to live in this village alongside of Joe are ones that also have memory issues. I have built a community of people that don't need food, aren't around food, and thus, don't ever think about food. I've done it!

You, slightly impressed this time, still turn to your repeated rhetoric. “Okay, but so what? We’re in the same scenario as last time. Let’s ask Joe what he’s thinking about again so that we can waste another handful of decades.”

Joe, who, is living a fairly better life now in this community of people, still suffers from the one thing that you and I are after; his relationship with what we call the obsessive thought pattern. Aware of this, we talk to Joe once more.

“Joe, hello again. I know you remember us this time, so I’ll get straight to the point. Our data collection needs to continue, so tell us Joe, what are you thinking about right now?”

“I’m doing better, thanks for asking.. dick. What am I thinking about right now? Well, it’s gotta be all the beautiful nature around me. The trees, the water, the mountains, the animals, the fields; all of it. It’s so wonderful, in fact, that I can’t stop thinking about it!”

“Oh don’t worry, we’ll help you with that. Back in a jiff Joe!”

We leave Joe’s presence and sit in silence for a bit as we both prepare for the discussion that’s inevitably going to happen. You, thinking you don’t need a reason as to why we should stop with this plan now, and me, already working on how I can remove all the natural elements from Joe’s life—making him revert back to depression as a likely consequence—sit in stillness as our thought patterns are wildly forming in drastically different ways.

You, annoyed with the silence, break it with anticipation. “Are we really doing this again?”

Indeed we are my friend. Patience, please.

You, not having the energy or desire to fight this fight, go back to your hibernation as I stew with my thoughts.

Then, there comes a period of repetition. For the next three hundred centuries, the cycle is the same. Joe presents something that he’s thinking about that seems impossible to completely remove from his life, you reluctantly agree to letting me continue on with the plan that you think is going nowhere, and then, after some arbitrary period of time where immortal Joe experiences the rise and fall of different human civilizations, I present a working solution to your still majorly unimpressed self.

Over and over again, this happens. And, in the process, something interesting to note. Upon each iteration, I increase my skill of being able to remove whatever arbitrary thing it is that Joe comes up with from his immediate environment. In the process of having the scope become narrower and narrower over time, I am forced to become better and better at coming up with solutions to successfully remove whatever it is from Joe’s environment. The only way for me to continue down this path is to rise to the needs of the occasion on each occurrence; a chiseling of a new skillset.

And poor Joe, destined to live for forever as our paltry science experiment, as his reality slowly becomes narrower and narrower upon each repetition of our acquaintance.

At some point after doing this time and time again, I come to you, with a metaphorically confident grin and a glowing complexion that you can feel in the fabric of reality before I even get close to your presence. You know something is up, and indeed, something is up. I've come to your presence with some very exciting news.

I've done it. I've finally done it.

"Done what?"

Done the impossible. Check it out.

We spawn out in a void of any light or energy; a vacuum of space.

"What is this place?" You ask.

We're in deep space. An area where there's no visible light from any distant star or structures for millions of light-years around.

You spot something else floating out here with us; a human. It's Joe. Upon recognizing you becoming aware of Joe's presence, I call out to him.

Say hello Joe!

"He can hear us?" You ask.

Not through vibrations in this medium, but through an antenna, chipset, and microphone that he has in his space suit. And check it out, he also has one of those life sustaining rigs that I made, but even more optimal. Turns out that garlic was more effective than the bull shark stem cells; who knew.

With this one large suit that he's in, it's holding enough life sustaining fluid to last for a very long time; that is, taking his very low energy expenditure into account. And, he can't even see this massive suit that he's wearing because of the blinders I put over his viewing window. His reality is completely devoid of stimuli. Joe, say something!

There's no response from Joe.

You, still confused at the situation you're looking at, ask me of the moment's importance. And I, who have been waiting for almost four earth centuries to finally be able to share the fruits of my labor with you, answer with,

Check this out. Hey Joe, I know you can hear me you son of a bitch so answer my question or else I'll make this thing a whole lot worse for you. Don't embarrass me in front of my friend Joe. Say it for my partner's godly ears to hear... what are you thinking about right now?

There's a pause and then Joe answers real slowly.

“There is nothing any more. Only nothing...” Joe’s voice slowly fades out. “Okay so you’ve ruined a poor man’s soul, so what?” you tell me.

Don’t you see? This is it, we’ve done it!

“Done what?”

We’ve solved the problem! No more obsessive thought patterns!

“You’re joking right? Poor old Joe floating out here in deep space is your example of how staying with your plan to the end is an answer to the problem of the obsessive thought pattern?”

I do indeed. Here, watch.

We say goodbye to Joe for now and teleport back to the planet Earth. We ctrl + f on Earth’s population and enter the keywords “obsessive thought patterns” into the search bar. Everyone that deals with this problem is highlighted for us to see, and within a snap of our fingers, they are all wearing the same space rig that was developed for Joe, and are all shot out to various regions of deep space; each to live the rest of their days much like how Joe is now.

Within another snap of our fingers, we fast forward a few earth years, and go to visit each and every person that was shot out to various regions of space. And, to neither of our surprise, none of them now have an issue with obsessive thoughts.

I boast my achievement once more to you, now armed with proof that my solution actually works.

Ha! And you were worried that we were wasting our time doing this plan!

You, at a loss for words, are experiencing a mix of frustration, confusion, and disappointment. But, in any case, you manage to get out, “Yeah, you might have solved the problem in some very specific case, but it’s in the most backwards way possible. It only works given a perfect set of circumstances, and even then, it doesn’t even address the problem directly. How is that considered a success in your mind?”

And I, who have been eating your shit for my plan this entire time, am now boiling over with excitement at the chance to finally make my claim as to why this whole thing was worthwhile.

You see, my fellow brethren of a god, what you don’t understand, and might not ever have the ability to understand, is that not every god gets the option of having the best choice available. Not all gods have the circumstances that grant them the top of the list, despite some of them being able to see the top of the list nonetheless. We didn’t all get VR Xbox 1440’s and World Destroyer for Nintendo 64³ in our godly youths. Some of us had to eat Cinnamon

O's Munch instead of Cinnamon Toast Crunch, and were given hand-me-down knowledge from gods above us in the hierarchical order—instead of us having the opportunity to find it for ourselves.

This whole time, this entire time that I was working on my plan, I knew that it wasn't the best plan available. I knew that I wasn't working with first place material, and hell, I couldn't forget it with you ramming it back down my throat upon every instance of me succeeding. I'm doing my plan because it's one that I believe in, and have believed in since the beginning, despite your constant noise telling me otherwise. It was a path that I wanted to explore, and, now, this path that I've explored, I've come to find out bears incredible fruit, and you're too blinded by your circumstances to see and appreciate biting into the sublime sweetness.

"Oh please, you act like shooting people off in space and making them forget everything is a proud solve of the obsessive thought problem puzzle. The only thing it is, is a subpar, barely functional solution that solves the problem only with a given set of circumstances."

Ahh, I see... you still don't get it. But, how could I expect you to see something that I've only been able to see from going through the exact experience that I did. So, I'll explain further. And in order to do so, it's going to help if we think about things a little more abstractly.

Our task is to solve each of the problems on our list of problems that we've been given. Let's think about solving problems in a general, abstracted way, instead of particular solutions to particular problems. If we think about the methodology used for solving any type of problem there is, there are two large buckets that one can use to arbitrarily categorize the types of solutions. Those of the direct type vs. those of the indirect type.

The direct approach is the approach that everyone is familiar with. In the direct approach, the problem is labeled as a problem, and the imaginary game of tug of war begins. A person, dealing with a set of circumstances that are labeled as being a "problem," is to come up with a sequence of events that directly changes the dynamics that this "problem" brings, in an attempt to mitigate the negative issues that emerge from its presence.

In the direct approach, there exists a see-sawing curve, where the power shifts back and forth between the problem and the entity trying to solve the problem. When breakthroughs are discovered, the see-saw moves in favor of the problem-solver. When the problem-solver is stumped, the see-saw moves in favor of the problem. That is, until, at some point, the problem-solver comes up with a solution that allows them to get off of the see-saw entirely.

The aim of the direct approach is simple; defeat the enemy. A deep understanding of the components at play is only secondary to coming up with a functional solution to the problem at hand. Essentially, if it works, it works, and no other questions need to be asked; there are other problems that need solving.

Compare this to the indirect approach of solving problems, a method that you might not even know exists. The indirect approach is used to refer to a sequence of events that indirectly changes the dynamic with the state that is being labeled as a “problem;” a sequence of events that aren’t necessarily directly aimed at the source of energy that is provided by the current state that is being labeled as this “problem.”

Easily seen through an example, imagine that you’re dealing with a school bully. The direct approach is to confront the bully, or to learn karate, or to tell a teacher or a parent, or something of this sort. An indirect approach could look something like your dad getting a job out of state and your family having to move. A sequence of events that was unrelated to the problem at hand, yet changed the dynamics of the experience that one has with this source of energy labeled as a problem; in fact, changed the dynamics of it once and forever.

The indirect approach is sneaky, as seen through the less hypothetical example of us using one to solve the problem of obsessive thought by shooting anyone dealing with it out into deep space wearing an advanced space rig. In some cases, the indirect approach can take a sequence of events that seems far off from a path that would lead to a total mitigation of the symptoms arising from this “problem.” Just like how getting rid of all the apples didn’t make any sense in the beginning, getting rid of all the apples had nothing to do with actually getting rid of the apples. It was simply the first step that was needed to set off a cascade of seemingly-unrelated events to get to a point of completion.

At first glance, the indirect approach might not seem like a solution at all. And, for the majority of the time spent developing this pathway, it’s not. The indirect approach to solving problems remains completely worthless up until the point in time where the entire set of actions sum together to create something of more value than the sum of the individual components. There’s a binary flipping of a switch that is provoked by the large amount of volume that it takes to get to the point of a working solution; at which point, the switch will stay flipped for quite some time.

If we were to compare these two methods of solving problems, you might initially think that the direct approach beats the indirect approach in every way. And to this, I would argue that the direct approach only beats the indirect approach in one way.

The amount of time, resources, and creativity that it took for the indirect approach was more than likely magnitudes higher than that of the direct approach. If instead, we were to have studied psychology and psychiatry and biology and the history of the human being and all of this jazz, we probably could’ve spit out a solution in less than five years time, given our seemingly endless capability here on Earth. But instead, we spent 6,000x that long, while probably doing 60,000x the work.

In this way, the indirect approach is blatantly subordinate to the direct approach. It took way longer and it took much more. But the direct approach comes with a very sneaky implication hidden away in its details, much different from the sneakiness that the indirect approach presents front and centered.

We have to remind ourselves that we're dealing with imperfect creatures, on an imperfect planet, in an imperfect universe. When we think about ideas and concepts and solutions to problems in their general forms, they're always going to be just a bit detached from the reality of these humans. We usually think about the solutions that we come up with as grand truths; perfect theory. When we imagine what it would have been like to spend those five years coming up with a direct approach, we also have to consider what happens after those five years are over.

Not to say that this *will* happen, but just consider this scenario that doesn't seem too far off of something that *could*. Let's say that we solve it directly after studying whatever it is that we have to study. It takes us five years, progress was made and progress was lost towards solving this problem, but, we finally did it—we solved the problem directly. Because of our actions here on Earth, we spark a new chain of events into existence that goes unnoticed by the traveling problem-solver.

Later on, while off solving a new problem on our list of problems, we just so happen to find ourselves in the timeline that exists 20 odd earth years after us having directly solved the problem of obsessive thought, on the same planet, studying the same creatures. We can't help but turn our attention to the solution that we once solved to see how it is faring with the passage of time. And when we look at how our solution played out over time, we see that something is off.

Because our direct solution involved person-to-person interaction at some point in the sequence of a person getting access to the solution that we created—whether it be a pill or a conversation or a surgery or whatever it is—we opened up our solution to influence from human imperfection.

It took these 20 odd earth years for a mutation to happen, stemming from the haphazard human practice of administering the solution to the masses by underpaying and overworking tired ass workers. The inevitable carelessness finally caught up to the DNA of the species, and so now, a new problem exists. Two new problems. Like a virus that splits into two different mutations, because of some idiot not doing what they were supposed to, there now exists a problem of distracted thought and the problem of obsessive, reoccurring nightmares.

Let's say that our supreme god above us gets word of this before we're done solving all the problems on our list. And, because our solutions are only valuable if they are solved in their absolute entirety, we're sent back to solve two new problems. Which, if we then took this one step further, maybe this cycle were to happen again later down the road after we've solved both of these two new problems, leading us to now having to solve four new problems. Maybe it takes longer for those four to show up, lighting a fire under our ass in the meantime, but, do we really want to deal with the stress of always having to worry that we'll have to come up with a new solution once a mutation inevitably rears its head?

Which brings me to my point; the one pro of the solution that I've come up with. If we look at the end game of how these differing solutions play

out over time, we find that the indirect approach gives rise to very different circumstances.

Let's say that Joe, floating off in space, eventually floats in range to see something new; a sparking of a pilot light that had seemed dormant for so long, Joe's mind instantly reverts to its best learned behavior and starts obsessively thinking about whatever it is that he just saw.

Our boss gets word of this, it's the same scenario, and we're sent back to deal with it. Except, instead of having to devote a lot of time and energy coming up with another direct solution that we might have to deal with again in the future—possibly double fold—we are instead tasked with something directly related to the one skillset that was just carved out over the much longer period of time that came before the working solution. The time spent solving harder and harder problems, ones of continuously narrowing scope, over the 30,000 odd years that we were doing this, makes dealing with another problem a piece of cake. For, dealing with these sort of problems is our area of expertise.

What's gained by going the long way around isn't the advantage that is given on the before side of the event happening; it's the advantage that's gained on the after side. Any new problem that we are tasked with solving, our capability to perform is fortified by the large amount of time that we dedicated to solving nonsense problems as we built up to a functional solution. We were provided no advantage of coming up with an indirect solution when our focus was narrowed to how it performed relative to the leading up of that solution, but are given one powerful advantage when looking at what happens after the solution is implemented.

If there existed a scale that rated solutions to problems against other solutions to the same problems, there are, in particular, two characteristics that would have to be accounted for in the standard ranking system; the demand of coming up with the solution, and the demand of up-keeping the solution after it has been implemented.

In the very general sense, putting direct solutions on this scale of solutions would have them score very high in the before portion of the judging—the demand of coming up with it. Humans have an insane ability to solve even the wildest of problems when we're given a specific direction, a statement that needs no explicit proof other than us having planted a flag on the nearest spinning space rock. This leads to a time crunch in the leading up to coming up with a solution, as it's the human's natural curiosity that leads them to the edge of what they know before fortifying what they already do know.

But, the scale that ranks how well direct solutions work after their solutions are implemented, due to the fact that humans aren't floating minds just yet—and are attached to imperfect biologies—it's almost guaranteed that there will be some changing in the original dynamic that the problem first presented us with, giving them, in general, a low score on the after portion. It might not always be the case that the direct solution we implement will be overtaken by the random mutations existing in the natural world that humans live in, but it is something that has commonly been seen throughout the history of this species.

For example, a direct solution to tuberculosis was once heroin. A direct solution for mental illness was once drilling holes in people's heads to let the demons out. A direct solution to creating a more superior race was to kill 6 million Jews. With humans, direct solutions advance the way of progress, but sometimes at the cost of doing so in a very ugly way.

I'm not trying to claim that Hitler was some hipster pioneer, but rather to say that it was only after he did what he did that the ideas related to it never happening again were actually able to be discussed by the other humans living on the same planet (which feels kind of off considering what's going on in China, but, I'm a god of time, not a mere earthling, so I'll just sip my tea on this one).

Direct solutions can be messy, because humans are messy, leading to inconsistent scores when considering the dynamics of how the solution and problem mesh with each other over time. Let's compare that to indirect solutions.

Obviously, indirect solutions score very low when being judged according to the demands that it takes for them to get to the point of a working solution. They're worthless up until a point of comprehensiveness is reached, and, it takes much longer to get to this point when compared to if we were to just explore the source of the problem directly.

But, when scoring the post-demands of up-keeping them rather than the pre-demands of creating them, they score extremely well. The one payoff that comes from dedicating a much larger chunk of time in the beginning of the process—essentially front-loading the work—is the robustness that emerges once it all comes together. It's like pieces of a puzzle that not only unlock some door when all the pieces are in place, but also essentially do so in a permanent fashion.

So, in a very generalized sense, we say that direct solutions are good before, and possibly bad after, and that indirect solutions are possibly bad before, but good after. What makes the indirect approach so enticing is only seen when considering a method that could negate the one blatant negative associated with this approach; a way to score indirect solutions so that they're good on both the before and after portions.

Consider this... what if we gave this solution of a space rig with a formula for life sustaining fluid, and everything else that went into getting to the point of a functional solution, to other gods of time working on this same problem?

If this were to happen, the one major con is completely washed away, as the gods of time receiving this solution don't have to go through the insane amount of time that we had to in order to get it. They won't get the added benefit of being able to deal with problems as quickly and effectively as the one who went through the process of creating it for themselves, but that's just the thing... they don't have to. From their point of view, all they would see is a completely free solution that didn't take anything at all to get.

And before you even ask how this is different from the direct approach in this regard, it's not. Both direct and indirect solutions can be shared with other gods of time if we wished to do so, but the difference is in the quality of the solutions. We could've spent a fraction of the time coming up with a

direct solution, and shared it with other gods of time, but this wouldn't change the fact that we're essentially giving these other gods the potential burden to solve new problems that they are not at all equipped to do so. But, by us front-loading the indirect solution, when we give it out to other gods of time, there's very little worry that action towards it will need to be taken again in the future.

There's nothing separating the share-ability of a direct vs. indirect solution to other beings, one just remains more resilient to change over time. It's the difference between coming up with a vaccine that will have to be modified in five years time, vs. the millions of light years that Joe will slowly be floating in space before he even has the chance of seeing something new.

In this way, the vast cost of the initial trip of coming up with an indirect solution weighs a whole lot less when it's averaged over the spread of other beings. If we were to give this solution out to thousands of other gods working on this problem, and consider the good that the initial 30,000 odd years does over the wellbeing of the thousands of individuals that it influenced, then, all of the sudden, 30,000 years for one set of gods to go through doesn't seem so bad.

"Your argument makes no sense," you tell me. "You've now based your argument as to why the indirect approach is better than a direct approach around an idea that you've just made up. Why would we give this solution out to other gods of time? Even if we wanted to be altruistic, nothing is to be gained by spreading the knowledge, for, when the first pair of gods turn in that solution, it immediately negate the benefit of anyone else having a solution exactly like it. We gain nothing by sharing the solution with other gods; how does this play a role in your argument?"

It doesn't. Not exactly. Because, you see, I'm not giving this solution out to other gods.

"Then who are you giving it out to?"

I'm giving it out to humans.

"Humans? What humans?"

The ones reading this book.

But, before I share it with you all here, there's someone in particular who needs to hear of it first.

We teleport back in front of Joe, and announce our presence to him for the last time.

“Joe! Buddy ole pal, how goes it? Listen, we’ll keep it brief because we know how busy you are rotting in a void of nothingness and all. We brought you a gift! We think you’re really going to like it.”

Joe takes a moment to respond, but he remains just as inanimate as before we spawned in front of him.

“Alright then, moving on... listen Joe, we—”

“Please kill me. End my suffering,” Joe is barely able to mutter out.

“Ahh, wakey, wakey, eggs and bakey; look who finally decided to join us! Relax Joe, try not to be so dramatic; what are you, Italian? Look, we come bearing fantastic news old friend. Do you remember that gift that we promised to you before we began our research together?”

Joe’s bionic eye lights up just a hair.

“Well Joe, being gods of time and all, we possess a whole slew of abilities that you earthlings like to ooh and ahh at. For one, going forward and backward in time are things that we’re free to do at our leisure. We can watch your first civilization begin just as easily as we can watch the last one fall.

You see Joe, this ability doesn’t just exist for us. We’re also able to exercise it on any human that we wish to do so. Which brings me to my point... say Joe, how would you like to go back in time to before we first met, to a time completely devoid of our influence on you, except for one eansy-teansy little detail that we change about your life... what if we gave you the solution to the problem of obsessive thought?”

Joe’s head lifts up.

“Come with us Joe, you’ve suffered long enough.”



A Solution

Okay, so what is this thing? Well, that's a complicated question. This thing is a lot of things.

It often changes its shape depending on the demands of the situation that it needs to be used in. But, one aspect of it that remains true no matter how it is used, is that it exists as an arbitrary categorization that can be used to organize a person's entire life; comprehensively so.

Categorization is a tool that the human brain uses to help it make better sense of what's going on around it. For those unfamiliar with the concept, it's helpful to start with the fundamentals.

Different humans experience life in many different shapes and forms, but there's one common thread between the way that all humans experience life. That is, all humans experience the *continuity* of time, with very slight deviations from a norm. Trees grow gradually, storms roll in and out, and puberty doesn't happen as soon as we're born. There is a continuous process of things going from one state to another, and we humans experience life as such.

When everything exists on such a continuous progression, it can be difficult to share specific ideas without first explaining all the broader ideas that are prerequisite. But, when we instead break up continuously happening events into discrete chunks, then communicating with these smaller, specific ideas becomes much easier.

There's a whole boatload of examples to choose from that exemplify situations where humans use categorization as a tool to help us make better sense of our realities. For one, consider light. The wavelength range of all possible colors of visible light is completely continuous. No gaps, jumps, or hops in the frequencies of the waves. Yet, we split these wavelengths up into discrete buckets that we call 'red,' and 'orange,' and 'yellow,' and so on. These are completely arbitrary lines that we draw onto the continuous spectrum of all wavelengths, and, by drawing these arbitrary lines, it allows for us to better communicate the idea of a color without both parties first having to know the exact wavelengths of the different colors.

When someone says red, the general consensus is that it's meant to refer to a certain *range* of wavelengths, not just one specific wavelength that everyone has honed in on. Colors exist as a categorization created by humans, for humans.

Another example of humans using categorization is in the way that we structure time. There are arguably only four dates that matter when it comes to

the point of view of the planet Earth that we live on; and they have nothing to do with Christmas, New Years, Labor Day, or any other made up holiday that we've created. The only four dates that Mother Earth cares about are the two solstices and the two equinoxes; the beginning of each of the four seasons.

On planet Earth, with its specific tilt, its specific axis of rotation, and its specific orbit, we experience each of these four days once every full cycle around our parent star (which for us, takes 365 day-night rotations).

But, four days every 365 doesn't make for much of a calendar. Maybe some 50,000 years ago, this wouldn't have been much of a problem, but today, in 2023, when people have every five minute block of their day planned out on their smartphone calendars, having only one day of reference for every 91 makes for a planning nightmare.

So, to resolve this, we further categorize the continuous event of the Earth going around the sun into more discrete buckets. We created the concept of the week, the concept of the month, the leap-year, the hour, the minute, and the second; all of these serving as arbitrary lines drawn in the continuous sand of time.

The last example of categorization that I want to shine some light on is the one that I'm using to write this text with; words. The purpose of a word is to convey meaning of an idea. Ideas, unlike words, are not discrete with clear-cut boundaries. Ideas exist in the abstract, nonphysical space hosted by our minds; a space which exists as being as continuous as the passing of time.

Much like the labeling of the different colors, and the seconds and the minutes on the clock, the use of words is a quick and effective way for us to better communicate and process what's going on around us with the environments that we interact with. But, using words as our main mode of communication doesn't come without its own shortcomings.

Much like how if I say the color 'red' to you, the idea that is created in your mind by reading the word here might not be the exact same idea as the one that I was trying to convey. What's lost by categorizing a continuous spectrum with discrete buckets is the exactness of the message. Sure, saying the word 'red' is quick and easy for anyone to get a general sense of the idea that I want to convey, but, saying the exact nanometer length of the wave of visible light—of the exact 'red' that I'm thinking of—is going to outperform the quick, categorized approach when it comes to the precision of the idea that I want to share.

With words, it's not always clear-cut as to which combination of them is going to best convey the idea that I wish to communicate. Unlike the use of colors, there isn't always a clear and obtainable ideal that can be referenced to as the best way to convey an idea.

Maybe its the case that the party trying to convey the idea doesn't have the proper means to get it across to another human in a way that they can fully understand it; or maybe instead, its the case that no matter how the idea is presented, the party receiving the idea doesn't possess the capability to understand it fully; and surely, every combination in between.

For a very simple example to help explain what I mean, check this out...
 4. Okay, now check this out... right. Which one of these ideas is more exact? The categorization of words is going to have an amount of nuance and bias that depends on who is giving the message, who is receiving the message, and the unique circumstances of the setting for its delivery.

All of this to say, I'm going to use discrete and arbitrary words to describe something that is not discrete or arbitrary in nature. On top of that, it might not be the case that I choose the best combination of words to describe this idea to every person reading this. And to those people, I apologize.

One of the few skills that my ego still takes pride in is my ability to explain complex concepts in simple ways that can appeal to the masses; but I'm also not perfect. I've done the best that I can to break this complex idea down to its bare-bones parts, but, because of both my limitations on the skill of my explaining, as well as the limitations imposed by chunking a continuous idea into discrete parts, the method that I've used here isn't perfect to say the least. And, until we find a way to link our hair together and share ideas and thoughts like in Avatar, it's not going to be perfect.

But that's okay. Because, a complete picture isn't always necessary to get the ball rolling towards understanding. Your brain—the one reading these words right now—is highly intelligent. My idea is that, if I give enough words—enough arbitrary categorizations—the intelligence of your brain will show itself in its ability to fill in the gaps that I've left for it.

It takes time for networks of neurons to connect with other networks of neurons, and for some, this could take quite some time. If this process doesn't happen immediately for you, give it some time. The brain will either sort it out on its own, or, granted that it has a desire to, will seek out more information so that it can.

Now, with all of this categorization preamble out of the way, I wish to share one more example of a categorization; mine. The one that I use to reason about life.

So, to get back to the original question... what is this thing? Well, it's a lot of things. But it's also no thing.

No product, no physical manifestation, no tangible collection of mass. No feeling of its intricacies, no grappling with its handles, no smelling it, no tasting it, nor no hearing it. Choosing just one set of words, or one pairing of adjectives, to describe this thing is too simplistic; so instead, I'll use a lot.

This *thing* is a **lens**. It's a window that can look into the past, it's a channeling of energy that can be directed in this moment, and it's a structured framework that can be used to predict the future. It's a way to process what has already happened, what is happening, and what is going to happen; a way to understand, reason, and infer. It can be directed in any direction of the user's choosing; without it giving its opinion as to how it's being used.

This *thing* is a **map**. It can be looked at from a perspective as zoomed out as possible, taking the whole map into account, just as well as from the perspective of an infinitely zoom-able point somewhere inside of it. It's a means of efficiently storing information that favors the visual system in the human brain; it represents a data structure that can hold as much information as information is required, without its complexity of search becoming astronomical for an astronomical amount of content. It provides routes from one location to another, it provides the topography of different terrains, and it serves as a reference for when direction is desired.

This *thing* is a **home**. It represents a place of comfort in an otherwise uncomfortable world. A free dwelling that can be customized to however one likes it; a dwelling that exists on the go just as much as it does in a physical location. It is a home that allows for changes in the structure, allows for different paint on the walls, allows for different types of cupboards to be swapped out, hell, it even allows for a swimming pool to be put on the top floor; the choices of decoration remain as choices. A home that can be accessed anywhere, anytime, even in the darkest of situations. It's an umbrella in the rain; order amongst chaos.

This *thing* is a **platform-giver**. It's a means of providing energy that didn't necessarily exist to the disposal of the user before its implementation. It allows for change, and keeps up with it as it does. It provides the user with the pair of running shoes that they didn't have before; it represents one's ability to do. It is a way for someone to change their reality in a structured and organized way.

This *thing* is a **boilerplate**. It needs implementation. It represents skeleton code that just does the bare minimum on its own. The true beauty of what a template can do is only shown through the beauty of its implementation. The rule sets to build are minimal and allow for an immense amount of creativity. In its unimplemented form, it represents neutrality as an empty canvas for one to create.

This *thing* is **easily shareable**. It can be drawn on a bar napkin just as well as be painted as a mural in someone's house. It allows for comparison between other individual implementations, without there being a universal ideal that any one of them can chase. It sparks healthy competition in a species to actualize the ideas that one most desires, the ones that can be shared with the desires of others. It allows for multiple people to operate under the same structure-coupling experiences between however many humans one pleases—just as well as it allows for private, personal discussion to be shared between individuals with drastically different backgrounds and implementations.

This *thing* is a **universal dialog** between your body, your mind, and your soul. It's given in a format that is easily understood by all parts that make up a human being, with all the components having read, write, and execute access to this whiteboard of ideas. It represents a channel for the subconscious mind to speak to the conscious mind; a channel for the body to request its needs; and a channel for the soul to delegate over both the body and the mind.

This *thing* is a **story**. It's a narrative that places the control of one's life into the hands of the one living it; as much as can be done. It can tell the main character how to think in a situation that they might not be able to think in otherwise, it can guide them towards acceptable behavior in an otherwise unknown situation, and it can produce emotion through a behavior function that can be tweaked and twiddled with.

This *thing* is **hope**. It can be used to actualize what's not currently here yet; a source of inspiration. It's a shoulder to lean on that provides as much comfort as comfort is needed. It can be used as a tool to steady-state a life that is otherwise not steady; a way to anchor one's core essence to an immovable rock during a passing storm. It's a thread that can be held onto, even when all of the other threads begin to pluck away.

And, this *thing* is an **identity**. It's a way for someone to look at themselves, share this view with others, and change the parts that are undesired. It's a source of confidence, even when the confident moments aren't remembered. It represents the backbone of the mirror into the implementer's soul—a truly individualized creation.

But, as many things as it is, it's also not.

This *thing* is **not** a get out of jail free card. It's not a way to deflect responsibility of actions already taken, nor a pre-john for deflecting responsibility of the ones that are to come. It can't be used in a court of law, just as well as it can't be used in an argument with a loved one; it is not here for pity, it is here for reflection. It can't be used to excuse the behavior of the one who implemented it, it can only help explain it.

This *thing* is **not** a get rich quick scheme. It is not something that gives its entire value upon immediate digestion of its components, but rather, can only be seen through the hindsight of its influence. It is not a way to bypass the gradualism of the body, and, it is not a way to bypass the requirement of energy when it comes to work (even though it channels energy that is already free to create).

This *thing* is **not** something that can be used to totally avoid negative feelings. Neither it, nor its implementer, have total control over whatever happens in the direction of the outside coming in during the processes that are our lives. External influence will always play an unpredictable part in the outcome that is the perception of any given moment, no matter if it's wished to be one way or another; and this doesn't always lead to sunshine and rainbows.

This *thing* is **not** something that can be forced. What goes inside of it is genuine to the person that it's meant to capture. Falsehoods naturally get plucked out as a consequence of repetitive attentiveness to the matter. It is something that flows with the current of energy that already exists; the flow of energy that's well out of our control. It's not crafting nothing into something, it's re-crafting what already is into something else.

This *thing* is **not** a procrastination tool. It is not meant to steady-state what doesn't need to be steady-stated. In times of acute stress, it serves as a

useful reference to what isn't being felt in the moment that it's being accessed, but, otherwise, it serves as a conveyer-belt that's always turned on, acting as the handler of the events produced by the passing of time. It is not meant to bypass what one knows needs to be done, but rather, serves it to them on a plate.

This *thing* is **not** a party trick. Its presence isn't meant for the validation or presentation to others; it is internally defined for internal use. It's not necessarily flashy, it's not necessarily sparkly, and, it's not necessarily always available for the communication to others; it is, however, internally relevant and understood.

This *thing* is **not** a perfect window into the chaos that is to come. What is to come is what is to come, as it's well out of the range of any of our predictions. Until humans have a much better understanding of the universe that we come from, we will never be able to fully predict what happens in the future of our lives, due to the chaos we perceive to be all around us. It is not meant to control the future, it's used to prepare for it.

This *thing* is **not** a solution to all of the dysfunction that exists. It is not the golden bullet that is meant to replace all of psychiatry; it simply represents an alternative. In a world where the best solutions aren't always readily available at a moment's notice to everybody, some means of control is better than no means of control. This thing is not meant to replace all medication, it is not meant to replace all therapy, and it is not meant to replace all conversations about dysfunction; it is meant to simply open up a new avenue for discussion.

This *thing* is **not** something that will keep every person reading this from killing themselves. Some very hurt people are going to be very hurt, regardless of the words that I type into this electronic box. This thing isn't something that is going to save everybody; that's a burden of impossible weight for any human being to bear.

And lastly, this *thing* is **not** you. Not entirely, that is. No matter how comprehensive and thoughtful and exact this thing is implemented, it will never be able to fully capture the entire essence that is a human being. All of the nuance, all of the complexity, all of the quirks that make us all stand out from the rest; these are things that no simple model has the room to hold exhaustively.

This thing is a lot of things. But it's also no-thing. But really, it's four things. Four things arranged in the shape of a diamond.

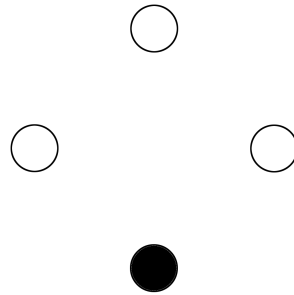
The proportions and the angles between the four things are insignificant. What's of importance is that there is a top, a bottom, a left, and a right.

Each of these four things is going to hold a group of related ideas in the context of human behavior, as this map in its entirety is meant to resemble one way that a person can organize their entire life. Each spot represents different modes of thinking from the rest—different ways to perceive the same stimuli.

The set of ideas and thought patterns that each of these spots is going to hold are going to be close, but not synonymous; meaning, it might be challenging to find a single word to comprehensively describe each of them. But, on the flip-side, there most likely *is* a word—a single word—that is going to be individually favored as the label for each of these buckets. These labels might differ from person to person, but, no matter the word chosen to describe each region, the underlying themes between everyone’s mental version will remain the same. And, although just a single word will always fall short to describe these things in their completeness, they do offer a quick and meaningful exchange of information; efficient shorthand.

Lastly, before getting into the meat of it, categorization rears its head once again as I attempt to explain one fluid map in discrete chunks. In practice, thoughts, ideas, and behavior within this map are all intertwined with multiple connections spanning across each of these four buckets; a mangrove that can be untangled upon it needing to be. Each one of these spots represents a pole of one continuous region; the areas that are most different from all the rest.

Clean cut in theory, controlled chaos in practice. Behold, I give you, my
Categorization of Life.



It starts at the bottom, where else would it start? The bottom is what everything else is built on top of; it's the foundation for any other structure. If the bottom is not taken care of, how is there to be an expectation for secondary layers to function properly?

The bottom is the place for all the things that have to be done; whatever it is that needs doing in order to do anything else. What does this mean for a human living in the year 2023 AD? At the bare minimum, food, water, warmth, sleep, supplies, and money are all needed—to some extent—to survive in today's climate.

Individually, each person will have a unique set of things that goes alongside this bare minimum core, with the size of this set being a function of how spoiled they were during their developmental years. For some, the bottom is nothing more than what's necessary. For others, the bottom is what they dedicate their entire life to perfecting. But for most, the bottom is nothing more than a stepping stool to what exists beyond it.

When asked for a single word—an arbitrary categorization—to label the bottom, I would choose the word “Health.” I used to prefer the term “Micro-life,” but changed it to health once I realized that there's nothing insignificant about taking care of one's health. It is a ritualistic, instinctual behavior that stems back through our genome over millions of years; there is nothing small or petty about that. So now, I like Health.

Health is something that is going to need to be taken care of for the entirety of one's existence. From sentient start, to too fast finish, health is a nonnegotiable requirement of living in this world that needs constant attention. Because of this, one should aim to optimize their methods for taking care of their health in a way that takes advantage of personal interests and motivations. Just because health is something that has to be taken care of for the rest of time, doesn't mean that it has to be unenjoyable. Finding activities that take care of one's own unique spectrum of health, while also being enjoyable to do, proves to be a more sustainable approach than forcing themselves to constantly do something that is undesired. Health is here forever, so we might as well get comfortable with our methods for taking care of it.

Instead of running, one can swim. Instead of swimming, one can box. Instead of boxing, one can stretch. Instead of stretching, one can breath hold. Similarly, instead of using a smart phone, one can use a physical calendar. Instead of working in a kitchen, one can work in a trade. And, instead of having nothing to be responsible for, one can get a plant. There are many ways to implement one's own unique bottom; something that is also going to be true for each of the remaining three areas.

Appointments, tasks, to-do's, messages, (e)mail, reminders, responsibilities, work, and all of the other bullshit that comes on top of the basic set of biological needs that are needed to be taken care of by any individual that wants to stay afloat in the twenty-first century, are all put into the bottom region just as well as the body's needs of nutrition, hydration, sleep, exercise, hygiene, warmth, and so on. There's no avoiding having to know when you have to show up to whatever it is that you have to show up to, there's no avoiding calling the billing company when they overcharge you by a ridiculous amount, and there's no avoiding paying the government the national fee just for living.

Although the bottom can be organized in any way that one sees fit, the most obvious divide is the one staring us in the face; splitting up health into the needs of the physiological vs. the needs of the mental.

With the plethora of options available, one always has the ability to take care of a large portion of their physiological health, even if it's suboptimal. Taking food, water, and sleep for granted (because it's not like being able to get your hands on any of these things is important or anything), the combination of breath work, stretching, and cold water immersion can completely take care of one's other bodily needs, and are able to be done by just about any living person on this planet. Breath work can be done anywhere, anyhow. Stretching can be done anywhere, in a lot of ways. And, cold water immersion can be done by anyone that lives near a body of water or has plumbing—that is, by anyone who has the cojones to cause self-inflicted suffering to themselves for a few minutes.

Food, drinkable water, and sleep, aren't as straightforward; these require resources that I can't give over text on screen, as much as I wish it were possible. If you can take care of your food, water, and sleep, it's stupidly easy, you just do it. For those who can't, it's stupidly difficult, because they just can't. Chamomile tea and 5mg melatonin tablets only do so much for the insomniacs, just as much as free food does for the poor, just as much as a water bottle does for someone living in the desert; they represent temporary solutions that do nothing to attack the root of the problem.

The one thing that there is to say regarding the uncontrollable fate of a hand of given circumstances that act as the fortune-telling cards that will dictate the total availability of food, water, and sleep throughout your life, is actually fairly useful—that is, if you completely disregard all of the pain and discomfort that will be felt along the way regardless. The point being, the body is so incredibly adaptable, that non-optimizations become optimizations of their own, if the circumstances demand it.

There are people that only sleep for a few hours every night, there are people who only eat a little bit of food every couple of days, and there are people that consistently stretch their cells' thirsts to their absolute limits; all of which are people who are still living, and, most of which, are people who are still doing what they need to do in order to survive.

Even if the hand that you've been dealt doesn't come with the abundance of availability of one of those three, don't fret. There are many others just like you, some of which have taken the mental stance of believing that the limitations of not getting some lacking resources(s) that they have been told that they need is only a limitation if they believe that it is; leading to a lifting of self-imposed restrictions whose true weight is felt only after they are gone.

Obtaining equilibrium over on the other side of the coin of health can prove to be even more difficult to obtain when compared to some of the physiological needs that don't always come for free.

With the body, it's easy. You feed it, you move it, you rest it, and it's as happy as a clam. But, for the mental side of things, it takes series of highly coordinated events that rely on the right set of external circumstances in order for their success to happen. For someone who doesn't have materials, money, shelter, or warmth in the winters, it's not as simple as a case of hopping into a cold shower to take care of what needs to be taken care of. It takes an incredible amount of time and energy to get a leg up on one's societal health in many cases, and it often takes generous circumstances that are well out of their control to do so.

Unfortunately, the global economy has fallen prey to the hands of the greedy. What this means for the common man is the disappearing of a once prosperous middle class, with the majority of survivors falling down into the levels below the line of poverty. For these survivors, their chance of living a sustainably happy and comfortable life gets immediately drowned out by the oppressive hands of those with it in abundance.

For some, taking care of the needs of the bottom demands all of their time and energy, from the start of their life to the end of it; the case of a robust, yet crippled human that has been forged by a lifetime of hard work, just to spend their entire timeline in a perma-defensive societal and physical stance.

For these unfortunate crew, they must find their footing in any foothold that they can; to help endure the winters that they have had no say in having to endure. Just as much as I wish I could give food to all those who are hungry, I wish I had the ability to give everyone who needs money the money that they need, but, reality has other plans in mind. The only thing that I can give to this lot is the pointing out of an idea that might prove beneficial upon playing around with for some time.

By being forged by the hardships of life, a famous saying comes to mind; a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor. The ones that are constantly faced with adversity learn the concept of anti-fragility more than anyone studying it from the outside in. Living through a period of constant storms, even when

one thinks that they can't take any more storms, molds a person to be able to handle any future hardships that are in store for them in their futures.

By going through the pits of life, and having the concept of the necessity of work drilled into the forebrains of those who must dedicate their entire life to it, these people learn a skill that can't be taught inside of a classroom. The thought of this might not do them any good in the short term, but, might prove to be valuable when the storms finally do pass. When the sun comes through the clouds, and the waters become calm again, not only is there a newfound freedom to explore in this unfamiliar world, but there is also the confidence that storms can be handled again in the case that they do come at some point down the road.

This confidence can instead manifest itself as a worry to those who haven't been through the storms themselves; a worry that the skilled sailor crew never has to worry about again.

Capitalizing on this idea, in a world as unpredictable and broad as we live in today, knowing the core set of actions needed to comprehensively take care of your health is going to be a more sustainable approach than trying to optimize it to a point of perfection. Knowing that I can live the rest of my life with just squats, steak, and nightly tranquilizers is going to bring me way more peace of mind than knowing that I have to take care of 25 things in my bottom domain to be able to move on to what comes past it. 25 things that introduce 25 different ways for something to go wrong, or 25 things that can be absent from the full routine.

As will be discussed soon, if peak performance is related to an internally motivated goal, then an exception is to be made. But, in most other cases, it proves to be more valuable to be comfortable with less instead of striving for endlessly more.

One foolproof way for you to go about finding your own, core set of health commandments is to go through the process of using trial and error to push past your limits. You're not likely to find out that you can get by with just a couple of activities if you don't first go without all other activities to see how you respond to not having the unneeded fluff on top.

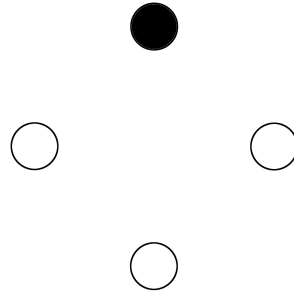
To find out just how little it takes for you to get by, it helps to first go without everything; doing so in an orderly and procedural way. Take away everything, and then add something. See how it feels, then add something else. See how that feels, maybe take away the first thing, and then add something else. As a consequence of going through this process, you will find out what is truly needed for your own survival.

The last thing to be said about the bottom of this map is related to the very common trap that people often find themselves prey to in a capitalistic society; the absolute obsession with the legal tender of one's residence: money. It's way too easy to see the benefit in playing the game of more and more and more without considering what it's taking away from. All that I will say regarding

this point is that, there's a reason that money belongs in the basement of this structure—as a piece of the foundation—and not on the top floor with a diamond shrine.

Simply put, there is much more to this crazy thing that we call life than the superficial joy brought upon us when receiving an uptick in the global database of non-resource, resource allocation.

What's left beyond money is precisely what's left beyond the bottom of this structure; the top, the left, and the right. And so, with the definitions of the bottom in mind—and a single label of “Health” for shorthand use—we can move to its complement; the top.



The top; the bottom's complement. An area not necessarily comprised of just joy and pleasure, but of principle and value.

The top is the space for what's held true over different experiences, across time, across settings, for each individual human being. The ideas and behaviors that get reinforced and strengthened upon every interaction that we have, in turn, defining the process that is ourselves; the defining marks of our own individuality.

The top holds ideas that give rise to feelings that can't be fully explained with words. How does one describe the bond that they have with their mother? How does one describe their relationship with their god? How does one describe why it is that they follow some code of ethics? *Why* things belong in each of our top spots is an unimportant question in contrast to *what* things belong in our top spots.

We have no choice as to what goes into our top spots, for, we are not choosing, but instead, discovering. What we want to be in our top spots requires no further action, for it's already in there; we just have to find it.

The things that belong in our top spots don't necessarily stay put where they are forever. The things in the top can change, but change is intermittent at best, being driven by reality shifting experiences; things like, epiphanies, mentorships, near death experiences, or, sometimes, just happening as a consequence of having a continuously developing brain that learns something new.

If asked for a single label to accurately describe the top spot, it would be something along the lines of "Values," "Identity," "Self," "Soul," "Me," "Root," something of this sort. The BIOS to a human being; the spark-notes of one's personality. Not everything in this top spot may be desirable for some unlucky individuals; they simply remain as the overarching true-isms of one's behavior.

The bottom is where things go to get out of the way, and the top is what the way is for. If Maslow was here, he'd be screaming something, something, self-actualization needs, but, he's not, so I'll keep it in my own flavor instead. Self-actualization is only a piece of the puzzle, not the entire picture. The top isn't just for high level values and morals that an individual holds, it's for *any* behavior related to the big picture ideas held here, no matter how mundane.

This may mean running an errand for a family member, or going to the store to get a trophy case, not just ritual sacrifice to a mythical god, or raising a spawn of your own.

The process of finding what's inside of our top spots can be nuanced at the beginning, but gets cleared up relatively quickly once questions leading down certain avenues are asked repetitively. For a simple example, ask yourself what you care about. When you come up with an answer, then ask why. Do this over and over and over again, over the course of a few days, and very quickly your brain will chisel down the exact concept that is meaningful to it—for whatever reason it may be.

For example; I like to lift weights. Why? Because it feels good and I think taking care of my body's health is important. Why is taking care of my body's health important? Because if I don't have health then I can't do anything else. Why do I want to do anything else? Because there are experiences that feel really good that don't involve taking care of my health. Like what? Well, for one, I can't help other people get healthy if I'm not healthy—an act that feels really good. Why do I want to specifically help other people get healthy? I just said, because it feels good and it's important to me. Why? I don't know, it just is. Bingo.

Let's try putting "helping other people" in the top spot as an overarching idea and see how that feels. Rinse and repeat until the soul is all wrung out of its ethereal nectar, and one is left with the sprinkles that creates their Power-puff girl equivalent; the seeds of their existence.

To get the ball rolling towards knowing what a top spot might actually look like in practice, a real life example may be useful. And, since there's only one person in the entire world who has their life implemented in this structure at this moment in time, it looks like I'm the lucky volunteer.

Inside of my own top spot, there exists four large ideas. In order, the first one falls under a huge umbrella of something that I use the word "Trust" to encompass. What do I trust? I trust a whole lot of things. I trust in myself, and my own capability. I trust in others, and that they will act in accordance to how I think they will. I trust the ones that I love, even if the trust is tested. But above all, I trust the process, and for things to happen in the exact way that they do. I don't worry, because I trust. And if things fall apart, and the trust was all a scam, well then it wasn't, for peace was provided up until the moment of its breaking. It's quite simple when the neo-cortex quiets down; when no trust leads to more worry and trust leads to less worry, why make a fuss about it?

Secondly, comes my family. I am incredibly fortunate to have been born into a loving and capable set of parents that filled my ever-changing environment with a lack of unnecessary stressors. It is because of my family that I was able to move across the country by myself, it is because of my family that I was able to graduate from college, and it was because of my family that I was even able to write this book in the first place. I owe my entire existence to the sacrifices that my parents made for me, and this will remain my truth up until the point

of my passing. Beyond just my immediate family, I am doubly fortunate to have been blessed with a supportive and available extended family that I have grown quite close with. I have been housed, fed, and sheltered by kin of the same blood for the majority of the days that I have been alive on this planet; and to me, when there's a whole lot of other people who haven't been, this isn't a petty matter.

Third on the list is a huge umbrella of concepts that encompass ideas related to the natural world that we were bred from. I hold my relationship with nature very close to my heart, as it's something that not only stems back to my youth, but to all of our evolutionary youths as well. We humans, currently living in the age of convenience, have seem to forgotten that we were once forged by the elements of the natural world; chiseled predatory specialists that were meant to adapt to the most of extreme conditions on this planet, and are now capable of doing whatever it is that we decide to do. But I do not forget this.

I do not forget that I am nothing more than a monkey living on this floating space rock, abiding by the rules set forth by the natural laws that govern this world; not the ones artificially made up by the monkeys in suits, for they are usually nothing more than arbitration wrapped with a bow called "morality." The only thing that rules me is what is waiting for me outside of my door in this unpredictable, unforgiving, unimaginable world that we live in; not the monkeys with fancy signatures who think they have outsmarted Mother Nature.

Lastly, my fourth value is an idea that exists solely for the others around me. If I was to examine my life by comparing my circumstances to others' (something that Teddy Roosevelt wouldn't be happy about), I would find an incredible amount of a phenomenon that is best described with the single word of, luck. My life has been extremely lucky. Even with substantial hardships along the journey that I've taken through the bogs of mental health, I am able to recognize just how much of my life that I constantly take for granted. To name just a few things, I am a white male who was born into parents who gave me a wonderful childhood into a land of freedom and choice. I have an able body and mind—with the use of available and cheap medication—giving me the freedom to explore what I wish to in this lifetime. I am over 6 foot tall, have an athletic build, straight teeth, plenty of hair, and above average looks. I've never lived through war, I've never lived through famine, and I've never lived through drought. The list goes on as to all the freebies that have been handed to me in my life, and so, the way that I resolve this conflict in my head—of having a lot despite working little—is by introducing the last of my values that I hold very close to my existence. My last value is captured simply; when I am in a position to do so, I give.

I give to those who weren't so lucky, to those who were given a shitty set of circumstances. What I have learned about this crazy thing called life at the ripe age of 24 is that **circumstance determines all** in the outcomes of our lives. Pointing fingers and saying something along the lines of "you are who you are because of the choices that *you* made" is absolute and utter

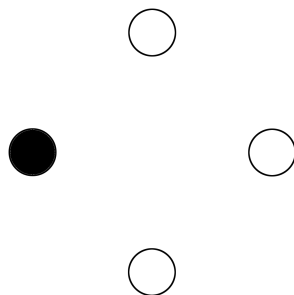
dogshit. You are who you are because of your genetics and your upbringing and your childhood experiences and your ethnicity and the opportunities that were placed in front of you and the people that you interacted with and the teachers that you had in school and everything else that played a role in your development. Not because of choices and decisions and deliberation that were made along the journey that was always meant to be. There are genius people working dumbass jobs, and dumbass people working highly influential jobs. There are people who break their back their whole life for nothing, and others who were handed a fortune before they were even able to conceptualize what a fortune is.

Nothing is guaranteed in this lifetime, not even what some might consider a basic set of rights; considering we live in an “advanced society” that is okay with global superpowers implementing modern day concentration camps for religious minorities. Fair isn’t a concept that exists in practice because humans aren’t a creature that were made to be fair. We were made to survive, and one very good way to survive is to gain power; power that harms the ones without it. And because fairness has no inherent value in a society full of power hungry chimps, I find myself implementing it for myself, by giving to the ones who were given nothing else.

With those four things, combined with taking care of my physiological and mental wellbeing, I live a complete life. Action and reason for action. My top exists only in the presence of the bottom, and my bottom exists only in the presence of the top. There is a duality between them, where one must happen in order to fully enjoy the other.

Choice vs no choice, long lasting vs. to be hurried, stronger feelings and bigger decisions vs. constant repetition done in one of many ways; the top and the bottom are polar opposites that are both necessary to get the full effect of the magnet.

Doing things that must be done, and a reason to do them; so... what’s left?



What's left is more than just the left. What's left, is time. While the top and the bottom combine to make a whole life, every single second of every single day is not going to necessarily pertain to either of these two spots. The time that is leftover is accounted for in between the top and the bottom domains with the domains of the left and the right.

The left side of this spectrum is categorized by internal interests. This isn't to say that interests aren't motivated or swayed by external circumstances—because they always will be—but instead to say that they are the interests that spark internal desire, devoid of external entities.

No one has to tell you what should go on your left side, just as well as nobody can force the presence of something undesired over there; the left exists as the area that holds the things that one is most interested in, without someone having to tell them to be interested in them.

The left side exists as a sandbox for creation; a place to build things that aren't even conceivable by the brain that is going to build them yet. This is an area that brings out the innocent inner child in people, as it reminds them of a time where rule sets were nonexistent, and curiosity was always rewarded. There is no failing on the left side, no letting anyone down, no doing it in the wrong way. There is only experimentation, learning, and creation; every step exists as a step in the right direction—as if that even meant anything at all.

Far on the left side of this spectrum, right in between the top and the bottom, is where true passion exists. Physical pursuits, intellectual pursuits, spiritual pursuits, whatever it is that one could dedicate their full being towards with very few limitations, the far left side is best personified with the idea of the “flow state.” The place where focus becomes so deeply channeled towards one specific activity, that, in the moments that it is being experienced, the mind, body, and soul fully unite their combined intent towards it in a manner that's completely barren of distraction.

For some, this may mean one thing over the course of 25 years, and for others, this may mean 25 things over the course of one year. Some prefer to

spend their time trying to perfect a small few, and others prefer to see how many they can collect; and surely everywhere in between.

Similar to the top, the exact contents of each person's left side are not only going to be unique, but are also going to be less of a function of choice and more of a function of circumstance. Snowboarders and skateboarders know that they are one and the same, one was just born near a mountain. We don't get to choose the things that we're passionate about, but, this doesn't matter in the slightest when it comes to implementation and experience of these things. Us having no say in what we enjoy doing doesn't take anything away from the joy of experiencing the feeling of doing whatever activity it is that we're forced to enjoy.

Similar to the bottom, although we have no say in what we're interested in, we do have a say in how we implement it within each of our own structures. I have no choice as to whether I wanted to write this book or not, but once I accepted that it was fact, I was able to mold the methodology to the one that best suited my individual circumstances; much like how if I don't want to run, I can swim.

Similar to both the top and the bottom, there is no ideal that can be chased. The ideal is whatever the implementer makes it out to be, not a fixed point that everyone is trying to reach. The left side is an area for exploration; so explore. There are no right or wrongs here, just freedom.

But, unlike both the top and the bottom, the left comes with inherent structure beyond its abstract idea. Loosely, the general structure of the left side is best represented as a collection of varying domains.

Each domain is going to hold a group of related activities and behavior specific to some interest. The exact bounds on these domains is arbitrary and completely chosen by the user. For example, let's say that I am interested in lifting weights, and I want to put it into my left side. The borders that I choose for this domain can be extremely specific to the activities that I am interested in, just as well as they can be all encompassing and vague. I could make the domain "squatting," I could make the domain "powerlifting," I could make the domain "strength training," I could make the domain "physical health," or, I could make the domain "the body." It doesn't matter which one I choose so long as it encompasses my internal interest; the choice is completely arbitrary, but serves as an appeasement to my own individual psyche.

Domains may overlap, or they might be completely separate. One might have individual interests in each of snowboarding, surfing, and skateboarding, and label the bounds as such, or lump them together under one continuous progression that's labeled "Board Sports." Once one's internal interests are recognized and realized, the mental abstraction that fits into the left side is essentially play-doh in their hands. Break it apart, lump it together, it doesn't matter; it is to be shaped to one's own individual desires.

The amount of play-doh that we have to mold with in our left side is going to be completely dependent on the amount of time spent in that particular domain. The more time, the more play-doh. There are factors that can be

considered that might speed up or slow down this process (things such as focused, dedicated practice vs. mindless, unfocused repetition), but, in any case, there is always an ever increasing amount of play-doh given to someone who is spending time doing an activity related to some domain in their left side.

For most, the left side is going to be highly dynamic. Unless one finds their passion at a very early age, there is most likely going to be some jumping around between different domains, with the hopping around possibly lasting for a lifetime. The structure presented here is completely indifferent as to how it's implemented. Domains can last for days, domains can last for decades, domains can change borders every day, domains can be broken apart well after they've happened; it all depends on what **you** want.

The left side, defined by internal interests, and organized with arbitrarily chosen domains, isn't really about either of these things. Instead, it's about the structure that they bring for what goes inside of them. The left side, in essence, is primarily revolved around one idea: goal-defined behavior.

Domains, as a concept, provide the platform that goals exist on. No goal is domain-less, even though some domains may be goal-less. Because of the malleability of the borders of domains, every goal that ever exists will belong to some arbitrary domain. Domains provide architecture and structure to the backbone of any goal that fits inside of them.

As I have come to find out, there is an entire science behind goal-defined behavior when it comes to the current human architecture; some of which I wish to shine a light on here. Because this is obviously a soft science, everything that I'm going to say is completely based off of experience, and not rigor. I know the things that I say only as they have pertained to my life; but, although they might not exist as some grand truths, some of you may find my conclusions valuable anyway.

In my desire (and implementation) for minimalistic simplicity, I wish to boil down this science to its most important parts, getting rid of any unnecessary fluff. Here are the axioms that I found to be of the most importance to myself when it comes to goal-defined behavior in the context of me acting in accordance to my left side.

Axiom #1). Each domain, at any point in time, is to have, at most, one goal.

This first axiom comes with an asterisk, because it's not entirely true. What will make more sense in a couple of axioms, there is a way to squeeze in more than one goal per domain, but only with necessary conditions at play. What this axiom does mean to cover is the deliberate, single focus of achieving goals related to some field of interest.

Sometimes, to achieve a goal, it takes sacrificing time and energy elsewhere. When there's more than one goal per single domain, this shift in intent can hinder progress on related goals in the same domain. On top of that, more time is likely needed to carry out two goals together, compared to adding up

the time it would take to do them separately, one at a time. Time and energy is spent during the transition between focusing on different activities related to different goals, simply as a consequence of us having brains that require rest. The farther along a path that one is towards achieving a goal, the more time is needed in between sessions dedicated to achieving it, for the energy and focus demands naturally become greater as one's skill increases in that domain. Focusing on one goal at a time compresses the total time—especially in the end game—that it takes to complete multiple goals, since large chunks of continuous practice can be devoted to achieving just one thing at a time.

This doesn't imply that one domain can't have more than one goal over time, just that it's better off for the user to do them one at a time. This also doesn't imply that different domains with different goals can't be worked on at the same time. If someone has the ability to work on five different goals in five different domains, more power to them.

Something that this first axiom does imply is that it's okay to not have a goal for some domain. Empty domains can bring just as much joy as goal filled ones, given that other life circumstances are sorted out. Also, how else would exploration and confidence in choice happen?

The main focus of the left side is all about goals, but that doesn't always mean that every single moment of every person's entire life is going to be dedicated towards achieving some goal. There's always going to be in-betweens; time spent just thinking about and exploring different pathways that seem interesting, while also leaving some of the discovery open to happenstance.

There also can be downtime in between goals in the same domain. For example, I can paint my whole life, but only have a goal related to selling a piece of my artwork for a small dedicated chunk of it.

Axiom #2). Lingering domains are to be closed before the active opening of new ones.

A lingering domain is one where no action has been, or currently is, being taken towards a domain that once was. Essentially, it's not gaining closure over a past interest. Closing lingering domains can take the avenue of creating a new goal in the old domain, with the idea of gaining closure upon its success or failure, or, in the more hurried sense, ridding one's immediate environment of any triggers related to said domain / goals in that domain in a dedicated effort to mentally close it off and move on to something new.

This could be burning old pictures, putting trophies into storage, selling old memorabilia, or making a phone call to someone that has been put off for years now. One doesn't have to open up a new goal in a domain that they are no longer motivated to achieve in when they can close it by taking some simple action to move on from it.

Closing a lingering domain is about putting an end to any and all thought patterns related to said domain that happen on a semi-consistent basis. This doesn't mean forgetting about the domain entirely, but simply, replacing its

daily occurrence of mental visitation with something else.

The importance of this second axiom relates to how much of a hindrance not closing lingering domains can become when attempting to achieve towards an entirely different goal in an entirely different domain. The effect of a lingering domain can last for a lifetime, causing intermittent grief and regret along the way, making any argument as to why one wouldn't want to take care of it immediately—once and forever—nonexistent. A little bit of energy up front can allow for the creation of brand new pathways in the future with much less resistance; an endeavor that's even more desirable when considering that domains don't have to be closed with time and energy towards a new goal.

It can be as simple as cleaning your place and deciding to set your intent on something new. Why not allow for the good to be even better—for the rest of time—for the price of nothing more than running up a small hill?

Lastly, something of note related to this second axiom is a message that seems to go against the grain of capitalistic society. That is, **failure is okay**. There is nothing shameful about ending a domain on a failed attempt at a goal. If the interest is no longer there, it's much more foolish to force oneself to go back in time and care about something that they no longer do—going against the grain of energy's flow—than to simply let it go and let something new fill its place. There's no shame at all in trying to do something that one hasn't tried before, and, in the case of it ending with failure, this dynamic remains unchanged.

Axiom #3). Bring into existence some physical reference to each goal's set of "W's."

The W's refer to the four (five) questions that are to be asked alongside of each and every goal. **What** exactly is the goal? **Why** this particular goal at this particular point in time? **When**, according to the completion of some event, is this goal going to be completed? And, **how** is this goal going to get done? Alongside the four W's (yes, I know that one of them is an H, but what do you want from me, 3 W's and an H?), one should also consider the **closing** of said goal; some physical act that marks the true completion and closure of the entire thing, allowing for new space to open up for whatever comes afterwards.

The idea behind splitting the "what" from the tagline of the actual goal is to give an area to clearly define what might otherwise be a shorthand label. The "goal," so to speak, is usually under a convenient label that refers to a more detailed task. Someone might have a goal of getting healthier, but the actual what is where the specifics are defined; what does healthier mean? By what time frame?

The "why" is used for support during times when intent becomes fuzzy, and is especially useful for narrowing in on true desires before tackling long term

goals. Clearly defining the why can take some time, especially if this question has never been asked before. As a general guideline that one can keep in mind, the shorter the why, the stronger the intent. If it takes an incredible amount of time to pinpoint why you actually care about what you're doing, it may prove beneficial to choose something else entirely.

The words used to describe the why are arbitrary; the feeling behind it is not.

The “when” is for creating explicit boxes that can be checked off once major milestones towards achieving the goal are completed. Unarguable moments in time that either happen or they don't, the boxes listed under the when are completely binary.

The when is where there exists wiggle room to achieving more than one goal at once, as brought up as the asterisk to the first axiom. A simple refactoring of the idea architecture is going to allow the set of ideas to remain devoid of any contradictions. The first axiom acts as an overarching, general guideline that applies to every goal and every domain. When zoomed into specific goals in specific domains, this principle that naturally becomes inherited to all goals has the chance to be overwritten by a more specific principle that applies to the specific goals in question. The reason the first axiom remains as an axiom despite its asterisk isn't because of its pinpoint accuracy to every goal ever, but to provide the default that all goals inherently follow.

The refactoring of separate goals into the same goal with multiple when's isn't always a straightforward process, and often times presents the same issues that breaking the first axiom would do on its own. Having multiple goals under the same goal requires that each of them are related enough while also being separate enough, so that possible conflict is avoided. Too related, and they just naturally merge to the same point; converging to the same goal. Too separate, and intent splitting can occur between the two goals, leading to a time loss in progress when additional time is needed to mentally shift frames to a different goal.

There's a fine line of when differing goals can be labeled under the same one with multiple whens, a line that becomes clear upon dabbling with venturing across its border for yourself.

One example of this is the one that I am currently working on in my own life. In my own left side, I have a goal that has a tagline of “Change my body.” Under the when, I'm currently working towards three separate goals that all require a different set of actions to complete, but don't interfere with the actions of any of the others. The current three that I'm working on are, 1) change my default breathing pattern to one that utilizes the diaphragm over the traps, neck, and other accessory muscles (the moment in time that this will be checked off is when I'm able to sleep for a full night without removing a piece of tape that I place on my mouth the night before), 2) to have a neutral spine and hips (the moment in time that this will be checked off is when I'm able to perform the big three compound lifts—squat, deadlift, and replacing

bench with shoulder press—without any discomfort), and, 3) is to weigh 200 lbs (the moment in time that this will be checked off will be obvious).

Each of these goals are all related to the same idea of wanting to change my body, as they all represent different steps that will need to be taken for me to achieve the goal that I want. But, importantly, none of these similar goals interfere with any of the other ones; and in fact, they aid. By working on my breathing, it helps the position of my spine and hips. By working on the position of my spine and hips, my body has a better foundational structure to gain weight on. And by going through the process of gaining weight, it forces me to work on my breathing during the training. Three separate goals that feed off of each other's progress, without anything being taken away from working on multiple goals at the same time.

This example would be different if I was to replace one of the goals with one that could cause issues with its compatibility with the others. For example, let's say that goals 2) and 3) are the same, but, instead of wanting to change my breathing pattern, I want to be able to squat 315 lbs. Let's say that, while working on this one goal of wanting to change my body, the progress that I make towards squatting 315 lbs is much faster than the progress made towards achieving a neutral spine and hips. Because of this, as I up the weight in the squat while not having a strong foundation, I might run into pain and discomfort due to still having an uneven spine and hips. And so now, any progress towards the first goal has to be halted while extra time is needed to work on the secondary goal. And, if it was the case that squatting 315 lbs was also directly related to my goal of gaining weight, now, progress is being hindered on two goals while focus has to narrow down to just one.

In this case, the goal of squatting 315 lbs, and the goals of wanting to change the structure and function of my body, are too different to be placed together under the same goal tagline. Here, the recommendation would be to first complete the goal of changing my body, with all of the nonconflicting things that this contains, and then, introduce a new goal—either in the same domain, or in a domain of tighter bounds—where squatting 315 lbs is the sole focus.

There's an art of choosing one's goals in such a way that maximizes efficiency towards completing them, and this takes time to discover. But, once some competence is obtained in this skill, setting up and knocking down goals that mean something to a person becomes second nature as the skill of choosing labels in an optimized way gets developed.

With all of the nuance that can take place in the when, there are just as many cases where the when is as straightforward as all the other W's. For example; Goal: lose weight. What: lose 5 lbs. When: when I lose 5 lbs. Although, typically, the when represents a chronological progression of steps towards achieving a larger goal. For example; Goal: get in shape. What: be able to do a triathlon. When: run half marathon, swim half portion of triathlon, bike half portion of triathlon, run full marathon, swim full portion

of triathlon, bike full portion of triathlon. The individual contents of a goal's when is going to be completely dependent on the goal itself.

The last of the four "W's" is the "how." The how is the hardest of the bunch. Anyone can come up with a goal that they're interested in with a reason that they're interested in it, but not all of these people are going to achieve that goal. The how requires one to come up with a detailed plan that gets them from point A to point B, with actions and behavior that match their intent along the way. Despite this being somewhat challenging, the how has an incredible amount to offer a human being.

The how is the space for creativity, exploration, innovation, problem solving, and personal expression, all in one. It's the space where all bars are lifted, and freedom to explore personal ideology occurs. The how, along with the right quadrant (which we'll talk about next), presents a human with a very powerful reason to live on this planet. A place for us to express ourselves, our true selves, by solving problems that genuinely interest us in the best ways that we see fit. The how is one's chance to show the world that they are competent and capable of success, in the way that is tailored to their own individual strengths.

Personally, I live for the how. I live for the "justified," drug-fueled benders that somehow produce results, and the freedom to take this unconventional route even when others recommend otherwise. The how is where I get to do something that I want, in the exact way that I want to, without any outside influence dictating how I go about it. It's a place for creation that allows for mistakes and treats falls very kindly. No punishment and no stalling, just right back on the saddle towards achieving what I want.

In a society where bureaucracy rules all, it's easy to be convinced that humans were made to live by artificial rules, with man made limitations dictating how we should behave. I, personally, am under the impression that humans, by nature, are the exact opposite. That we instead thrive in periods of brief chaos, considering it's what would have been evolutionarily selected for in our chaotic world. Rules and limitations are good for keeping order, but in some sense, humans weren't made for order. That's not to say that we can't emulate it for the greater good, but more to say that there exists some importance on channeling energy through pathways that have already been naturally chiseled out by the arrow of evolution, instead of the ones that become dulled down in a bureaucratic society.

If anything, we humans were made to create. And, any one who has created anything new before has had to take a step into the unknown to get there, a place of reacting to some uncontrollable chaos. The how is the exact place for this to happen; it is a playground to challenge one's own mind to think in a way not previously thought of before. By treating the how as a grand platform for one to create something new in their own vision—instead of a rule based place of duty—one will find that the joy that comes from respecting the opportunity to create in their own vision leads to a much more satisfying journey than one without it.

When coming up with plans for the how portion, the mantra that is short and meaningful is, intuition guides and trial/error refines. The gut feeling is always a fantastic place to start, even if it leads nowhere. Plans aren't meant to be perfect, they're meant to get the job done. And, humans, being imperfect and all, learn best by falling down. Sometimes, it takes us a few times to get it to work, but there's no shame with the failure in the process of learning that that happens along the way. Being harsh to one's self over mistakes and/or dwelling over harsh criticism are going to be much less effective than more repetition with a focused mindset. Allow for failure, don't put an expectation on time, and for Christ's sake, do it with a smile, you're on the left side!

The real ending of the "W's" isn't with the how though, but with the "close" attribute of the goal. The close acts as the caboose that cleans everything up in the end; it's what allows for something new to enter, possibly another goal, possibly another domain, or possibly spending more time doing something other than chasing goals and exploring domains. One of the ideas behind stating it explicitly at the beginning is to prepare the mind for the moment before it comes, through the power of visualization. Knowing that this moment in time is going to come, even at the start of a goal, is a very powerful motivator that pushes one towards the reality that is now being constructed in their subconscious. If they tell themselves that this moment is going to come, and they visualize this moment coming, and they have a detailed plan as to how to make this moment come, then, chances are, that moment *is* going to come. A free, natural channeling of energy that lasts for the entire duration of the goal that's being chased.

The close can be something as simple as burning pieces of paper, or it can be something as complex as taking a trip to Africa. But, whatever the close may be, the only aspect of whatever methodology is chosen that's worth consideration, is that of its comprehensiveness. Close it and close it well, this is the opportunity to really change one's self, by deciding to fully close off a past chapter of their life and create space that invites for new opportunities.

It can be hard coming to terms with what it means after the close activity is completed, as the mind is always going to have an aversion to completely unknown circumstances. But, despite this initial aversion, let me drop a reminder in here that, life is really just one big change from beginning to end. Whether we try and avoid this or not has no effect on the ever passing arrow of time; so we might as well capitalize on it. Old is good, but new can be even better.

The importance of the third axiom has less to do with covering for a forgetful mind, and more to do with what is being brought into existence with the creation of some reference to the W's.

The left side is defined by things that are found interesting and worth pursuing to each person's individual desires. The goals that are self-chosen, inside of self-chosen domains, are ones that are to bring excitement and curiosity, not dread and procrastination. By bringing into existence a clearly defined goal,

being chased for a clearly defined reason, with a clearly defined point in time that it's finished, along with a clearly defined plan to get there, the only reason one wouldn't begin taking action towards that direction would be one of insufficient resources (whether it be or material or time).

It's all stated in the definitions, a place of interest with a goal of interest, and a self made, self-believed in plan to get to that interest. But, when this reference to the W's doesn't exist, it's a common scenario for people to begin drifting away from the task at hand as time goes on, especially when the goal demands one to push past uncomfortable barriers (as all worthy goals would do). With this drifting, intent can become hazy as the mind tries to convince itself that being exactly where it is right now is actually what's best for it. Having a physical reference to the answers to these questions keeps focus on the exact task at hand over long periods of time, while also allowing for change and adaptation as they're needed.

Similar to the ending of the argument for why one wouldn't want to close off lingering domains by putting a little bit of energy into it up front, there's no reason as to why one shouldn't spend a minimum of a couple of minutes detailing the specifics of something that they are already interested in.

Axiom #4). Goals are to match personal desires.

This axiom may seem obvious due to the way that the left side is defined, but serves as a more specific principle that doubles down on the default, inherited trait given to all goals by the map's definition. One might find themselves at some point trying to fit an externally motivated goal into their left side, an extremely common event in a society filled with gaslighting and gullible members.

Trying not to get lost in the meaning of words here, the goals that belong in the left side are to exist even outside of the presence of any other living person. They are to match what's inside of one's individual soul, something that might take some time to find. In the meantime, it serves to be much more beneficial to leave the left side open to happenstance than it is to fill it with something that isn't desired.

As a teenager/young adult, it can be difficult to understand what's really internally motivated, and what's just the consequence of someone brushing off on them. But, as time goes on, one begins to narrow in on the particular set of activities/hobbies that means something to them outside of the existence of others. There's nothing adverse with not achieving any goals at a particular point in time, instead, leaving the left side open to chance. There is no axiom that states that the left side must have any goals, or even any domains at all.

My strongest piece of advice related to any of the axioms applies directly to the fourth one. Don't let the toxic sludge of today's media seep into your left side; that's what the bottom is for. The left side is pure and meticulous, and if it has to be put on pause for some time, so be it. It's better to look at it untouched and pure from a distance than it is to try pushing rope inside of it. The left side is about learning and creation and exploration and discovery

and achievement and recognition and passion and freedom; it is not about the spilt honey that is other people's opinions.

And lastly, **Axiom #5**). Allow for adaptations, for change is always inevitable; simply keep a record of the progress.

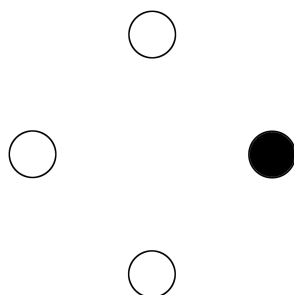
Progress isn't always linear, and sometimes seems to go in the wrong direction. But, in reality, every occurrence of doing something exists as a part of a larger whole; a parent process. Life happens, things change, plans must be amended; always. There's no shame in changing a goal, or one of its details, for life always has its own story in mind. But, no matter what direction life takes you in, keep some record of the change.

Maybe it's writing down each new change on a piece of paper and saving all of the papers, or maybe its some form of digital storage, as I'm sure that someone reading this would be able to create a version control system for keeping such specific changes. In any case, the mental security that comes from knowing that past iterations can be accessed if they need to be allows for a greater depth of exploration towards what's ahead. By keeping record, one knows undoubtedly what has been tried, when it was tried, and how it was tried, even if it's not held in the forefront of the brain.

This detailing of the soft science of goal-setting completes the explaining of the structure of the left side. In conclusion, the left side is represented as a loose collection of domains with individually selected borders that hosts goals which are aimed at internally motivated desires.

Domains can have no goals, one goal, or goal after goal happening progressively over time. Goals are motivated by personal desires, catering to the inner soul of the individual in charge of creating them. Domains *may* change over time, goals *will* change over time.

With this, we can move on to the last of the four regions; the one that exists on a spectrum opposite of the left.



The right; the opposite of the left. The activities, thoughts, and behavior related to any externally motivated stimuli. This includes all social behavior, every relationship—human or otherwise—and any action that changes the perspective of another organism that lives on this planet.

When thinking about it in shorthand, it's useful to condense the right side to strictly people related activities, although it encompasses more than just our relationships with other humans.

The right is what connects us to each other in a very primordial way; a consciousness that we all share, and are able to relate to with one another. Whether the relationships be with family, friends, peers, associates, students, teachers, lovers, pets, trees, aliens, or anything else that has an ordered, re-occurring process of “life” inside of it, the right represents the bonds that we share with other life; the bonds that mesh together with everyone else's bonds to create a fabric of our social realities. This fabric exists outside of our own lifetimes, as the influence that we can have on each other is influence that can be passed down through generations to come.

The right side presents the most beautiful parts of life, even more so than chasing our own passions. While the left side has passion in its far left, the right side has love in its far right; something much more powerful than that of passion. Although more difficult to achieve, and even more difficult to maintain, love is a feeling that can't be matched by any other.

Alongside of all the other feelings that can only exist in the right side, this area presents a human being with the ultimate reason to live; to feel in the presence of others.

The left side is revolved around achievement and exploration. In the right side, exploration is a given, and achievements are a non-factor. The right side has nothing to do with accolades or achievements or goals of any sort. The right is about nothing more than feeling what other people have to offer us; feelings that we are not able to offer ourselves. The right side is limitless, boundless, and allows for endless discovery; to a greater degree than that of the left.

In contrast to the left, the right has no inherent structure at all. In fact, the opposite. The right is even more freeform than coming up with a “how” for an internally motivated goal, simply because others offer more to us than what we can offer ourselves. Bounded by our own knowledge sets, we require external stimuli to continue to grow and learn and change, something that stalls overtime when we strictly rely on ourselves to provide such reoccurring stimuli.

The right side is free from any structure or rule set, because any attempt at doing so would perfectly capture the creator’s own individual bias towards seeing the world in the way of their own reality; the same bias that the right side ends up washing away. The left side is about control; the right side is about letting go of it.

Although we bring no structure into the right side, structures are going to arise naturally from the consequence of us existing as power hungry monkeys. Dominance hierarchies are likely to be formed in a species with limited resources; dominance hierarchies that affect every single member of the society that they are meant to explain. Sometimes, these hierarchies naturally sort themselves out without any additional guidance by mankind. But, other times, we attempt to create artificial hierarchies that tell us our roles instead of letting them be discovered naturally.

Back in our evolutionary past, power within a tribe was held blatantly and unequivocally. The strongest monkey ruled the weaker monkeys, and, as a result, had children that were more likely to be stronger than the weaker children. This was a time where power was more determined by physical strength and vigor, not necessarily pertaining to intellect and strategy. Nowadays, things are much different.

During the transition that we underwent from monkeys to humans, power dynamics existed in a range of in-between states. What was first determined by raw strength, power then changed to the hands of the tribes that made the more superior tools, and then, to the tribes that were adept at sustaining agriculture—something that has nothing to do with raw strength at all. Then, currency was invented, changing the power dynamics once again. Now, the ones who have the power possess skill sets that have nothing to do with raw strength, or their tool-making ability, or their ability to sustain their own health on a piece of land; it’s instead given to the ones who have the highest amount of little green sheets of paper.

This alone is such a drastic change in the way that a species evolves, but there’s even more complexity that gets added on top. First gained by strength, then by skill set, followed by green little paper, there exists a new global currency that every person is after; information.

Anyone who can gain knowledge over what’s happening around them gains a leg up when it comes to their survival. One doesn’t need power, skill sets, or money if they have knowledge on how to get any of those, with clearly defined steps to get them there.

This change in a species wouldn't be nearly as dramatic if it wasn't for a couple of inventions that we recently created that blows this whole idea up into massive unavoidable concepts that everyone now has to deal with. First, with the invention of the printing press, then, with the invention of the internet, the latest change in the power dynamics within our species is one that puts the power into the hands of any person that has two things: a functional brain, and an internet connection.

At first, power was determined largely by genetics. Better genes, bigger muscles, more strength, more power. Then, it was determined largely by circumstance. Born white? Or into money? Or into a healthy childhood? These things allowed for greater monetary success. And now, with the creation of the internet, everything has changed once again. An extreme, widespread distribution of power has been released over all nations containing all people with access to a phone line.

Anyone that can access the internet through the use of a browser connecting to a public server, has the ability to learn just about anything, ever; a change in what drives a species towards its next step in evolution. Without even doing a quick Google search, I think it's safe to assume that over half of the humans living on this planet have access to the internet in the twenty-first century (even though that number is probably much higher). That's over four billion people who have access to all the same information as any of the other four billion. The natural competition that this introduces into a species that is now centered on gaining knowledge is absolutely enormous. Billions of people, competing to know the most things, to understand the most concepts, to be able to be the first ones to share their new found ideas with the rest of the world, leading to a rate of change that our species has never seen before.

Previous to the invention of the internet, it was always the case that information and knowledge were hard to come by, and were usually only achieved in the case of wealthy circumstances. Being able to afford school, or being able to afford the time to become a scholar, used to be luxuries, not givens. This presented a tall barrier for anyone that was well capable of living on the other side of it, but didn't have the resources required to do so; a lifetime of unrealized potential.

With the common adoption of the internet, now, anyone, anywhere can be working on the same problems as the ones that only the .01% of the global population were working on in the previous ages. The effect of this change on a species cannot be captured well enough with words. Friendly competition, along with healthy collaboration, and a connection of some of the smartest minds in all generations across the globe, all in the matter of seemingly instantaneous communication, pushes our species' capability to heights that keep getting shattered with each new generation.

But, even with this crazy invention of the internet, and the change that it's brought to the way that we look at other members of society, we are still shackled to the remains of our pasts, and the dominance hierarchies that still exist

there. For example, I can spend all my time learning everything there is to know, making me an extremely valuable member of a tribe, but, as soon as I walk outside for a smoke, if there's some guy outside who is bigger than me, and he is angry for some reason, he could quite literally kill me despite of all the power that I have with all of my knowledge.

In the long term, natural selection sense, the members of our species with more relevant knowledge and information are going to be more likely to survive and pass on their genes, but this doesn't necessarily invalidate all of the hierarchies that came before it. We no longer exist in just one, societal-wide hierarchy, but in overlapping hierarchies with the same members playing different roles in different hierarchies.

This can lead to an incredible amount of confusion for the individuals that are apart of many, as the mind constantly has to frame switch between its role and how it should be behaving around others. For example, take some guy who is working at a company, who is younger than his assistant, who has a boss that he used to bully in high school, and who works alongside a janitor that used to bully him in middle school; how is this person going to react if they're all sitting in a meeting together?

Any one person walking down the side of the road can exist in a handful of varying hierarchies with varying positions in each, all unknown to the person they're passing by. A new to the profession teacher, that's been squatting competitively for 15 years and has a blackbelt in Jiu Jitsu, has no power whatsoever as soon as he walks into a stand-up comedy bar.

Someone who is considered a god at what they do in different domains, can be humiliated in an instant by simply being in the wrong location at the wrong time. In modern society, we exist in tribes within tribes within tribes; roles overlapping on roles overlapping on even more roles.

Not only does this present the psyche with the constant need for resolution as it's constantly needing to re-evaluate its place in its environment, but it makes for way too complicated of a data structure to accurately present the right side in a way that makes sense to us. Fast forward to the current day of 2023, and the situation becomes even more bleak when one considers the implications of vast adoption of new technology; specifically, social media and smartphones.

The presence of social media and smartphones yet again adds another layer of complexity on a stack that's already made up of layers of complexity. With the vast majority of people being connected to the same platforms for opinion, we've created a hive mind of thought and reason that is an echo chamber to any thought that's shared by the average.

In the current, current day, there actually is a hierarchy that everyone abides by; the one that emerges naturally from having an enormous amount of similar humans that are all connected to the same source, sharing similar thoughts. On social media, the rulers of this hierarchy aren't the ones with the most physical power, or the ones with the most money, or even the ones with the most relevant knowledge sets. Instead, they are the ones that are best

able to grab attention; the ones with the most followers, likes, and retweets. Anything and anyone who can grab the unsophisticated attention span of the human brain, in a consistent and unique manner, are going to be the winners of the hierarchy that now dominates our society. Opinions are no longer valued by their merit, but rather by how many likes that they can get.

This consensus of average minds, the one that is made up of by average monkeys, absolutely has the ability to be the sayer of one's fate. Everyone, everywhere is playing court with this hive mind of chimps, where the average mind controls the judge, the jury, and the security. Worse yet, this average group of monkeys, oh boy, are they an emotional bunch. In their court of law, logic is only secondary to initial feeling. They judge based on how they feel, not necessarily on how they think; something all hypothetical actions must take into account.

Any action taken that is documented and posted online by one of the majority of the, let's just say, three billion people, that goes against a belief of the emotional hive, gets immediately dejected and ridiculed by the weight of the majority of three billion other people on this planet. Any mistake, any fuck up, any slip of the lip, and one now has the weight of the entire average world on their back. A nonnegotiable sentencing of how the majority of the world is going to judge them, and attempt to further the stress placed upon them by looking for even more opportunities to document and post of all of their future fuck ups that go against their grain of opinion.

Appeasing to this beast is the only option, as one only has so much power going against the many. Accepting this idea for one's self is yet another change to the social power dynamics in our species. If one is unable to recognize that they are being judged by a consensus of human beings, everywhere, all the time—or, if instead, they are able to recognize it but are unable to appease it—it can cripple this person who is unable to abide by this phony rule set for the rest of their societal lives.

Just in the past couple of years, this effect has been magnified, largely beginning during the lockdown due to COVID-19. Too much time and too little stimuli leads to us acting out in unprecedented ways, as largely shown by all of our behaviors during that period. One of the relics leftover by this infectious disease is the infectious negativity that we now have towards others. Everyone is constantly looking for the wrongdoings of someone else, just so that they can speak their mind with their opinion that they've been told is important.

Due to our primal instincts, we have no choice but to put our own survival in front of anyone else's. And, in a time where there are many of us just trying to survive—even in the richest of nations—generosity and altruism are only of secondary concern. We cope in the ways that we cope, and for some, this means degrading others.

Cancel culture is the current meta, causing widespread and chronic stress in a species to act in accordance to how they think they should act. But, this isn't to say that everything about this is negative, for, if one is able to step outside of this meta by getting off of social media and being able to dismiss the

judgement of others, the ultimate hierarchy is achieved; the one that doesn't exist.

By realizing that being cancelled actually means jack shit unless your work is dependent on the opinions that others have of you, you step outside of the artificial hierarchy created by the abundance of souls on social media that decide the fate of those on the same platforms. This isn't too hard of a task once you realize that most people venting their opinions on social media are nothing more than sheep screaming in their own agony. This can be difficult to realize when the screaming is loud and directed, but also isn't, once it's realized that the sheep have no power outside of the screens that they are glued to.

All of this to say that, if one thing is apparent, it's that the complexity of modern age society has eliminated any possibility for us to organize the right side in a meaningful way. When everyone is carrying guns in their pockets, both literally and metaphorically, this makes for one complicated ass social structure; one where everyone is dangerous, armed with the power of just one tweet or just one bullet. With all of these intertwined games being played between various groups within our species—ones that aren't bound by geographical location—it makes for modeling social behavior quite difficult.

Any attempt at trying to explain our social behavior in a piecewise fashion fails to fully encapsulate the entire complexity of living in the twenty-first century. When we attempt to say things like, we act in these sort of ways because of this sort of social theory, and we act in these other sort of ways because of this other social theory, we're disrespecting the intricacy happening around us that our brains can never fully capture and reason about.

Most of us have built layer after layer of defense mechanism and coping strategy, just in order to survive today's current climate; in turn, contorting all of our psyches into twisted knots of anguish and anxiety.

It may seem tempting to ask questions like, why do we act in the way that do in the presence of others? But, with everything given here, I don't see how any human is going to have any comprehensive answer to that question other than, who the fuck knows. And, frankly, who the fuck cares.

Fortunately for us, human social behavior isn't something that necessarily needs modeling. There is an incredible amount of freedom gained when one lets go of their assumed control over their behavior when it comes to how they act in accordance to their right side.

By letting go of the reigns of control, and saying, whatever is to happen, is to happen, one will find that the common, backwards facing lens of, "why did I do that?" or, "I should've done this instead," turns into a frontward facing lens of "If I did this under these set of circumstances, I bet I will do this under these other set of circumstances." Grief related to the past turns into curiosity related to the future, as less time is needed to be spent on deliberation of how one acted. If one is to act independent of how they wish to act, an incredible amount of space opens up upon digestion of this idea to explore the facets that bring about our own uniqueness.

There remains an infinite amount of joy to be had on the right side, without the need for any sort of structure or control. Mother Culture might have convinced some of us that the right side has tons of inherent structure, and that one needs to abide by ethics and morals and act this way in this situation and this other way in this other situation, but, one must not forget that we share the same blood as all of the other mammals on this planet; and often, act as such. The suits and ties go devilishly well with rhetoric about how one must go about living a “good” life, but I challenge the notion by saying that there is no more such thing as a “good” life. We have reverted back to survival being our number one concern, except this time, in a jungle made of concrete.

We’ve evolved to the point where making sense of our own realities around us has become too complicated for us to process in a timely manner, due to the speed at which we have technologically advanced. But this doesn’t change the fact that we are here, experiencing this transition in our species as such.

Being in evolutionary limbo, there’s no advice to be had other than to go out and have fun. There’s too much nonsense and too much chaos and too many agendas that are happening everywhere all the time, that the only reasonable path is one that attempts to negate most of the negative by finding joy in what brings the positive.

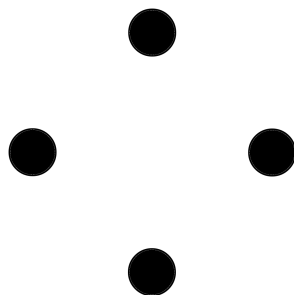
As a species, we are currently, deeply, deeply hurt, and we are doing everything in our subconscious power to safeguard what innocence we have left. Kids are being exposed to the same massive influx of information—both good and bad—that adults are, wiping away the little innocence left on this entire planet. The things that people are doing to resolve this pain are even more absurd than some of the past, hyperbolized articles that TheOnion wrote. The things that the Florida man has done, the things that dirty politicians do, the things that pastors do to children, the things that mentally ill children will resort to, the reasons that protestors are setting themselves on fire for... our reality has become stranger than any fiction that we could have come up with.

Because of this deep, unavoidable pain that we all feel in the trenches of our souls, we say fuck it; whatever happens, happens. I don’t know why I act in the way that I do, but goddamnit, if everyone else is running around doing fuck all, then you bet your ass I’m going to be doing it too.

Because of this rationalization with even the most absurd behavior, the right side becomes the sink of the overall structure; the dev/null—an incredibly important aspect to the whole operation.

With this detailing of the right side, this also completes the detailing of each of the poles of this overall architecture of four things. And now, because there exists a sink, everything belongs somewhere.

Everything, ever, belongs somewhere. Keep that in mind.



As stated in the preamble to this structure, this map exists as a discrete categorization of a continuous region. Thoughts and behaviors mesh together seamlessly between all regions of this map, with the complexity oftentimes being hidden behind the scenes. To get a better understanding of this idea, it's helpful to look at how each of these poles relates to each of the other ones. Going backwards chronologically, we'll start with the relationships that the right side has with the other three.

The relationship between the right and the left is going to be dependent on the individual contents of one's left side. True for almost every activity, there is almost always guaranteed to be some social contact with other souls at some point in a journey from beginner to non-beginner. Whether it be for advice, or competition, or necessity, most things existing in the left side have some relationship with that in the right. This relationship can be symbolized by thinking about one's teammates to play for the sport that they love, the people that they have to interact with as they perform their favorite hobby, or their competition on a journey to accomplishment.

The relationship between the right and the top shows itself in a form of love that's hardly one of a sexual nature; relationships beyond the superficial-meaningful connections that seem to be timeless. This is where the relationship one might have with their family could go, or the love for a god, or the love for some other living soul that's not themselves—one that means something to them beyond what we can fully experience in this plane of reality. If instead, someone has a top spot that is devoid of any social related value, then the channel between the top and the right is only infrequently accessed. It would be fairly challenging to live an entire life with a top spot that has no interaction with the right whatsoever, but that doesn't mean that it can't be done for whoever is sociopathic enough to try.

The relationship between the right and the bottom can best be visualized by thinking about the people that one works with. Maybe colleagues or co-workers or associates or attending the same school, or maybe just the person working the drive thru-line you frequently visit, this region is best defined by forced proximity—and often, interaction—between others. This usually happens

in a repetitive fashion, but doesn't always have to be. Something worth noting is that forced proximity doesn't necessarily imply negativity, for people existing in someone's bottom-right region can easily move to a location in the right where the bond to the bottom is broken—given the proper conditions are at play.

The relationship between the left and the top is often described with words like destiny or fate. Things that exist here, to one's experience of them, are beyond just some hobby or some activity. They represent a feeling into something much greater than words could ever describe. The two combine to give promise to unlimited dopamine; a passion to do something with a firmly rooted reason backing it. As much as some of us wish we could spend all of our time here, life presents us with a different reality. For a lot, this connection might not ever be consistently visited at any point in their lives, for it takes a true calling to be able to place activity in the top-left.

The left and the bottom are connected on the dependence of how one's bottom is implemented. A strong bond between one's left side and bottom region, whether it be a passion for physical health, a passion for work, or a passion for whatever other health related thing, implies a greater sense of self-security, and a lesser probability to achieving heights never reached before. If I have some internal desire to take care of some aspect of my health, more power to me, as I'll become healthier and happier in the process. But, having things in the left side that are completely devoid of any connection to the bottom allows for a higher degree of intensity in exploration; often leading to a higher probability of limits being broken. In the left without the bottom, one is able to push past acute discomfort with a disregard for immediately tending to the health that is otherwise not being taken care of. Essentially, don't expect to be a Picasso if your passions are related to sleep, diet, exercise, and whatever office job you have.

Lastly, the top and the bottom share the obvious, inherent connection that they have from being each other's complement, but also combine to represent a place of pure peace. There's something divine about taking care of our health in a way that aligns with what our soul desires. A place devoid of any bullshit or arbitration, this region represents a place for stretching in the woods, a place for making money while helping out family, and a place for volunteering at the soup kitchen. A space that allows for more space to think and to be, without any stress on how it is to be done.

With the individual components of this map explained, along with all of the relationships that they each have with one another, it's now more useful to start looking at how this thing behaves as a whole instead of trying to dissect its insides. If we are to believe the notion of a whole having the ability to be greater than the sum of its parts, then looking just at discrete portions of a continuous map is always going to leave out some key information. Upon

zooming out, and looking at this structure as a whole, there's one last relationship worth looking at that will complete the telling of this second story. The one that it has with time.

This map, in its entirety, is always moving along the axis of time. Along its way, the things within it may change as a function of the external influence to regions within this map, but the entire contents of the map are never all changed at once. Literally speaking, the higher up that a behavior exists in within this map, the less likely it is to change as a function of time. One may take care of their physical health in a different way every single day, but they are most likely not going to be changing their core set of values on the daily.

While it is common for the things inside of the map to change over the course of one's life, it becomes less and less common for one's entire map to change after around the 25 year mark. Stabilization occurs as a big chunk of time dedicated to exploring new is now gone, and specific personal interests and desires are able to be put on the front burner.

One may arbitrarily categorize the continuous path of their own map's trajectory over time with the notion of a chapter. A chapter: an arbitrary segment of time used to categorize one's life by the large scale events that happen within it.

Maybe a new chapter is to begin when moving to a new city and getting a new job. Or maybe, when finishing a ten year long self motivated project; or breaking up with a partner of five years. The borders for what dictates a chapter are usually blatant and in your face, but, that doesn't mean that they can't be chosen to be whatever one wants. Large scale events allow for easy chunking of a rather long and involved life span, with the map provided as a strong, mendable framework to use as a backdrop for the memories.

The point of having arbitrary chapters in the first place, is the exact reason for why humans use categorization with just about everything that we know; because it's useful. Life is long, and for some, life changes a whole lot. It can be hard to remember decades of different experiences, especially when new experiences are being had. Thinking about one, continuous lifetime in arbitrary parts is an efficient means of storing information in the brain. It allows for quicker communication of large ideas, without all the ideas needing to be fully explained.

It's also just cool to think about the different parts of your life, and how there was a different mini-version of yourself acting out different roles in different settings. Sure, some of the details of one's entire life are going to be lost by chunking a continuous phenomenon into discrete parts, but how else is one expected to remember their entire life in their older age?

This completes the description of the structure that I wish to share with the world; my drop of expression on an already paint-filled canvas. As much as I wish I could just end the conversation here, there's still more to be said.

You see, I've actually told these stories out of order.

The story that I plan on telling next is the context that gives rise to the power contained in the story that I just did tell. But, I had to do it in this order so that I didn't get the people that don't take their full prescription of antibiotics running around spouting ideas of "mine," that are completely out of context.

Maybe some of you feel the potential already, maybe some of you need more explaining, but in either case, I aim to give this solution the pedestal that it deserves; making it accessible to all as a result. With that being said, join me in my last story, where I get to share a few more.



Perspective Determines
Reality

Back when I was a teenager, there was one night, just a few days before Christmas, that I remember particularly well. It was one of those, cozy by the fireplace with no stress sort of nights where everything was just right. The smell of hot cocoa in the air, mother and father wrapping Christmas presents in the room next door, fresh baked cookies on the counter.. okay maybe I exaggerate the specifics, but you get the point.

My mother, bless her heart, is a Facebook Marketplace fanatic. Always looking to strike a good deal, or get rid of something that she doesn't want anymore, she is frequently visiting the site. On this particular night, she was selling a pair of shoes to some lady that she didn't know (ironically, I can't actually remember if it was a pair of shoes or not, on this memorable night and all), and my mom had arranged to have this lady come pick up the shoes at our house.

When the lady arrived, my mom later said that she could tell that she didn't look like she had much money; a rickety car, old clothing, a fatigued appearance, that sort of thing. She comes to the door, and the two of them talk for a second, exchanging nice-i-ties, and as the lady does the thing where she asks how much the shoes cost, even though she already knows how much they cost, my mom stops her. She hands her the shoes and says something along the lines of, "here, they're free."

The lady tries to refuse the offer, even though the shoes would clearly help her situation, but my mom insists; she says something along the lines of, accepting this gift isn't an option, and you're not leaving until these shoes are in your hands—free of charge. And, this tired lady's poor, innocent soul, genuinely trying to refuse a gift because she can't even imagine putting my mom out of a pair of shoes that she doesn't even care about anymore (and frankly, doesn't really need the money for either), eventually backs down and accepts the gift.

When she does, she breaks down crying, right there in the hallway of our house. It turns out that yes, she was struggling, and yes, she was tired, and that yes, she was extremely thankful for such a gift. She was getting the shoes for her daughter for Christmas and admitted to struggling to pay for her gifts this year. And so, without her knowing, my mom was able to play Santa Clause for this lady this year; a person who could not have been a better recipient.

Before the woman left, my mom was able to share the reason as to why she did what she did. She told the lady, "Hunny (my mom calls everyone hunny), when

I saw you, I just knew. I just knew that I had to help. It was a sign from God.”

And there it was; a sign from God. She did what she did because she chose to act on the sign sent to her from above.

As much as I would love to squeeze in my point of why attacking people’s religious beliefs, when the belief gets the believers to do net positive deeds in society, is nothing more than a display of ignorance by way of trying to shove an unwanted cock down everyone’s throat, I can’t now because I already did; but I digress.

A sign from God; she did what she did because of a sign from God. Now, taking religion out of the equation, we can zoom out a bit here and look at the situation from outside of the perspective of the ones involved in it. By looking at it from the outside in, we see that, some person (my mom), believed in some set of perspectives (Christianity), and, because of this belief, she acted in accordance to it. The belief is what lead to the action, and, in the specific case of my mom and this lady, the belief in a God is what sparked an action of generosity.

Except, what if this was backwards? What if, instead, the action came first, and the belief was constructed secondly? This would feel weird right? An action that happens regardless of belief, and then, a justification given to it only after it has happened? Could the brain even do such a thing? How fast would it have to do this to go unnoticed by the minds of the ones going through it? This idea seems fishy.

But, just because this initial feeling is one that leans towards trepidation, doesn’t mean that the idea can’t be explored further.

If this really was the case, that action came first and then belief came second, then, with the case of my mom, that would mean that, my mom gave the lady the shoes for free, and, upon her brain recognizing that the situation that just played out doesn’t make any sense—of her giving away one of her items for free—the dissonance gets resolved just as quickly as the event happened with the use of a justification—any justification—to explain the events that just happened.

Maybe there exists some sort of lookup table within her brain that contains the set of beliefs that her brain is telling her that she believes in, that is able to be quickly referenced in any case of cognitive dissonance rearing its head. If this was the case, this would prove to be a very efficient way to handle any sort of mental conflict that arises. The brain can simply go down a list of held beliefs, checking to see if there exists some way that any of them can connect to what just happened, and, as soon as one is hit, the justification that gets manufactured isn’t really manufactured because it’s probably going to be one that has been used in a similar situation before.

With my mom, she gave the lady the shoes for free, and, as her brain recognized this, it began going down the lookup table. The very first entry in

this hypothetical table: religion. Is there a connection? You bet there is.

Jesus taught giving to other, and, the event that just happened has a clear and precise connection to this entry in the table of beliefs. And so, the justification that gets crafted after the fact revolves around whatever central dogma is most easily accessed by her mind that is looking for answers as to what is happening around it.

Now, even if all of this was true, it still wouldn't fully capture all the nuance that exists in the way that we would justify things happening around us. Almost all of the nuance that is leftover can be attributed to one human concept: emotion.

This perfect lookup table doesn't exist because we are moody creatures that think in moody ways. If I'm hungry, the person who cut me off while driving is a piece of shit who can die in hell. But, give me steak and eggs before I go out driving, and the person that cut me off must be in a hurry. Our lookup tables are constantly being influenced by the way that we feel; something that is constantly changing throughout the day, throughout the week, and throughout the year.

So, maybe there does exist some overarching, metaphorical, lookup table in the brain that is used as the default for all justifications of things happening around it, but, given that the mood of the person at the time of the referencing is far enough from a norm, then the influence that the mood brings overrides the default justification that would've come from the overarching table until the mood passes.

If this idea had any sort of merit, then, the first question that I would want to ask is, is there a way to negate the influence that mood brings, so that the overarching lookup table was used in the same way in every scenario, regardless of mood? If it were the case that such a way existed, then instead of our justifications for what happens around us swaying from optimistic to pessimistic depending on the time of day, they would remain as constants no matter when they are referenced.

This alone is a powerful question, whose answer would open up the doors to many more questions. But, there would be another question that I would have immediately after that one. Assuming that the answer to that question is a point on a spectrum leaning more towards the yes side, my follow up question would be, is the lookup table mendable? That is, could the belief system be changed to something that it's currently not? One that provides different justifications for the same scenarios, leading to different avenues of thought?

If the answer to this question was true, again, so many more questions open up. Can every person's belief system change? Are there some beliefs that are unchangeable? Is there a system of beliefs that leads to more positive experiences in life than the ones that are already believed in? So many questions to be asked, and these only scratch the surface.

But... if we are to imagine that action comes before belief, and, if we are to imagine that there exists some sort of lookup table of beliefs in all of our brains

that's used to construct specific justifications, and that this lookup table is a) able to NOT be influenced by mood, b) is able to be changed, and c) can even be optimized, then, in all of this hypothetical nonsense, any of this would still only prove to be valuable if it were able to be given as an applicable, real life example where its effects are clearly seen and felt.

Bounded by fate, and backed by vodka, I'm just crazy enough to be the person to try.

A Natural Perspective

Everything starts with time.

We humans experience time in a very distinct way. In every single one of our experiences, time flows in the same direction; forwards. We don't assign a direction on time other than it moving in the same direction that it always has been. No loops, no backwards travel, no standing still; just, forward.

The rate at which we experience time changes as a function of a lot of things, including personal enjoyment of the activity at hand, as well as physics phenomena such as gravitational pull from large objects and how fast we're moving through space-time. But, the rate at which we experience time is largely unimportant for this discussion. What's more important is a drilling down of the idea that time always has, and—we are to believe—always will, move in the same direction; forwards.

Time, alongside everything else that we experience in the natural world, is continuous. There is a seamless integration in the moments that we experience, no matter how fast or how slow they come. Things don't appear and disappear instantly, they happen in a progression. Just like how we only ever experience time moving in the same direction, we always have believed, and, as of now, are to forever believe, in the continuity that time brings.

In this omnipresent continuity of time, there exists a natural ordering on the events happening within it; the order in which we perceive them. On the quantum level, this may cause dispute, but here on the classical level, this is something that is largely taken for granted. We don't write sentences from the inside out, we start at the natural starting spot; the beginning, the parts that make up the sentence in succession.

The one-two-three's—happening over time—take on the same continuity that is present with time itself. And, in this continuity of time, the continuous one-two-three's happen in something that we call space. Space is a sandbox arena that permits physical beings to take mass and interact with each other under four fundamental forces.

There is a gradual aspect to the living cycle of all things, happening in space, over time; processes that have to happen before other processes are able to happen. Following the one-two-three, consecutive ideology, things on the classical level don't happen instantaneously. Things happen, more things happen, and then, even more things happen, for trillions of years, until this universe ends its life cycle and becomes desolate and inactive, at which point, no more things will happen (unless, they do of course, but, in any case, that's besides the point).

We see that the gradual things that happen in physical space, over continuous time, occur in groups. It takes a very specific group of gradual, localized events to happen in order to grow a tree, not randomly timed and randomly spaced events happening across the universe. These groups of gradual, related events can be called processes.

A single bacteria organism is a process that hosts the processes of the different components of the cells that make it up. A single plankton is a process that hosts the process of a bacteria, which hosts the processes of everything happening inside of that bacteria. A single plankton is part of the eating process of another process called a whale. A whale is a process of processes that is hosted in a process called the ocean. The ocean is a host process to many other processes, that is hosted by the host process of planet Earth. Everything and anything that we experience in this continuity of time is a process.

If we trace back all of the processes that we see in our environment, they all belong to the same system of processes that we call "Nature." Nature is a system of processes that implements a set of laws that all of its children processes abide by. It consists of much more than just the living organisms on our planet, for, when viewed through the lens of time provided here, it consists of any and all processes that we perceive to be, in the entire observable universe. There may be other systems that exist outside of nature that are beyond our current means of comprehension, but, nature is used to refer to the system that hosts all processes that are meaningful to us humans.

These laws that nature provides are applied to both the living and the nonliving. The nonliving get a flavor of laws in the form of limitations of force interactions; the ones saying that the speed of light is constant in a vacuum, that energy and mass belong to the same spectrum of a similar form, and that there are four fundamental forces running all motion in our universe.

There's also the ones that exist for the natural world (the world of carbon-based energy pumps). The ones that say that traits that lead to a greater likelihood of living and passing on like genes are naturally selected for over time in a competitive environment. This leads to an ever-changing meta between organisms, one that determines how DNA is replicated, how culture is created, and how carbon based life forms interact with other carbon based life forms.

One universal rule set that we observe as a principle that applies to everything in nature—both living and nonliving—is the concept of death. Not just

constrained to living organisms, the life cycle of every process here on Earth, in space, is limited. At some point in the future, every localized bundle of energy currently existing in this plane of existence will cease to exist, once and forever; giving way for new life to emerge and experience what this plane of reality has to offer.

Death is just as natural as life, but it tends to get the devil role instead of the angel one. Life and death are coupled together as part of the same process, where one is not able to happen without the other.

What comes after death, we're not sure of. Maybe it's being recreated into a different form of energy, maybe it's traveling to another universe, maybe it's traveling to another dimension in our own universe, or, maybe it's just haunting the still living. It could be anything really, the unidirectional arrow of time doesn't allow for us to go back and forth across the goal posts of living and not living freely. But, despite not knowing what comes after, we do know that death surrounds us just as much as life does; the yin to the yang.

Any process that we see, carbon based or otherwise, abides by the laws set forth by our parent system of nature. In this way, we can visualize nature as being a bubble, with other bubbles inside of it. The realm of possibility of embedded bubbles within this larger bubble is going to depend on what each individual bubble is, but one can say for certain that every one of them will be bounded from above by the larger bubble of nature that they are constrained by. One such bubble encapsulated in this larger bubble of nature, is that of the human being.

The human being is a process that abides by the natural laws, both for the living and the nonliving, and is perpetually bounded above by such. We have no choice as to the fact that we need to eat every few weeks, sleep every few days, drink almost every day, and breathe every few seconds. We have no say in the fact that we interact more commonly with forms of mass rather than energy, what lightwaves pass into our eye balls, nor the fact that we feel pain when touching a hot stove. In these ways, we are bounded by our biology, which is then bounded by the bigger bubble of nature.

Humans, existing as a process on Earth, have developed one ability that allows us to do all of this conversing and discussing about what's going on around us. We have developed an ability under a loose label that we call abstraction; a way to talk about physical processes with nonphysical ideas.

With abstraction, there are such things that we might call "forms." When we see a plank of wood resting on four other planks of wood, we know that structure to be what we call a "chair." That physical chair we're looking at is a direct manifestation of an abstract form of a chair, for, the idea of a chair exists as an idea without a physical manifestation—one purely as a concept.

Through abstraction, we can reason about other processes besides our own. We are able to talk about the concepts of continuity and gradualism and processes happening in space and even abstraction itself through the power that abstraction gives us. We are able to reason about other processes happening

around us, without us necessarily having to exist as those processes; knowledge that can lead to a greater understanding. Any process that we are able to witness can also be abstracted as having a form, one away from its physical bundle of energy, with the aid of our advanced mental architecture.

By using the power of abstraction, and the effectiveness of categorization, humans have many different ways to reason about the same things that are happening around us.

In a very particular case, we have the ability to abstract and categorize the passing arrow of time. More specifically, we have the ability to think about time as a partition of intervals instead of just one continuous stream. That is, we can split up the entire length of time, from beginning to end, into intervals of whatever length makes the most sense to us; our own categorization. We could say, for example, that all of life is split up into 5 second intervals, chained together seamlessly. And, us saying that 5 seconds is the interval of all intervals would be just as valid as anyone else saying that any another interval is the interval of all intervals.

Picking any length of time to create arbitrary separations, the sum of all the intervals is all of time. If one was to think about making each interval as small as possible, condensing it to as close to a single point as we can get, there comes a point where narrowing in any further provides diminishing returns on its appreciable exactness to that of the human mind. This single point, similar to a single point on a continuous number line, is what we call a state.

A state is a single moment in time; a snapshot of how everything is in an exact moment. If you sum up all the states together, you get all of time; analogously, taking every point on the number line gives the whole, continuous number line.

Besides just being able to reason about physical objects as abstract forms, we are able to use our advanced brains to do much more than that. We have the ability to analyze, predict, and understand the progression of these states, these chains of moments in time. We know that certain states must happen before other certain states, and that certain states only happen after other certain states; we possess the ability to compare states to other states, recognizing similarities and differences between them.

By comparing processes to other processes, and states to other states, all abstractly, we are able to pick up on patterns, given enough time and data, that is. In other words, we're able to gain the ability to accurately predict outcomes of other processes before they happen, and, if given enough time and data, we can turn that knowledge into a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms at play with whatever it is we wish to study.

Across the history of the human being, we have had a whole lot of time to not only understand so many different processes other than our own, but also the ability to pass all of this knowledge down to the next set of generations that come after us. This leads to a compounding effect in the way that humans have come to learn things, one that has only largely happened in the past few

thousand years. The human being, a process that had already topped the food chain of all food chains that it existed in, now with the ability to continue to advance in a completely different domain than the purely physical—at an unbelievable rate—has become quite the incredible creature to say the least.

If we fast forward to the current day, we exist in a relatively unique time. Due to the major advances in technology, as well as the abundance of extra time we have leftover from not having to survive the elements as our primary activity any more, humans have had a lot of time to study the processes that are all around us. With the smartest minds working across varying fields, all of which are able to connect with one another instantly from across the globe, we find that, over time, there becomes a general consensus of what knowledge is accepted and which is not; a meta, if you will.

This meta represents generally accepted knowledge that doesn't just come from a single person. Since every meta is plastered on the front page of the internet constantly, the refining process of understanding whatever it is that we're trying to understand, becomes rapid as everyone tries to subconsciously (or consciously) outcompete everyone else. In current times, the best information wins, and, with the smartest minds able to compound on the smartest minds that came before them, the consensi of knowledge pertaining to various processes that we see around us in the year 2023 are quite resilient to change, to say the least.

That isn't to say that the details of what we understand might change, because they most likely always will, but rather to say that, the chiseling procedure of understanding the components of a process becomes more and more exact as time goes on. For example, we know that thoughts are connected to the brain, and, at this point, are sure of it—even if we once thought that drilling holes in skulls was a valid way to attack them. We are very confident in the frameworks that we have built to perceive the world around us, because they have been continuously getting built over time, across the generations and generations that came before us.

One of the processes that we've come to understand fairly well over only the past few hundred years—from this procedure of an open source, common understanding that gets carved out over time in a global society of intelligent minds—is the one of ourselves. The human being, a process occurring in nature that not only has the ability to analyze its own process, but the ability to do it well.

Through the time and experimentation of our ancestors, we have been able to understand the human process better than we ever have before. Through an understanding of the biology, the chemistry, the neuroscience, the psychology, and the sociology of ourselves, all of which came from the dedication to explore each of those domains by the intellectual pioneers that first did so, we have a large portion of cause and effect relationships related to our physiology figured out.

With everyone being able to agree on most of the ideas related to the process of the human, there are some who believe in radical beliefs on top of the shared beliefs; one of whom is called Dr. Robert Sapolsky. Dr. Robert Sapolsky is a neuro-endocrinologist at Stanford who is able to agree on all of the agreeable stuff, but who holds a radical belief that sits on top of the agreed upon knowledge when it comes to his understanding of the human process. But, before I get to that, I would be doing Dr. Sapolsky an injustice if I at first didn't give him the pedestal that he deserves.

Dr. Sapolsky is an incredible intellect that has credentials for both abstract theory formulation as well as hands-on, in-field practice of the theory. He graduated at the top of his class from Harvard, has won awards for his work in his field, hosts one of Stanford's most viewed lecture series on YouTube, has authored a handful of books, and has spent multiple seasons living amongst the baboons and locals in various regions of Africa. Not only has he studied the biology of human beings in theory, but he has lived with a process that is very similar to ours—the one called the primate—that has lead to profound discoveries in the way that we view ourselves. He understands the mechanisms at play behind that of the primate's biology, leading into an understanding of our own as well, as indicated from his lecture series and various talks.

The reason that I bring an external character into this story, is because Dr. Sapolsky's mind plays a very important role here with the discoveries that it has made. For me to come up with my own discoveries pertaining to the same ideas, it would take a few degree's worth of time and knowledge before I would feel even the slightest bit comfortable giving an argument backing a claim as big as the one that I'm about to introduce.

I know very little about biology and chemistry and neuroscience, and all of the disciplines that fall in-between of those, and I don't plan on dedicating years of my life to learn about those domains before I finish this book. Luckily for me, I don't have to. Because Dr. Robert Sapolsky has.

Now, here's where I'll lose half of you, but, I hope that you can at least hear me out with what I have to say before you turn your cheek to the rest of this book; for whether or not we have a say in what we believe in is largely out of our hands. Put simply, Dr. Robert Sapolsky does not believe in free will.

That being put into the narrative presented here, Dr. Sapolsky is to be a big believer in the action before justification direction. He believes that action happens entirely independent of the choice that we assume that we're making as it happens, regardless of the justification that we come up with after the fact.

Why this belief? Well, that's a very complicated question. The concept of free will encompasses much more than just the condensed thought of us acting in accordance to how we think we want to act or not. There's a lot of biology involved, a lot of psychology involved, and a whole lot of theory involved.

Personally, I don't think that us having free will or not is going to be proved one way or another in any reasonable time scale to the ones reading this text. There's still a whole lot that we don't understand, and might not ever have the ability to understand, but that doesn't mean that the concept can't be explored further anyway.

Now, I bring Dr. Sapolsky into this story because Dr. Sapolsky is an intelligent man. This isn't something that you have to take my word for, as if I was relaying the whispers that I was receiving from an angel. He has publicly accessible work that is available for free to anyone with an internet connection. Instead of letting your brain decide on which side of the argument that it wants to lean towards with just the information I'm going to present here, I urge you to first watch something of his—anything of his—before coming up with a conclusion for yourself on the matter.

I think a very important idea that needs to get explicitly stated here is that I'm not here trying force a particular frame of view upon anyone reading this. Instead, I'm here to state a set of perspectives that I believe in, and furthermore, the effects that pop out when believing in them.

Simply put, what you yourself believes in does not matter to me. Whether you want to roll with the ideas presented here or discard them entirely plays no effect on the well-being of my day-to-day life. But, if you either do the research yourself and agree with the argument, or, are too lazy and so will just take my word for it before moving on (or rejecting it), you might be interested in hearing some of the specific consequences that fall out of believing in this perspective.

Understanding the belief of no free will comes down to thinking about just a few questions. First off, is all of life predetermined already, or is there some sort of computation that's taking place in each (or some) of the states that pass by, that determines what comes next—not something that can be known of in advance?

The argument for why we think life tends to be more on the not predetermined side is because of the discovery of a concept at play in our universe that we call chaos. For those who have only heard of the word chaos in a nonchalant, societal setting (e.g., "It's so chaotic in here!"), there exists technicality behind the word when it is used in the fields of mathematics, biology, and economics, just to name a few. Simply put, chaos is complete unpredictability of a process that we can otherwise reason about just fine.

A common example that demonstrates how chaos works in our universe is much more effective than getting into the true technicality behind it.

A single pendulum is nothing more than a weight hanging from a fixed anchor. You can swing the weight from side to side, and the weight will move in a smooth arc back and forth until it loses all of its kinetic energy. Very predictable, very easy to reason about.

A double pendulum is essentially a single pendulum with another break in it; a weight attached to a fixed anchor with a joint somewhere in its connection.

You take a double pendulum, and you do the same thing, you pick it up to one side and drop it to watch the smooth arc that it carves out in space, except, it doesn't do just that.

It acts very erratically as it displays seemingly random movement. This is initially confusing, as a double pendulum doesn't seem to be too much different from a single one. So, to gain more knowledge of what's going on, we stop it from moving about, pick it up to the side again, and drop it once more. This time, the movement is still erratic, except, in a much different way than the first time. The pattern that it displays, which is no pattern at all, carves out a completely different shape with its path over time than the first one did.

We do this again and again, each time, dropping it from what we think is the same spot, and each time, it acts completely different from the last. Every time, we think we might have an idea of how it's going to behave, and every time, we're completely wrong. A double pendulum represents a chaotic system, one that we cannot predict.

Reasoning about a double pendulum is otherwise simple. We know of the physics governing the motions of the weight, we know of the role of gravity in the whole thing, and we can abstractly talk about the idea of a double pendulum in the first place. But, when it comes to predicting how it's going to behave, we have no nothing to say. This is a system where even the slightest of variations in initial conditions—the height and velocity at which we let go of the weight—causes drastic differences in the end behavior produced.

Even knowing of all the parts of a double pendulum, and how they work on their own, we currently have nothing meaningful to say as to how they all come together to work as a whole; thus, chaos.

To us, chaos represents randomness in an otherwise orderly system. Chaos is all around us, and in us, as it seems to be a very natural component of the world that we were bred from. Chaos can help explain how we've somehow already have made it to the moon, yet, can't even get daily weather predictions right; it's the igniter of the process of natural selection—at the heart of DNA mutation; it's the shape that's created when squeezing a drop of food coloring into water; and, it's behind all of us having unique fingerprints.

If we take chaos into account when we consider the answer to this first question of whether or not life is completely predetermined, it gives strong reason as to why we might think that it's not. Unless we just don't have the capability to understand it fully yet, chaos in our environment presents us with an undeniable concept that must be taken into consideration when answering such a question.

When we zoom in all the way to the fundamental interactions governing the way that everything moves forward in time, it's no doubt that chaos is apparent. We can't even predict where an electron is, much less how the fabric of different space-time fields interact with each other. Since everything is built on top of these fundamental interactions, it's an easy leap to think that the structures built on top of them have an aspect of chaos involved with them as well.

Despite it seeming that chaos is dictating how things move forward on a moment-to-moment basis, when we zoom out far enough, we see that there are still patterns that are apparent. For example, we can't always predict what the weather is going to be like on a day-to-day basis, but, when we look at it on a much larger time scale and lose some of the specificity, we know a lot about the weather. We know that during these times of the year, the temperature will range in between these bounds, and that places with certain conditions are going to have more rain and less sun than places with other certain conditions.

It's definitely apparent that, here on the macro-scale, a lot of things definitely are predictable. Even though there's chaos happening all around us, giving rise to the reality that we see, we're able to understand the patterns of the processes around us as if there wasn't any chaos involved at all. We can do this so well, that certain specialists can spend 30 minutes with a 10 year old child and can gain a decent prediction as to what direction they will lean towards in their future, through a poking and prodding of their barely developed personality. And so, the chaos present in the foundation of our reality loses its omnipresence when bubbling up to the structured reality that we experience.

As a metaphor, the chaos underpinning our universe presents default, pre-built channels for things on the macro-scale to happen. The chaos existing in each moment is in control of exactly which channel the involved parties are to take, but, when looking at the pre-built channels from a distance, we see that there's only little variation between the different paths that the chaos could have chosen from.

As an example backing this metaphor, you can tell that some nerdy kid is going to grow up to do something nerdy, even though the exact job that he'll end up doing is left to the randomness that his environment presents him with as he grows up. You don't have to know the exact path that they will take to know the bounds of the ones that are possible for them. Maybe, there's a random interaction that happens on the fundamental scale that rises up and manifests its way into their real life as being the difference between them taking a shower or not on a particular day, only one of which leads to them meeting the CEO of the tech company that they now work for in a coffee shop that wouldn't have happened otherwise. But, regardless, we could almost say for certain that this situation would have turned into nothing at all if they were instead to meet the CEO of a large art firm.

The chaos underpinning our reality has the final say in our exact path through life, but that doesn't mean that patterns aren't able to be drawn from the group of possible realities for each of us, when we zoom out and look at our paths from a distance. Which brings us to the second question, if life is (inserting a possible 'largely' here) not pre-determined, and chaos is playing enough of a part to influence our realities, just how much control do we have over this chaos?

Is it possible to influence this chaos? To channel it in certain ways? Is there anyway that we can have some say in what happens to us that goes against the grain of chaos? And if so, how much? With chaos and unpredictability

happening on the smallest of scales, is the effect that they play on the largest of scales entirely in the hands of the seemingly random computations? Or, is it negligible enough so that humans can choose otherwise? These questions are what get to the heart of the actual question of free will—the one that comes after knowledge that we don't actually have knowledge on how a large portion of how our universe works.

On one end of the spectrum of beliefs related to this concept, you get the Sapolsky view. This being, that we have absolutely no say in any of it, and that, whatever is happening on the smallest scales, bubbling up to the largest of scales, is what is ultimately deciding what each and every one of us do all the time.

On the other end of this spectrum, you get the—oftentimes—religious based belief, that yes, we do have a say over all of this chaos that's happening on the micro-scale, and it comes from nothing other than belief in this perspective.

As to which one you believe, I couldn't be more indifferent. Again, I'm not here to push narratives upon people by force. I care much more about exploring the consequences of what comes after the perspectives that I myself believe in. And, to me, the perspective that I believe in is the one that strongly favors Dr. Sapolsky's position.

As a thought experiment that I like to use as to why this belief makes the most sense to me, imagine choice through the most zoomed out lens possible and incrementally zoom in, and, after each step, ask the same question; could there have been choice involved? For example, did I have any choice in the fabric of space-time being the way that it is? Probably not. Did I have a choice as to being a specimen that's part of the Milky Way? Probably not. Did I have a choice as to whether or not I was born on a planet that experiences one trip around its parent star every 365 day-night rotations? Probably not. Did I have choice as to what state I was born in? To the schools that I went to? To the information that was taught to me? To the forced interactions that I've had between other groups of individuals growing up? To the parents that I was born to? With the brothers that I had? And for how long I was breastfed? Or what my DNA looks like? Which set of my genes are being expressed?

At what point do we say that choice was involved? All the time? Only part of the time? Only after puberty? Only in adulthood? Only in dire circumstances? Only when we say we do? It's very hard for my mind to find a good starting point of there being a switch of us suddenly being able to express intent that possibly goes against the grain of the fabric of our reality. And, on top of that, Dr. Sapolsky prevents very convincing real life examples of just how much our biology controls our behavior; examples that I'll leave as an exercise for the reader to find.

So then... let's say that you the reader end up believing in this belief, the one that says that choice is largely or entirely out of our hands. What are some of the consequences of believing in such a drastic claim?

At large, it evaporates any notion of something that I've come to learn, a lot of people have a hard time letting go of; control. It evaporates control. It washes away the pride in all of the decisions that we've made, all the grief in all the decisions we didn't make, and every feeling that lands in between.

Bill Gates didn't choose to be Bill Gates no more than the homeless drug addict didn't choose to become a homeless drug addict. We all experience a unique current that is set onto us from the moment that we are brought into existence, and is incrementally defined by the unpredictable interactions that we experience in our environment over our lifetimes. Taking pride in the paths we've taken, because of the decisions that we've made, is akin to taking pride in it raining during the spring, or it being sunny in the summer.

When life is looked at through the lens of one that takes away our say in the decisions that we make, a cascade of new considerations and changes in belief occurs. It's not just one change to one belief, but rather, one belief causing change in a whole lot of other beliefs; a mentally expensive endeavor. But, given enough time and consideration, one might find that the idea becomes more digestible and absorbable the more that they dabble with it. When this moment comes, there is still a lot of conversation to be had, for this is not where the story ends.

All walks of life, good, evil, and everywhere in between, are living lives that have been handed to them; even despite the ones that contain a lot of hard work. Upon acceptance of this, empathy begins to replace judgement, and generosity begins to replace stinginess. When we look at people as the consequence of riding a particular wave that was given to them, instead of them choosing the waves that they've ridden, we open the door to understanding some of the feelings that they might have felt during their own specific journey.

It's when we look at someone who we put below us on a made up scale in our heads, whether it be the homeless man begging for money, the crack head tweaking on the street, or the prostitute just trying to make enough money so her pimp doesn't abuse her again, and begin to pass judgement on people that we don't know, on a journey that we didn't take, with assumptions sprinkled throughout that they chose their path to be the way that it is, that judgement leads to negativity in a social environment.

"I'm not going to give to the homeless person, they should just *choose* to get a job."

"If I give them money, they're just going to *choose* to spend it on drugs."

"If only they would have *chosen* to act in a way that they didn't."

But, when we replace the lens of judgement—the one that's ultimately fueled by assuming control—with one that encapsulates the idea of choice being less of a factor in the outcome of one's life path, our hearts immediately begin to open up to feeling what other people have felt, without us having to experience the same pain that they have. This, very naturally, leads to a free well-being boost within a society; one with no cost at all, simply happening from a change in

perspective.

“I wonder what’s keeping that homeless person from working. Is it a disability? A severe mental health diagnosis? Chronic pain?”

“If I give them money, they’ll have no choice but to spend it on drugs, so instead, I’ll give them warm food.”

“That poor soul, who has had no choice as to the pain that they are currently feeling.”

An innocent, inquisitive nature begins to fill a society with this one simple change in perspective; the one saying that we have no choice in the way that we behave instead of us assuming that we actually do. That’s all it takes to better the lives of both parties involved; an extremely low barrier holding us back from a symbiotic relationship between all members of our society.

So, why is it that it feels so natural to hold on to the opposite belief? Why is it so difficult to let go of choice if it leads to such positive effects? Well, with the good, comes the bad. And the “bad” here being completely subjective to how one reacts to a certain idea. On one end of a spectrum, saying that there’s no choice in the way that we behave and act, we get these beneficial feelings of empathy and generosity replacing feelings of judgement and shame. But on the other end, it can also wipe away pride and accomplishment.

How is one to feel proud over what was already laid out for them in the chaotic fabric of our reality? How is one to feel proud over a path that they had no say in? Can one truly gloat over their path down a current where they had no say in the direction of the water, had no say in the raft given to them, and had no say in the others that surrounded them on this path down the river?

In some sense, there’s absolutely no denying that hard work is almost always a prerequisite for success, so there does remain some sense of accomplishment that will never be wiped away. Just because the path wasn’t chosen doesn’t mean that the path was easy. But one has to realize the platform that was given to them for them to be able to take the path that they did. Even when people are forced to run uphill both ways, they have to realize that there existed an energy within them that powered them up those hills.

As someone who has been through two rounds of major depression now, I can tell you that, when there’s no energy left, when the body is chronically fatigued, and the mind is under full siege, there’s not a chance in the world that someone creates the energy required to get up those hills by themselves. Creating energy when energy is not there is so far detached from one’s reality in a state like that, that making consistent leaps across that gorge to get out of it, without the help of anything else, is nothing short of a miracle. And so yes, even the ones who wake up at 4AM, even the ones who train three times a day, even the ones that torture themselves just to achieve the label of a ‘winner,’ are all given the platforms to be able to do what they have done. A healthy body, a thinking mind, and the tools necessary to take their own path.

And so, with a belief of something like, free will being largely out of our hands,

both positive and negative consequences fall out. On one end, grief, shame, and regret all disappear within a snap of the fingers, and on the other end, pride and ego and one's self image can take a fairly large hit if they were heavily relied on before. Upon further consideration of all the remaining effects that sit everywhere in between this spectrum, a new feeling emerges. A feeling of peace.

Why peace? It's simple. I do not choose, therefore I do not worry. There exists ways to train different reactions to stimuli that we already have been exposed to, but there is no inherent need to so. There isn't an inherent need to do anything. One can simply sit back and watch their whole life unfold without having to take any action besides the occasional sip of an ice cold lemonade.

But, don't be mistaken, for the path of default isn't always one of joy. For some people, myself included, letting go of the reigns of control means becoming homeless, or not having a job, or not having a car, or all three at the same time. Letting go of the reigns and assuming no control isn't always a path that goes up, and it's very hard not to want to grab the reigns once it reveals itself to be one that goes down; but one can't forget that ups and downs are both parts that make up a whole life.

Bad times aren't to be shied away from, because that sentence no longer makes any sense. There is no shying away from anything, because there is no action to take at all, we are simply experiencing.

For others, ones that have the resources and means, letting go of the reigns of control is stupidly simple once they're given a proper framework that allows them to be able to make the switch from a previously held perspective to this new one. You don't have to tell someone to think differently if you give them a framework that does it for them. And, the framework that follows the ideas here goes something like this.

We are simply experiencing a ride that is constantly being pieced together by some very large amount of chaotic computations. There are things that we can do in this ride to change how it feels, such as leaning one way or the other, or putting our hands up or down during the drops, or even opening our mouths the whole way through, but we have no say in where the ride is taking us, and for how long it will last.

The process that is myself-Dominic Vicharelli-has had no say in how he was to develop, and under what conditions, both of the nature and nurture sort. That isn't to say that the life I lived was pre-determined, but rather, was pieced together on a moment by moment basis depending on the interactions of naturally occurring chaotic systems happening in my environment.

By letting go of choice, I ease the burden of responsibility of superficial matters, and place a larger emphasis on core values; for the superficial is to come and go as it does, but the things that are to remain true over time are what are worth looking at. A lifetime's worth of holding onto chronic, unnecessary stress related to artificial, self-imposed burdens, completely lifted off of my shoulders upon acceptance and digestion of the fact that my life is completely out of my hands.

A freedom prevails, and a new space emerges. For, however I act, is in perfect alignment with how I was determined to act; caused by the uniqueness brought into this moment that was unpredictable in nature, and by the unique reaction I had to this unique moment in time. There's no more stress related to doing the "wrong" things, the "wrong" way. That concept makes no sense when mistakes are considered as an integral part of one's timeline, instead of as a concept that we must choose to be as minimal as possible. Mistakes happen because there is no other way that the event could've happened; there was no place to interject the notion of choice anywhere in the process. And so, there is no "wrong" way anymore, only *the* way; the one that happens.

Every action leads to reaction, and everything is to come as it does. We will always act in accordance to our paths, for there are no other paths that we can take. No stress, no preparation, no worry. That is, for me at least.

I've had two years to ponder this, and to deal with the frustration of the killing off of old brain cells for the formation of new ones, and thus, two years to also prepare for the consequences in believing in such. I do not worry because I am prepared for anything that life has to throw at me. Some may not share the same feeling towards letting go of control, for they are unprepared for the chaos that is now not-noticeable in their lives.

For those currently unprepared, you might be feeling just a tad bit of angst. A touch of unease; ready to fight or flight. And I don't blame you. I'm making some fairly strong claims. But this isn't a stand-off that I wish to win by force. I just wish to present my case and have you deal with it as you do.

There's one last question that emerges from the needs of the unprepared; how is one to go about preparing themselves for the unpredictability of life? The answer to that question is complicated, because I seem to have just washed away any plan of action one could take toward anything at all, if there really is no notion of choice and all. How are we to take action towards changing something if we have no say in what we are doing, and how we are reacting to our environment?

Yet, despite this viewpoint, a beacon of light shines through the fog that is going to be viewed as our guiding star. A beacon of light that requires a group of perspectives separate from the ones presented here. So, before we move on, a recap of the natural perspectives.

Time only moves in one direction, continuously and forever. With time, comes space; a physical arena. Our space comes in the flavor of three dimensions of measurement, but the number could be any. Gradual, localized events called processes happen in space, over time.

Nature is a system of processes that hosts all events perceivable to mankind. This includes both the living and the nonliving, with the laws that each abide by. Processes that happen in nature are gradual and are known to be heavily influenced by chaotic systems.

The human being is a process in nature that is unique to all the other processes in nature (that we currently know of) in, particularly, one big way. The human being has developed the ability for abstraction; the ability to think about, reason about, and communicate to others, abstract forms of physical (or nonphysical) objects. This ability opens up an incredible amount of doors for the human being process to explore.

Because of this abstraction, one of the forms that we have been able to reason about is the one of ourselves. We have developed the ability to study the human being process, as human being processes ourselves; an act that is truly remarkable. Through the compounded knowledge that the smartest minds in the fields of the sciences have recorded about us, before us, there exists a current meta of information that is accepted by most everyone—even in today’s extremely polarized world.

Now, there’s something to note that might be getting overlooked subconsciously. Up until this point, I have made absolutely no stabs at religion or science whatsoever. We can all agree on the fact that time only moves forward, and that nature exists, and that we—humans beings, existing too—belong to it, and that chaos is an idea that exists in nature, and that we have minds that are able to not only think about, but talk about all of this with each other; and then, there’s a divide.

One of the ideas at the forefront of this meta of current information is the one that says that a human’s behavior is completely determined by the laws and interactions it has within its parent system of nature. Simply explained, the belief is that, we are what we are, and we do what we do; nothing more and nothing less. The opposite idea related to this belief is the one that says that, we are in fact agents of choice, and that we have a say in the choices that we make during our lifetimes (by mechanisms currently unknown).

Some of you are going to end up believing in the former, and some of you are not. If one does end up believing in the whole no choice shebang, then they get the added benefit/trade-off of all of the consequences that come from the notion of free will being a myth. Depending on one’s circumstances, this will either be liberating or absolutely terrifying. If one instead subscribes to the idea that chaos has negligible effects on our realities, and that we’re all agents of choice, they too stand on ground that is absolutely defensible as well. But, no matter the path of belief taken at this fork in the road, both groups of believers meet back up at the same spot, with the same question.

How do we prepare ourselves for what life has to throw at us, whether or not we actually do have choice? The big picture, theory stuff only gets us so far, for at some point, the body and the mind will default to some physical action. So, what’s left for us inside of this nature bubble for our exploration?

A whole lot.

Body, Mind, & Me

The exploration of life continues with further examination into the human process. So far, the encompassing bubble scheme is Time → Nature → Human. And now, it's time to dive deeper into the Human to add another layer to the overall scheme; the body, the mind, and the me.

What is a human? Easy, I just answered it. I joke, only sometimes, but understanding what a human is can be a complicated task depending on how detailed one wants to get. We are one complex organism with a whole lot going on inside of us (with our biology) and a whole lot going on outside of us (with our social behavior). It also depends on what previous biases each of us hold towards thinking about what a human is. To a Christian, a human is the making of God. To an evolutionist, a human is an evolved monkey. And, to this framework, a human is a process belonging to the nature system.

But, no matter the biases that we each hold towards understanding our own species, there are a few things that are indisputable between all groups. For one, we know that there has never been a predator as adept as us at the game of surviving in the natural world. Whether our talents were chiseled over millennia by natural selection, or God-given, it is undeniable that the human being really is the apex predator of apex predators. With the use of our own creations, there is not a beast that we can't take down; and in an elegant fashion, no less.

We also know that we all share something that, in English, we call "consciousness." Consciousness is some abstract phenomenon that we can all feel, yet have trouble describing. It's a process that starts in humans around the age of 4-5 years old, and continues up until the point of the person's passing. When consciousness ends, we're not sure what happens, for it seems to be a one-way street. We are unsure if other organisms besides humans share this feeling of consciousness, but, this section of the text isn't dedicated towards nonhuman species, so I'll keep it focused on the beings of ourselves.

These two parts, a consciousness combined with a virtuoso killing machine, make up some, or all, of the components of the process of a human being. Why view them as two separate parts of one whole? Because, fundamentally, they are.

The body has a set of tasks that it is capable of doing that is different from the set of tasks that the mind is capable of doing; the body runs, and the mind thinks. I can't do calculus with just my body, and I can't exercise with just my mind. But, although separate entities, capable of separate tasks, they are connected together by an unbreakable bond. A connection where one party has the ability to heavily influence the other.

Defining the distinctions between the body and the mind can be challenging because of this separate, non-separability that they share with each other. Does

the brain belong to the body or the mind? Are the hormones that flow in the brain that dictate thought attributed to the mind or the body? What about when the body and the mind are working in conjunction on a certain task? Despite this overlapping of functionality, the lines that I want to draw between the two are simple enough for anyone to understand.

The body is defined to be all that is physical. Anything that can take on a quantifiable measurement of any sort in the physical arena of space that we experience. This could be a measurement of volume, a defining of physical structure, or even voltage of a current. The body refers to all of the cells, all of the tissue, all of the bones, and all of the electrical currents between neurons. With the use of our bodies, we are able to interact with other physical things happening alongside of us in the continuum of space. We see the body, we feel the body, and we are the body. Partly that is.

The mind is defined to be all that which lives in the nonphysical. The mind hosts processes that exists in a dimension that we are only barely accustomed to perceiving, through this one recently developed avenue that we call thought. What happens across time, but not necessarily in space, the mind refers to everything that can't be quantifiably measured by humans (maybe with a possible, yet, added in here). The mind is where the answer to $3 + 9$ is, it's where we can imagine the laugh of a loved one, and it's where we can close our eyes and visualize sitting on a beach with a Corona. What happens in the mind is individualized to every single person, with it only being shareable in different forms than its original format.

Beyond the separation of what I define to be the body and the mind, there exists a natural tendency to arbitrarily categorize another boundary; the one called the me. Some call it the soul, Hindus call it atman, and Christians may call it the divine spirit, but in any case, the memory of what our own body and mind do in space, over time, leads to the desire of creating another bucket to which we can use to understand ourselves.

The me is defined to be what the body and the mind carve out of both the physical space that the body exists in, as well as the nonphysical realm that the mind interacts with, when considered over time. The gradual, localized, consistent form of energy that behaves in ways according to how it's behaved before, the me is the bucket for all the processes related to the body or mind that have been long forgotten about by the passing arrow of time.

The body and the mind only ever exist in the moment that they are in (even though the mind can play pretend otherwise), but the me exists across time, across physical and nonphysical space, with the ability to greatly influence the greater fabric of other living souls—possibly in timelines that it doesn't even exist in.

Each of the body, the mind, and the me have their own desires and pleasures that might conflict with the interests of the others. My body wants steak and milk, my mind wants drugs and porn, and my soul wants to finish this book. Different desires, different pleasures, different modes of reasoning, all housed within the same system, working together as one seamless machine.

The mother system of the human being (nature), containing all of the interactions that completely define the activity of a person's body and mind, lays the roadmap for how each of our souls are to develop; all of the parts that make us up, completely under the influence of all the interactions that shape us in the way that they do. Visually, the relationship between how influence is introduced and handled by a human being, can be vaguely represented like so:

current state $\xrightarrow{\text{(influence)}}$ (body \leftrightarrow mind \leftrightarrow me) $\xrightarrow{\text{(action)}}$
 appendage to 'me' $\xrightarrow{\text{(influence)}}$ new current state $\xrightarrow{\text{(influence)}}$. . .

A feedback loop of the environment throwing something at a person, the three forces that comprise of their essence as a human being reacting in some way according to behavior consistent with what each force has learned before, for them to exhibit some behavior that adds to the chaos of the environment, for everything else (and themselves) to react to, thus continuing the cycle.

In an attempt to better understand these three forces that comprise of a human being, and the arbitrary lines that I'm drawing between them, it might be helpful to look at the relationships that they have with one another.

The body and the mind share an inseparable connection with one another in the sense that, one hosts the other. The mind wouldn't be possible (yet) without a physical brain to host it in. Because of this connection, the body and the mind share an incredible amount of influence on how the other behaves. One might think that, by now, the body and the mind would've found a way to coexist in true harmony. But, instead, we see that, in today's day and age at the very least, the mind constantly shows up to the battles of the body, and vice versa.

Even though they are part of the same system, their own set of desires can present conflict for the other one when we begin to get to the outer edges of visualizing their wants. For pure bliss, the mind wants no distractions. Eating, drinking, and peeing all get in the way of the flow state, for once it's accessed, the needs of the body become of secondary concern. Conversely, bringing real change to the body sometimes involves ignoring the false warnings set up by the mind in an attempt to ease the pain that it is feeling during the transition to a new state.

Being apart of the same system, the body and the mind possess inherent modes of communication that often get overlooked by our prefrontal corteces. When I present your mind with something that it's forced to react to, there's no time spent building a bridge between the body and the mind in order for them to communicate effectively. All the bridges are already built, and in a highly optimized fashion. The mind and the body share the ability to communicate with one another in such deep rooted, efficient ways, that it doesn't matter if the thought of the message ever crosses over into the conscious experience of the one going through it.

For nonbelievers, skeptics, and those who are just simply confused, examples are always handy. Especially when they're ones that get the audience involved as well. You hear that? Everyone stand up, it's class participation time!

Okay I kid about the standing up part, but this *is* an example where you'll (hopefully) get to feel the connection between the body and the mind for yourself; a way in which the mind possesses the ability to quickly and powerfully affect the body which it is hosted in. No extra time is needed to feel the effects permeate from one to the other, for there are no bridges that need to be built. To access this pathway of the mind influencing the body, I'll use a story based around an interaction I had when I was in college.

Back when I was getting my undergraduate degree, I minored in computer science. As one can imagine, this meant spending a lot of time around a lot of other computer science students as well. Anyone who's been around a group of CS students from anytime around the mid 2010s, onward, can probably tell you that the topic of cryptocurrency comes up at least once.

Over time, multiple of these conversations occur across a spread of people, across a spread of courses, and, even the uninterested become, at the very least, initiated with the idea of crypto. In my case, this meant little about understanding the technology behind it, and instead, knowing which cryptocurrencies were being held by what people that I talked to.

Obviously, I couldn't remember every coin that everyone held, and, I didn't plan on keeping record of such, but there were definite patterns that I couldn't help but pick up on through the various conversations that I had. Certain types of people with certain types personalities definitely tended towards certain types of coins, and, because of this, I didn't have to know what coin every person was holding to be able to pick up on these patterns. When there are large enough buckets that everyone can be placed into, it makes for a much more efficient storage of data when compared to randomly organized lists of facts.

Now, in the year 2022, when crypto experienced a large boom, shit hit the fan. For those unaware, a crypto boom has occurred cyclically, starting with the creation of bitcoin in 2009, up until 2022, with the one occurring in this past year the largest one yet. Teenagers that still get their moms to serve them Eggo waffles in the morning became millionaires essentially overnight, because of the low sanctions and high volatility present in the crypto sphere as of the early 2020s.

Those who struck, struck. And I knew one such person who struck. And not just some anybody; somebody whose number I had in my phone. When all of this crypto craziness had settled down, I reached out to him with a text saying something along the lines of, "were you still holding blah blah blah coin during that huge rush?" and I got the response that I was hoping for. This dude, just some dude with no particular skillset of extreme value, now held the

title of what some people spend their whole lives trying to achieve; my man, was in fact, an actual millionaire.

Some guy that I knew, some random dude that I met in college, alongside of thousands upon thousands of other nerds who were ahead of the curve with this new form of currency, literally beat the game of modern life before their brains even had the chance to fully develop; way to go tech hipsters!

But anyway, upon talking about it with him further, I realized that he didn't actually need the money because of his well paying job, and that he almost forgot about the coins entirely. In fact, his gracious soul had decided to give most of his earnings away to those who actually needed it.

Now, I wasn't close friends with the dude or anything, I just happened to connect with him over a project that we worked on together, so I wasn't planning on asking him to give me any of his winnings or anything (and even if I was friends with him, I'm not sure I would ask of such a thing), but regardless, he did something truly unimaginable that I will never have the chance to fully thank him for.

He asked for my bitcoin wallet address, and less than 10 minutes later, I had one whole bitcoin sitting in my wallet. One whole bitcoin, something that cost less than a penny upon its creation, was, at that time, worth over \$40,000.

This dude was practically handing them away because of some whole, "money isn't important" mantra that he was preaching, and I just so happened to be walking on the right path at the right time. He gifted me \$40,000 just because I was willing to talk to him for a bit about his spoils, without asking for my own piece of the pie; an act of generosity that would be hard to believe even from a best friend.

The reason I tell this story is to give credit to the statement that I hope will spark just a little feeling of joy within each (some) of your hearts. When I first got that single bitcoin, I cashed it out immediately. I eventually put some back in, and wound up winning some more. I then transitioned to cheaper cryptocurrencies, where a little money can turn into a whole lot of money real quick—at the price of even higher volatility—where I hit big on one coin.

I did a lot of research into all the top 500 cryptocurrencies, as well as read commentary on what the masses were saying about each, and felt very confident in gambling on a small handful of coins that had the potential to turn me, myself, into a millionaire as well. And, as luck would have it, before the wave was over, the 14 hour days that I spent dedicated to research proved to be worth it; my numbers hit.

With a coin that has the ticker AVAX, I made an incredible amount of money by betting on it before the masses really got their hands on it. It went from under a dollar to a max height of just around \$100 in just a few months time. An unbelievably quick, yet massive investment that almost got me to shit my pants, upon realizing how much money that I had just made.

With this large sum of money, I have set myself up for the rest of my life. Money is of no concern to me anymore; hence the reason as to why I'm giving

this book out for free. With some of the money that I have leftover, I'm free to do whatever I wish with it. And what I wish, is to give back to the people.

The first 100 people that go to the link buried within the supplemental portion of this text at the end and submit their bitcoin wallet addresses, will each get a bitcoin of their own.

Now, before all of you run off to see if you made the cut or not, there's something very important that you must understand. What you must understand is that... the link doesn't actually exist, because the story was a lie. I made the whole thing up.

I don't have a friend who hit big, I didn't get the chance to really gamble with crypto, and I didn't get the chance to make a site that gives out bitcoin to 100 people dedicated enough to read this far into the text. But, you thought that I did, and because of this fictitious story that lives solely in the nonphysical, I was able to create a very real feeling in your physical. I apologize that I had to go to such lengths simply to prove a point of how the mind is able to influence the body, but wide nets must be cast for an audience of everyone.

The mind is able to affect the body in more ways than just one. I could have told a happy story, a sad story, an exciting story, a depressing story, a story causing any emotion that I could have wished. All different neurotransmitters, all different hormones, all different heart rates and breathing patterns, all caused by everything happening in the nonphysical. It's a powerful dimension, the nonphysical—the mind's sandbox—one that we are only just beginning to understand the depths of.

One of the interesting things to note about the influence coming from the mind to the body is its intermittent escape from the clutches of the gradualism that the body knows so well. The mind has outpaced the body in terms of its evolutionary track, showing itself in its ability to frame switch between different point of views almost immediately. Even though the mind is causing the release of hormones, and the activity of neuron connections, both of which belong to the gradualism of the body, it contains the power to switch between which hormones are being released, and which neuron connections are being activated at a rate that is faster than the body would ever consistently experience naturally. The mind has the capability to switch between ideas, thoughts, and trains of reasoning seamlessly, and as quickly as is demanded; much quicker than the body switching between modes of sleep, hunger, and exercise. The mind has the ability to switch between the joy of “*Gasp* I might be getting a bitcoin!” and the despair of “this fucker thinks he's got jokes” in the span of just a single moment.

This relationship between the mind and the body goes both ways. Just as the nonphysical has the ability to affect the physical, the same is true in reverse. This one, much harder to convey on a shorter time scale—at least partly

due to the gradual nature that our body still stays true to—is one that exists, but in a much more subtle way.

Exercise, happening with the body, semi-consistently over time, leads to positive changes in the mind 99 times out of 99. There is something so primitively simple about advancing the body in some domain that requires energy, and the positive change that it brings to the mindset of the mind attached to it, no matter what the activity is. And what's more, is that the amount of avenues that one can take to access this change is perceived to be limitless.

Whether it be playing a sport, or breath work and meditation, or instead, just taking care of one's diet and sleep quality, positive changes in the body lead to positive changes in the mind every single time. Likewise, not taking care of the physical needs of one's body plays immediate and apparent negative influence on the mindset that comes along with it. It doesn't take a genius to realize that they aren't going to be visualizing sunshine and rainbows when going through a hangover.

These changes come on more gradually than the opposite pathway (in the general case), and are more of a long lasting change in feeling over time than that of the other pathway as well. Body change is gradual and long term, for systems upon systems have to work in succession and integration, over time, and consistently. Getting healthy doesn't happen overnight, gaining muscle and changing body structure doesn't happen overnight (except, it literally does), and the benefits of a healthy circadian rhythm happen over the course of the days that it takes to set it up. None of these provide an instant change in perception, unlike the mind, which can.

The body and the mind, affecting each other bidirectionally, affect the soul in the most obvious way possible; they are it. The soul is defined to be that of the body and the mind over time, so this direction of influence is apparent and needs no further explanation. The other direction, however, presents something of interest that will make much more sense given the context of what's to come later. Before describing how the me has influence on its host body and mind, we'll take a deeper dive into each of these individual components.

Starting with the body, the extent to which it is able to perform is jaw-dropping. Instead of me using strong words that try to push bounds—like “limitless potential,” or “incomprehensible ability”—I'll use real life examples with real life people; people of whom completely deserve to have their names collected together in history.

Eddie Hall. The first man to pick up over 500 kilograms off of the floor, shattering all previous records at the lift. For my fellow Americans, that's just a pinch over 1,100 pounds. In the process of doing so, he gave himself a concussion, a nose bleed, and memory loss. Since Eddie Hall, there have been other successful attempts at lifting over 500kgs, but none in the record

breaking fashion that Hall pioneered.

Eliud Kipchoge. The first man to run a marathon in under 2 hours. For those unfamiliar, that's 26.2 continuous miles, ran at a pace of 4 minutes and 34 seconds for each mile. 4 minutes and 34 seconds for 26 miles, in a row; that's running 104 continuous laps around a track, where every lap is under 1:09 pace. That is incredibly fast for incredibly long; an act that—alongside all these other acts—will undoubtedly go down in the history books as one that pushed the limitations of the human body to a point that was once considered impossible.

Alex Honnold. A man that has climbed over 3,000 feet (about 900 meters) of near vertical, sheer, granite-faced rock wall... without any rope or harness. Over 3,000 feet of holds that an amateur would literally drop their jaw at, where one mistake leads to the ending of his life, and he does it without a safety net. Talk about sweaty palms.

Wim Hof. The iceman who has mastered the control over his—once thought of as uncontrollable—physiology in ways that have scientists scratching their heads. He has climbed over a third of Mount Everest.. while wearing nothing but shorts, shoes, and gloves; he has ran the fastest half marathon above the arctic circle.. while barefoot; he has climbed the entirety of Mount Kilimanjaro in just two days.. again, wearing just shorts; and, he has even ran a full length marathon in the Namibian desert.. without drinking any water.

James Lawrence. A man who has completed 50 ironman races in 50 consecutive days, across 50 different states. The ironman is one of the most grueling tests of endurance on its own, without the help of there being 50 of them in a row. For those unacquainted with an ironman race, it's just a mere 2.4 mile swim followed by a 112 mile bike ride followed by a full length marathon at 26.2 miles. No biggie, just 50 of those. In a row. On the road. Goddamn.

Ross Edgley. A man who has swam around the entirety of Great Britain—a total of 1,780 miles (2,860 kilometers)—over the course of 157 days; on a typical cycle of 6 hours of swimming followed by 6 hours of rest. Need I say anything more on this one?

There are people on this planet that can break stone with their hands, there are people on this planet who can jump over 4 feet in the air, people that can run as fast as the speed limit in a neighborhood, people that can run for as long as the amount of time it takes for the Earth to rotate about its axis, and people that can quite literally pull multi-ton airplanes with ropes attached. When it comes to the spread of capability that the human body possesses, there exists an almost unimaginable one that is easily taken for granted when we're told that 8 hours of our day belong to stagnation and screens.

The body is able to withstand heat just as well as it can withstand cold. It can go weeks without food, and days without water or sleep. It can survive off of just meat, it can survive off of just plants. It can make tools that enable it to take down any beast of any size, and is equipped with a stomach that can digest just about anything that it does. It has a fail-safe adrenaline system that can turn on in the fraction of a second, that can give us either superhuman strength in the short term, or endurance beyond our normal capability in the long term, to keep us alive against any novel stressor that we come across.

It has an immune system that protects it against millions of foreign invaders, some of which it has never seen before. It has a nervous system that allows for such fine motor control, that it is able to cut the skin off the outside of a grape while also being able to crush apples with the same hand. It has a visual system that is able to process millions of colors and textures at once, an auditory system that can detect even the slightest breaking of twigs, and a nose that, well the nose isn't all too great, but it's still pretty cool.

It doesn't matter if your belief system that gets you to this point is God based or evolution based, there's no denying that man is a highly advanced, highly capable species of the animal kingdom that has a body that has helped it reach the heights that it has.

Any time dedicated towards focused repetition, in regard to any physical activity under the sun, and one is guaranteed to see an increase in their capability of performing that activity as time goes on. It's pretty nutty to think that the body can do anything that we put in front of it, and elegantly so, and all that is required is repetition of doing that activity over and over again.

On top of the simple methodology used to get better at the endless list of activities that the body can perform at, once competence at the activity occurs, recall of performing that activity again in the future, no matter how much time passes before the initial learning process, becomes automatic. In other words, the body's memory is essentially infallible and endless.

Any activity that is learned to the point of some competence by the body, and it is able to be recalled at any point in the future, without fail. It might take a few tries to fully recall the movement pattern—depending on how much time has passed since the initial learning process—but, in general, once learned, always learned.

One can dedicate their entire life towards the mastery of just one activity, or towards doing as many activities as they can fit into just one lifetime. The option to mend the body's capability exists solely to the hands of the owner.

Because of this overarching framework that is used here, the one that gets to the idea of the body's ability to learn anything through repetition, further investigation into the body looks at the nested frameworks that one might use to reason about how they could go about repetition to optimize the learning process of the body. A framework that I have found to be particularly useful goes like this.

Generally speaking, the body's learning process is most optimized during repetition as far detached from the mind as possible. That is to say, the body, being good at its own set of tasks, and the mind, being good at a different set of tasks, work best at their own set of tasks when they're as far away from the other as possible. Any energy dedicated towards the secondary entity in the learning process is energy that can be used towards the primary learning entity, thus speeding up the process in a way that's faster than that of attempting to develop both entities at the same time.

We lift best when the mind is empty, and we do calculus the best when our body is exercised and fed. The learning process is the most optimized when distractions are at a minimum, and the entity that's learning, whether it be the body or the mind, is able to completely focus at the task at hand. One very common distraction that the mind presents to the body during the learning process is the one of emotion.

Emotion is something that the mind brings to the body in an attempt to speed up the learning process. Ironically, emotional interference from the mind limits the full capability of the body's innate learning process; the one that is magnitudes better equipped to learning the set of tasks that it was developed to learn, rather than the backseat driver that thinks it is.

It's a very common scene for sport players to get frustrated at themselves when their skill on a particular day isn't at its peak. Or when someone doesn't hit the PB that they were planning on hitting, or when their time was just that much worse than its best. The emotional interference by the mind can cause feelings of grief, and sometimes regret, on which actions were or weren't taken.

Part of this emotion comes from the fact that we're just emotional beings. We have no choice but to feel joy upon success and a little bit of grief upon failures. If someone is really good at shooting free throws, they probably couldn't help but feel a little bit of frustration if they were to miss ten in a row.

But, that isn't to say that practicing something with the emotion that naturally seems to seep its way into the learning process can't change. One can develop the skill of practicing with neutrality through focused repetition of letting go of all thoughts—positive, negative, or otherwise—while performing an activity that one hasn't mastered. Any thought injection by the mind is to be let go of and replaced with a focus at the task at hand, followed by more repetition.

There's an entire book revolved around this idea, of letting the body learn in the way that it best knows how, instead of the frameworks placed upon it by the mind—that end up hindering the learning process in the long term. The book is called *The Inner Game of Tennis* by Timothy Gallwey, and is definitely worth a read if one wants to gain more of an understanding on how this process works (the book isn't really about tennis). But, reading this book isn't a necessary prerequisite to continue on reading with the back pocket belief that the body learns best with a *laissez-faire* approach.

To some, coming to terms with this belief can be more difficult than expected.

I can't help but think that part of the reason for this is that living in a competitive, capitalistic society has made us think otherwise. In a society where mistakes cost money, and money is the ultimate goal, mistakes will be minimized as a consequence of humans that optimize limited resources. Failure isn't something that has an inherent reward in our society, for it seems to oppose the ultimate goal of progress. A's and B's deserve cookies, while F's deserve a slap on the wrist.

And, this is natural in a society that exists with limited resources. When mistakes cost resources, both time and material, there's no reason as to why we wouldn't optimize for less failure. But, unfortunately, this belief that failure is to be avoided, has seeped into the other perspectives that we also hold as a general collective. In particular, ones that have their deep roots in our history—ones of the opposite nature. Perfection was never something that would have been selected for in an environment, for it usually comes at the trade off of exploration. When focus narrows, the chance to be open for change gets diminished.

I claim to argue that failure is just as important—if not more important—than success in the arc of one's learning journey in a given physical domain. Failure proves as a catalyst to the learning process, with exploration of different avenues being an immediate consequence of its presence. Without failure, the rate at which we learn will always be limited by the one artificially imposed on us—by ourselves—when we try to avoid the one thing that speeds up the process; letting go. Especially when it comes to learning of the physical—learning of the body, that is—failure isn't a necessary component, but one where the argument for its removal has no merit.

The body was made to fail, and learn through such, not be forced to act in perfect accordance to an ideal. Given enough time and repetition, mastery is simply a consequence of neutral repetition, without it having to be the main focus of every physical act. Playfulness and learning by falling are the body's main modes of learning in the way that it was breed to learn, with scratches and bruises simply being a part of the process. Avoidance of this natural methodology comes with the cost of long term hindrances on performance and capability; a natural path for a collective to take when they are made to believe that doing things the “correct” way is the only way.

Just as failure is to be forgotten about with each repetition, so is success. The body and the mind, sharing inherent modes of communication, already know what the goal is before the mind has the conscious thought of it. When the body goes out to perform a physical task, it knows that its goal is success of that task, without it ever needing to be told that that's the case.

Because of this inherent understanding of what is to be done, there is no need to spend any extra energy using the mind to reiterate the goal of the task at hand to an already informed body. This can prove to be a tremendous energy save in the totality of the learning process, especially if someone finds themselves often stuck in their head while performing a physical act. Why

spend mental energy telling yourself that it must be performed in some way, when the body is already aware of that way?

Result or fail, drop any of the shoulda, woulda, coulda's, and move on to the next repetition. Over and over again, rep after rep after rep. No smile, no frown, just a focus on the individuality of each repetition; as if the body is a lifeless artificial intelligence made up of neural networks, doing computation over and over and over again, until it gets to the point that failure is no longer even an option. The body possesses the same optimizing architecture that we've artificially created with AI's and neural nets, but its performance and spread of capability gets tarnished when the mind interjects with its superficial opinions. Let the body be, just as the body was meant to be; for one will find that the natural learning process that we all inherently possess seems to work quite well.

Theory is always more useful with practice though, so, here's another chance for audience performance; except, this one doesn't come with the cost of a false wave of hope. I plan on teaching each and every one of you—each and every one of you that is willing to stand up and give me five minutes worth of your time—a new movement that you've probably never learned before. And, when I say me teach you, I mean, you teach yourself. And, when I say you teach yourself, I mean, your body teach itself; no thought needed.

Okay, here we go. Standing up, both feet on the ground. It's better if you can get someone to read the next bit for you, but if not, doing it yourself is fine too.

Okay, take a second to let that head rush go away (you damn smokers), and, when grounded, follow these instructions.

Feet not touching, but fairly close together. Slowly rock from side to side and feel your hips loosen up just a bit. Feel the weight shift from the left side of your feet, to the middle of your feet, and finally, to the right side of your feet. Feel how much there is to feel, just from standing still and shifting your attention to what your feet are feeling as you sway back and forth; both internally and externally.

Now, as you stand there, balancing in the middle of your feet, there should be, in particular, three parts of your foot that are making contact with the ground. The toes, the thick pad right before the toes, and the heel. Forgetting about the toes, just focus on the pads and the heels. To accustom yourself to feeling them even more, rock back and forth on the heels and then on the pads of the feet. Do this a few times and let the body find a natural rhythm that it sways too; first on pads, then on heels, then on pads, then on heels.

Now, standing still, with the left foot, go up onto the pad while keeping the right foot flat on the ground. Go up high enough on that pad with the left foot, so that, if you look down, you can't see your left foot because your knee is in the way.

Finding your balance, swap the state of your feet; left foot flat now, and right foot arched on its pad. Swap the state of your feet back and forth at the same time for a few repetitions, and again, let the body find a natural rhythm to the motion.

Now, standing still again, both feet flat on the ground, go back to doing the rhythmic motion of rocking back on forth between the heels and the pads of the feet. Up on the pads, catch on the heels. Do this a few times, and then go back to the next rhythmic motion, which was swapping between one foot being flat and the other being arched up on its pad. Do this a few times as well, and then go back to the stance with the left foot arched on its pad and the right foot flat on the ground.

This might feel weird at first, but, keeping neutral repetition with no attachment to the result in mind, keep the position of both of your feet exactly how they are, and drag your right foot back as far as you can, pausing in this split squat stance with the left foot still arched. Now, keeping that stance, swap the state of your feet; left foot flat, right foot on pad. Then, do the same thing you just did with your right foot now with your left foot; drag it back as far as possible while keeping both feet in the same position.

Rinse and repeat, a little wax on, wax off, and within 5 minutes of neutral repetition, you now know how to crudely moonwalk. Within 15 minutes, that crude turns into average, and within an hour or two, that average turns into above average. From there, the moonwalking oyster is in the palm of your hands, as more time dedicated to repetition leads further down the path to eventual mastery.

Five minutes of no pre-conceptions or expectations, just neutral repetition with a refocusing to “wax on, wax off” every time the mind wants to interfere with the process, and the body is able to learn something brand new that it will never forget. How crazy is that?

The total time it takes to learn this movement well is going to depend on everyone’s own exposure to learning in the physical realm prior to this occurrence, but one can be assured that this isn’t something that they need to free a block of time for on their calendar. The five minutes put into learning it upfront, lead to a literal lifetime of being able to perform it in some crude fashion whenever demanded.

Dementia patients that are still able-bodied, are still able to ride a bike given that they learned how to at some point before their brain slowly began shutting down on itself. The body, like an endless terabyte solid state drive, is able to recall any movement that it once learned in the matter of just a few attempts.

With this endless capability of the human body, one can’t help but take a second look at the lifestyles that we’ve been convinced are the new norm. Without even bringing the mind into the conversation, an average day of the week for a working class citizen has very little to do with the amazing hard-

wired architecture that we all come equipped with. We wake up, sit at a table for breakfast, sit in our car to go to work, sit at a desk where we stare at a screen, sit in our car to come back from work, and then take a load off of our challenging day of sitting by sitting in a recliner so that we can spend our time looking at another screen. I just have to ask... is this really the way we ought to be living?

We've been persuaded that in order to fill the "too much" time that we have on our hands, we must slave away the excess towards tasks that just bring about more tasks. That, instead of spending our free time dedicated towards the vast field of opportunity that we can explore with our bodies alone, it's better off wage-slaving for just enough to get by. We've been convinced that the health of these infinitely complex machines that we all possess are only of secondary concern to that of "pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps" when it comes to what we channel our energy towards. We've been convinced that fancy clothes and pointy shoes are marks of excellence; a display of how far we've come from our natural environment from which we were forged.

We've been convinced that all of the red meat, egg yolks, and salt are what are causing heart disease and body ailments and cancer in the general population, and not the sitting and stagnation and screen staring that we are all constantly doing. And that, the answers to all of these questions aren't going to be the simple ones of getting up and moving our bodies around for five fucking minutes, but instead, are going to be the ones that are marketed to us by our own personal practitioners as we ask them why we all collectively feel like shit. We've been convinced of way too much, and frankly, I'm over being convinced of all the bullshit that we've been convinced of.

I'm disgusted. And you should be too.

If there was ever a time for a revolution, 2023 looks like as good of a year as any, and, when the pot is already full, it doesn't take much for it to boil over. So, with some courage on my end, and some mental flexibility on yours, allow me to see if I can be the one to push it over the top.

The way that we are currently living is so far detached from the environment that we were breed from (or given to) that the health of both our bodies and our minds have taken the ultimate sacrifice. With suicide rates rising, and mental health conditions becoming a standard for the youth, it's apparent as to the cost of what changing from our natural environment has done to our general well being. Only few are okay, the same ones that are preaching that one must 'work harder' to get to the positive results of the circumstances that were handed to them; the ones whose messages get broadcasted to the masses. But, for the rest of us, we are not okay. We are far from okay. We are hurt and we are in need of help.

Help for us doesn't come in the form of stronger medication or healthier coping strategies, but a change in the way that we see reality. Change is not going to come with different political figureheads, it's not going to come by voting on different rules, and it's not even going to come by rioting in the

streets. Change is only going to come from a change in the way that we think, and thus, the way that we act.

Change is only going to happen once we accept what we are and where we come from, before we think about who we are and how we should act. Change is only going to come from us realizing that we, as a species, are indeed capable of change; that things don't have to be the way that they have recently been.

A perspective that is currently floating around in our society is one that puts our deviation from our roots that are connected to the natural world on a pedestal called "progress;" where every technological step is labeled as a step in the right direction. That, with greater technology, comes greater convenience, and a greater way of life. But, with the adoption of these idea sets, we tend to throw out the importance of the needs that tie our bodies to our evolutionary histories.

Our bodies were bred from, and belong to, the natural world, and still operate as such. The lifestyles that have become the default in our society are a slap in the face and a kick in the balls to the true demands of the body; the demands that aren't governed by arbitrary rule sets or bureaucracy.

40 hour work weeks in 8 hour intervals of stagnation, childhood diets consisting of pig grade food, unavoidable exposure to constant advertisement starting from the time of sentience to the time of our deaths, drinking from the same water that we dump our ever increasing garbage into, killing off of the environment that is propping up our greedy behavior, and, because of all this nonsense, us coming up with coping mechanisms just as complex as the problems that we are coping from.

Gen Z is addicted to TikTok like millennials are to prozac like the boomers are to painkillers. We poison our bodies with our customized choice of personalized ethanol, and even blend it into a part of our common culture. We have psychiatrists handing out day meds, night meds, mid meds, tranquilizers, benzo's, barbiturates, fuck, even speed. Some of us have reached a tipping point as to what else can be put into our bodies to handle the reality that society faces us with outside of our doors.

The cure is simple, it always has been. It's one where we return to a lifestyle that suits the architecture that makes us who we are. The route to get there, is not. And, if we are to change as a society, we must accept the idea that, sometimes, a difficult route is worth the trip if the destination proves to be of higher quality, and of a higher degree of sustainability, than the one that we're currently on. As to what exactly this is going to entail? I don't know. I just know that doing so won't be pretty.

I'm far from the man with the answers to the question of what must be done to get to where we want to get to, and frankly, I'm glad that I am. Revolutionizing is a big endeavor, and comes with the great price of the perpetual unknown. It's not something with a clear-cut road map, it's not something that necessarily brings joy along the way, and it's not something that the average is going to look forward to.

BUT, I would be completely remiss if I didn't at least give someone else the opportunity to act in a hugely influential way with a structured framework as a backing for the motivation to do so.

I'm all here for when the revolution goes down, I mean, fuck, I already got my vodka shooters and brass knuckles ready; but as to when it's going to happen? That's going to be dependent on one of you. I don't know what else to do other than to spread this message, and, maybe, that's the extent of my role. But, maybe for one of you youngins reading this, your role has yet to begin.

Consider this my passing on of the baton to anyone who is willing to grab hold of it. I look forward to what this next generation of humans has to bring to society. One of the very, very few positives of an entire generation going through a filter of mental illness that begins as soon as they become sentient, is that, on the other side of their suffering, we're granted with a generation that is completely empathetic. One that knows how to recognize pain, knows how to reconcile pain, knows how to be a fucking human being to other human beings feeling pain; way more so than a generation where empathy was instead replaced with hard work.

There's much to be said by the newbies to the game of life, and I'm very excited to listen. But, this isn't where the story of perspective ends, for, when we're all done revolutionizing, there's still more to the tale that I must share. My agenda is two part, and revolutionizing only fills the first.

There's still more to come, and it starts with the story of the mind.

The story of the mind shares some similarities with that of the body, but differs in one large way. Both the body and the mind have been selected for over time to be the complex beasts that they are, but the mind has relatively recently jumped a hurdle that put it on a new level of capability when compared to that of its ancestry.

The body is strong, it's always been strong. The mind is smart, it's always been smart. But, as of recently, the mind just got *r e a l l y* smart. So smart, that it developed a new ability. It has developed the ability to become aware of itself.

Self-awareness, a process belonging to the mind, is exactly that; the awareness of self. It is a mind and a body writing this text about minds and bodies, and it is a mind that is referring to the mind as "the mind." With this recent evolutionary ascent, the doors have opened up to all new sorts of capability for us. We have an incredible amount to discover when it comes to just finding the limits of what we are able to learn, much less the near infinite amount of content that we are able to learn about. But this new capability doesn't come without us experiencing some growing pains that come with it.

The doors have just opened to a world that, thousands of years later, we are still discovering, which has a subtle but sure implication of us experiencing the latter portion of trial and error in abundance. Any step that we take, any ability that we discover, and any new path that we tread, comes with the growing pains of learning anything brand new. The inevitable exploration, fueled by innate curiosity, comes with the cost of us having to deal with the unknown that we come across; and, in the unknown that the mind has been evolutionarily wading its way through, there are many traps that it has found itself prey to. Traps that will require time, energy, and selection to get past; time, energy, and selection that aren't present in our timelines just yet.

In this way, the mind's intelligence and capability relative to what it *can* do is low. We have to wonder, what are our minds really capable of? What are some of the things that we might imagine will become better over time, compared to where they are right now, on the scale of our capability?

For one, the biology of the body presents the mind with needless hurdles to constantly jump over. Our bodies give our minds some simple challenges, but ones that can't be thought their way out of. Things like mood. Things like not getting a good night's sleep. Things like saying something mean about someone just because you don't like them. All of these, and so many more, propose limitations on what the mind can do in its purest form; a state of pure thinking.

Instead of being able to think with clarity and precision, we get hungry, and all of the sudden, we turn into angry Karens that are looking at the world through a lens of anger and frustration devoid of objectivity. It was Dr. Sapolsky who famously referenced a very interesting study that concluded that the single greatest predictor of whether or not a judge amongst a parole sentencing board was to rule positively or negatively towards the potential parolee, was the amount of hours it had been since he last ate.

Here we are, thinking we're all high and mighty with our morals and ethics and laws and the sort, and yet, here we have someone who has devoted their entire life's arc to judge accordingly and fairly to a system of law that exists without human emotion, only to have his life's mission stripped away from him by a rumbling tummy.

The mood patterns that our bodies exhibit are constantly limiting the full, unbroken potential that the mind has to offer. Telling a depressed person to think clearly is just as useful as telling someone with a flourishing life to do nothing with their time.

This concept provides just enough of a transition into a similar, but added on top, aspect of the mind that we might imagine seeing some change in the direction of over the course of our species' existence. Our minds are unable to change the biology of the body that hosts it at a moment's notice, even when it knows that—in theory—it can.

We can spend a whole lot of time studying which neurotransmitters are associated with desired states, and which hormones give rise to positive feelings vs. which ones that give negative ones, and not be able to switch back and

forth freely between these bodily states. With my made up story of the crypto lie, your mind had the ability to influence the body in a quick, yet powerful way that felt really good. Why can't it do this without the false hope?

If my mind can affect my body, why does it have to rely on pills to keep serotonin around for longer? Why can't it just tell the body to release more serotonin; or, have it stay around in the synapses for longer? We can know of what situations will bring stress before they happen, we can know if a stimulus will bring us pain vs. euphoria, and we can know of bodily ideals that exist in theory, and yet, lack the ability to be able to think our way there.

We can't think our way into a better state, even if we know of the underlying mechanisms and messengers that could get us there. Might this change in two million years time from now? It might very well be the case that, given enough time, an ability that gets selected for within our species is one where the mind is able to block out any negative internal feedback from ever crossing into its perception, especially during times of acute stress. For example, while getting sober, or after breaking a bone, or even after a heartbreak.

One can't help but think of other, random mutations that would lead to vast changes in the way that we perceive reality. Maybe our dreams become completely controllable as a default. Maybe the mind is able to stay awake and alert, even during times when it's sleeping; allowing us to think all day and all night. Maybe our minds learn to communicate strictly in the nonphysical; no language, no drawings, no facial expressions, just thought. All of these and countless other possibilities that might exist in the future of our species.

Despite all of this potential, potential that makes the mind look rudimentary, immature, and error-prone, in every other regard, it is the complete opposite.

The intro to what the mind is truly capable of doing is extremely similar to the one of the body. For one, it doesn't matter if our ability is god-given, or chiseled out by evolution, there are still going to be indisputable aspects of the mind that we can all agree upon. When we shift the perspective from what it can be, to instead, what it is, the incredible complexity of the mind that's shown is utterly beautiful.

The mind is capable of such an immense amount of things, that trying to create a comprehensive list of all that it can do would be foolish. And besides, explicitly listing the abilities that the mind possesses isn't exactly as clean cut as listing out all the abilities that the body can do. With the body, it's easy to group specific movement patterns that occur in a similar context with one word labels that encompass all the variability. "Swimming" doesn't just refer to one specific movement pattern, but to all the movement patterns that happen in the similar context of being in water.

With the mind, this is much more difficult. The body, containing 600 odd skeletal muscles, and being able to perform in thousands of different scenarios, makes for an incredible amount of combinations of different movement. But, with the mind? Billions upon billions upon billions of neuron connections; millions upon millions upon millions of connections of networks of other connections of networks. The amount of combinations of all that the mind

can perform is so large that the literal entity that came up with it can't even process it.

We do throw around some very loose labels for general processes, but it takes away from the beauty of the true complexity that is going on behind the scenes. We use words like memory, learning, concentration, prediction, visualization, computation, things of this sort, in order to convey meaning in short and efficient ways, but each of these terms refers to a countless number of neuronal networks doing very specific things at very specific times, all with integration that happens so fluidly that it goes completely unnoticed by the conscious mind that is hosting these processes. Memory doesn't always work in the same way, the learning process can be done in one of an infinite amount of ways, and perception of the same stimulus can change depending on where attention is directed; making for a malleable brain that develops in a completely different way than another one—even given the same set of circumstances.

It's insane to think about the amount of processes all happening at the same time, the amount of systems it requires to work together on the tiniest of time scales, and the amount of data that it is constantly processing—both internally and externally—and how all of this comes together to form just one continuous reality that can last for up to 100 years, without it ever showing its internal mechanisms.

Saying that the mind just does this or just does that takes away from the elegance of its convolutedness. So instead, here are just a few things that the mind has managed to accomplish in the most recent blip of its evolutionary existence.

It has built a particle accelerator that smashes together subatomic particles at speeds approaching our universal ceiling of speeds; all without us being able to see any of it.

It has taken a picture of a space object that's millions of light years away from us; a space object that emits and reflects exactly 0 lightwaves.

It has discovered short and concise ways to universally represent the underlying laws that govern how its parent universe works; and, sometimes, can be as simple as drawing just a couple of lines. A couple of lines that are understood by the majority of 8 billion people living everywhere on this planet; see: $+$, $=$.

It has figured out a way to engineer on the scale of both nanometers and megameters, with robust architecture that has, and can, last for centuries—no matter the scale of size.

It is on the brink of having global satellite internet access accessible to anyone on the entire globe for a monthly rate; a monthly rate no more than a few hours of work (depending on where you live), and at a data rate that would allow for someone to download every single one of our entire DNA sequences in just minutes.

It has created a reliable and consistent method for harnessing the power that comes from splitting atoms in half; and has proven so with the genocide of entire modern cities on the island that we call Japan.

And, it has created a global surveillance system of rectangular black mirrors that we carry around in our pockets; one that possesses such an enticing stimulus for users to join under their own deliberation in the form of never-ending new media, that individuals around the globe are opting in by the masses. All within just 30 years of us creating the internet.

And this is just to name some—some—of the things that the mind has done, and can do. Despite its relative infancy that comes with its imperfections in other domains, in the domains that the mind can do, it can do extremely well.

With the tools of memory, language, and highly advanced motor control at our disposal, our minds have well outpaced the biologies that host them. Our knees haven't even adapted to lateral stress, and yet, our minds were able to go from airborne to the surface of the moon in less than one hundred years.

A few hundred years ago, people would dedicate their entire life and career towards learning one specific branch of all there is to study. Now, we have the knowledge of just about everyone, ever, refined over thousands of years, literally in our pockets, accessible by a few movements of only our thumbs and eyes. It is absolutely ridiculous what the mind has achieved once we were able to take the physical health of our host bodies as certain by controlling our environments as much as we're able to.

A lot of the recent advancements that we see with the mind have to deal with the aspect of it being able to understand the basics of time. The mind knows that time is always moving forward, it knows that its end is somewhere along the arrow of it, it knows that the things that did happen influence the things that are happening which will influence the things that will happen, and it knows that it itself knows of all of this. This creates power; a chance for influence. And the mind will take those, every single day of the week.

Our ability to project into the future as well as remember into the past is one of the hallmarks of our immense learning capability. I am able to come up with a hypothesis that is able to predict the future, as well as remember the result of it once it happens. This allows for an incredible increase in the rate of learning for our species, relative to the rate that would have been present before developing this new-found capacity for scope.

With scope, the mind gains the freedom to stray away from the moment that it exists in, on either side of it, by looking both in the past as well as ahead into the future. At first glance, this might seem like a tremendously beneficial trait that an organism can develop—for the sake of its survival, that is—and, for most things, I would agree. By being able to plan ahead, we become better hunters, gatherers, growers, and lovers.

By being able to remember the past and draw conclusions from it after it's happened, our environments become safer, more comfortable, and more convenient. In so many ways, being able to step outside of the moment that the mind itself exists in proves to be beneficial. But, in some pivotal ways, it's not.

A wandering mind playing the game of what-if can bring itself a great deal of grief if it finds itself where it doesn't belong. As anyone who has thought about their own mortality can tell you, sometimes, the traveling mind finds itself somewhere in the nonphysical that ends up bringing it very real feelings to its very real physical, all in the moment that the mind exists in—not the prospective one that it just created. Being able to think about our inevitable doom can bring a lot of stress upon a species, as maybe seen by the recent fascinations in bunkers and cryogenics; anything to expand the inevitable boundary of our demise just a little bit further out.

It doesn't take something as serious as thinking about one's own death in order to feel the feelings of the future; this is something that is happening to us all the time. Getting nervous about what someone is going to say to you, feeling apprehension towards a presentation that you have to give, thinking about getting that flu shot that you know you should go and get, all of these and countless more examples where the feelings that are inevitably going to be felt in the moments that they will exist in are doubled over by experiencing them now as well.

On top of that, sometimes, since wandering into the future takes accurate predictions to get right, the scenarios that the mind comes up with can just be flat out wrong. But, them being wrong doesn't stop them from bringing unwanted feelings anyway. Things like, imagining mom didn't answer the phone because she must have gotten into a fatal car crash, or, the reason that person didn't text back is because they actually just hate you.

What other species is able to bring about a stress response to its own body—and, sometimes, in the long term—with nothing other than thoughts which live in the nonphysical? Like babies that were given hammers, it's only a matter of time until our mind wanders off to a place that ends up bringing it pain. And, just like babies given hammers, it's not that we don't possess the capability to understand how the tool we've been given works, but rather, that not enough time has passed for us to understand the true nature of its functionality.

One might claim something along the lines of, getting a taste of the feeling that we're going to feel before it happens is a way for our minds to prepare themselves for the feelings that are to come. And, to this, there may be some human truth. But, it's also undeniable that, sometimes, the damage brought into this current moment from a mind that is looking in either the past, or in the future, seems to be able to bring about more damage in total, compared to if the mind wasn't wandering in an area that was hiding negative feelings behind unknown doors.

This is especially shown in the case of someone who is experiencing depression. You take a person who is depressed, someone who spends every waking moment of their life just trying to endure the storm that their own body and mind are creating for them—just so that they can endure more pain in the moments to come—and you equip them with a mind that has the ability to teleport in time. One might think that, maybe, just maybe, this depressed person can use this ability to solve the complex problem of depression that they're facing,

by zooming out of the situation and realizing what it would take to get better and what it would take to get themselves out of the hole that they are currently in. But, reality has a different idea in mind.

Instead, the wandering mind is first going to think about the current moment, and how, it, along with the body, are so chronically exhausted, that they are unable to take care of themselves in the state that they exist in. This brings stress.

Then, the wandering mind travels forward a little bit, and thinks about the moments to come; and how, if it can't even take care of itself now, how is it going to take care of itself in the future? This creates more stress. Stress that would have belonged in the moments to come, but is now going to be felt doubly so by being felt in the current moment as well. And, this isn't where the pain stops, for the wandering mind still has some exploring to do.

After it's finished realizing that thinking about the future only brings about doom and gloom, it wanders its way backwards to reflect on how all of its previous actions could have been so much different if it was just healthy. It thinks about how it is behaving in a way that is so far off from what it is used to behaving like, and how this is affecting the relationships it has with the people that it loves, and how, if it could have only chosen for things to happen in a different way, maybe things wouldn't have turned out so bad. But, things are bad. Real bad. Both in the immediate past, as well as in the immediate future; the totality of the mind's field of vision when it's in an unhealthy state. And, upon the mind realizing this, it brings even more stress.

As the mind goes about its travels, it's important to realize that it only has the capability to travel so far in either direction due to its heavily fatigued state. It can't think back far enough to realize that things were once okay, and it can't think far enough ahead to realize that there's a chance that the pain it's feeling now might pass once and forever. But, no matter, for it only has the range that it needs; the one that goes back just far enough for it to realize how much of a piece of shit it is, and just far ahead into the future to realize that it is hopelessly doomed.

One would think that, the mind, being highly intelligent in many regards, would realize that thinking about both the past and the future can present a parasitic relationship between the mind's host body and the areas it is dabbling in in the nonphysical, but, nope. Instead, it decides to spend all of its time there and think about how everything that just happened sucks and how everything that is about to happen is going to suck just as much, and how none of it is worth experiencing as a suffering human being; leaving a poor, poor person, who has an inevitably wandering mind that brings damage to itself no matter where it travels; all happening to an already exceedingly damaged state.

The ability of scope; it presents the mind with give and take. And, until we have some evolutionary time to think about it, we're left with infantile growing pains that come along with developing any new ability.

One of the hurdles that I imagine we'll eventually jump over at some point in the future, is the tick that we have picked up along the way that falls under

the label of rationalization.

Rationalization; oh, does the mind love this cool little thing that it just found. Rationalization basically says that anything, ever, happened because I said so. Why? I just said; because I said so, that's why. Rationalization is all about projecting our emotional bodies into the nonphysical in an honest attempt to give causal reason as to what's going on around us. And, because we bring emotion here, one might guess that the results are often going to be swayed by the mood that is brought in to whatever rationalization is created.

In a bad mood, the mind says that that thing happened because of bad reasons, and, in a good mood, the mind says that that thing happened because of good reasons. In a bad mood, the mind looks for the negative, and, in a good mood, the mind looks for the positive. In an attempt to explain causal events that are happening in our otherwise neutral universe, we often overlook the fact that the system of rationalization that we're using is just as imperfect as we are. When attempts to explain what is going on around us are constantly being influenced by mood, this causes the reasoning to change shape depending on something as simple as the time of day that it was thought of. Rationalization provides an imperfect human with an imperfect system to explain what happens around it; so, maybe its not a tick after all.

Rationalization is preferred as the default for the mind when trying to reason about what's going on around it, because rationalization is safe. It's safe simply because the mind can make it safe. If the justification changes shape all the time, there's no stopping the mind from choosing ones that provide it with the most comfort; its ultimate goal. It's in the best interest of the mind to keep things exactly how they are, for, the things that are exactly the way that they are right now are understandable and known. If things change, something bad could be waiting for it in the unknown; or even worse, something painful. In this way, the mind develops a bit of Stockholm syndrome with the current state that it exists in, even if it knows that something better has the possibility to exist.

The downsides of rationalization can only be seen when one is able to look at their life without their own subjective lens towards it. This isn't something that's easy to do. In my case, this happened with magic mushrooms. For others, this happened with breath-work and meditation. And for some, this will happen simply as a consequence of reading the words contained in this text.

But, in any case, If one had any drop of desire to change how they currently are to something that they're currently not, they're almost guaranteed to have to deal with a mind that constantly suggests otherwise. The mind doesn't like change, it likes comfort. And so, the mind will attempt to come up with reason after reason as to why right now is the best possible state for it to be in.

For those with clever minds, I don't have to tell you that the mind is capable of convincing you of wild things, because I'm sure you already know of this for yourselves. As I write this book, my mind has convinced me that getting sober

from smoking weed 10+ times a day is actually going to lead me into a worse state that I am in now. That, the constant coughing, the droopy eyes, the anxious mindset, the burning throat, and the empty wallet are all actually good things, and that there's no need to get rid of any of them. They are here, now; something that can be grappled with by my mind, since all the parts that make them up are present for its digestion.

More specifically, one of the tools that the mind uses in an attempt to keep itself how it currently is, is the use of rationalization from differing viewpoints. The mind can take the stance of its future self, its current self, or its past self, when arguing for any point; viewpoints that might all lead to differing, sometimes conflicting outcomes. Not only can I imagine a feeling that belongs in the future, but I can argue on behalf of it; and same goes for the past. Inherently, because some viewpoints may have conflicting interests, this leads to inconsistency with behavior and thought. A year ago, I didn't go to the gym because the timing wasn't right. Today, I say I didn't go to the gym a year ago because I was depressed. And, in a year from now, I'll probably be saying that I wasn't going to the gym because of social anxiety.

How is one to consistently change something that is always changing appearance? It's like trying to attack a Pokémon that has used the move double team a bunch of times—raising its evasiveness to a point where all that can be done is to miss attack after attack. To stab at this major bias that the fearful mind is going to have, one has to find clever ways to trick the mind into going somewhere that it might not want to go. Sometimes, it takes someone to hold someone else's hand down an uncharted path, in order to cross the natural barrier presented by the innately wandering mind.

It's like trying to wrangle your terrified pet into the car once it learns of the word 'vet.' Our minds know of our own vets, every second of every day, with each of us having a unique one; a set of activities that would lead to desired change that might not be the most comfortable to go through.

Just like how you have to pick a new word to label going to the vet, the party being tricked has to be presented with information in a different, ordered, yet distracted way, in order to take it to the places that it doesn't want to go. Doing so is challenging, and takes a very delicate touch, for there is a natural aversion for change that any living organism, trying to do its best to survive, would have. But, as some may come to know, the unknown path can sometimes lead to tremendous discoveries.

Rationalization, something that makes it difficult for any user of this tool to change themselves. One can't help but wonder... is there a better system of explanation that exists? Well, as it turns out, give humans enough time and resources, and they'll find just that. The imperfectness of rationalization is well contrasted with a set of systems that belongs in a completely opposite direction than that of the ever-shape-shifting nature of rationalization; the concept of logical systems.

Logic is a system that is different from rationalization. Logic is a system that

can be looked at from any angle and provide the same consistent feedback, with it only ever changing as new discoveries append to what is already built. With rationalization, metaphorical visual perception of the system is going to be dependent on one's location when they look at it; the location of a bad mood vs. the location of a good mood would provide different results. In logic, everything is, and always is, no matter how it is viewed. Once and forever, it presents a system that is unchanging to our perception of it.

Discovery of such systems forever changed the human mind. Not as large of a change as the self-awareness one, but one that drastically changed the course of the human mind forever, nonetheless. Logic presents a framework for the nonphysical; a way for us to reason about what's happening around us that's devoid of our bodily biases. But, similar to scope, this too, has its give and take.

The 'give' here being obvious through all of the scientific discoveries that we have made that help other human lives; and, sometimes, in the significantly drastic case. Looking at the modern medical discoveries of our time gives anyone enough proof as to how using logical systems in a practical way can lead to substantial increases in the general well-being of the people. The 'take' here might not be so obvious, but is easily understood through one real life example.

Just over 300 hundred years ago, happening in the very new United States by the, not very new, established European citizens, there were women who were tied to stakes and burned alive because of the belief in the logic behind the idea that they were witches. Witches. In the 1600s; witches.

By this time, Kepler had already published his Laws of Planetary Motion that explained how that which we can't see operates, and what were the new settlers of the grand ole US of A doing? They were burning women alive. Oh, I'm sorry, witches. They were burning witches alive. Why? Because that's what you do to witches. You burn them. Alive.

Makes sense to me; and, apparently, to the people at the time, as well. A perfectly logical system that is to explain what is happening around us without the subjectivity of human emotion involved. No matter the viewpoint that is to be taken, day, night, happy, or sad, those women were perceived to be witches; once, forever, and always. And this, presents the critical take that comes with the ability of our minds to understand a logical system; no one said that the logic has to be sound.

There's no requirement for logic to be true logic (in a mathematical sense) when it comes to our mind's ability to believe in it. All it takes is just that; belief. The requirement for logic to be logic, to any individual, when it comes to our perception of reality as human beings, has nothing to do with the structural integrity of the nonphysical framework that the logic gives rise to, but instead, simply whether or not we believe in the system that we've either been told, or have come up with on our own. Women were burned alive on stakes not because of sound logic, but because of sound belief. And this, creates logic.

Unfortunately for us, we don't get to choose what we believe in. Our minds have the final say in what we believe in, a decision that usually flies under the radar. For anyone who has taken a basic level math course at any point in their life, if I write $2+3=?$, their mind is going to have no choice but to believe in the answer of 5. Why? Because it makes sense, that's why. And it will make sense until a logical system other than mathematics shapes the way that we see computation in a different light.

When presented with mathematics for the first time around, the same system that humans use to most accurately model our reality, actual connections between groups of neurons in the brain were to be created once the rules were understood; a process of learning. This creates long lasting effects in an organism, ones that, apparently, are undisturbed by environmental fluctuations. We see that, once we understand something, especially in the case of a logical system, it's likely that we will understand it, in that way, for a very long time.

In the same sense, not having a say in what we believe in can prove to be beneficial. For one, this basically means that someone else can put in all the leg work to discovering a logical system, so that the person that wants to use it after its creation doesn't have to do any of it at all. One doesn't have to create mathematics to understand it and use it as a tool; and one surely doesn't have to put in the same amount of time and effort as the forefathers of mathematics did, for it still to be used as a powerful instrument.

The transition from using rationalization as one's main method of reasoning to the use of logical systems—or rather, from a particular logical system to another logical system—is hardly a difficult one, given that there's an obvious benefit of doing so. A metaphorical example that appeals to this idea is one that Timothy Gallwey mentions in his book that I brought up earlier, that revolves around the body and not the mind. Condensed to a single sentence, once babies learn how to walk, the transition from crawling to walking is insanely fast, and happens in a one-way progression of events.

Why is this the case? From one viewpoint, one can say that walking is a more efficient means of getting around than crawling is. So, why wouldn't the baby stop crawling when it learns how to walk? If we attempt to translate this reasoning to a metaphor that pertains to the mind instead of the body, it would be something along the lines of; once a mind finds a framework for thinking that leads to, on average, a greater well-being than the one that it is currently using, changing from whatever system it is currently using—emotional or not—to the perceived better one, is hardly a challenge.

When comparing this idea to that of the nature of our biology, this aspect related to how we experience the effect of believing in a logical system in this, one time, flip of the switch manner, seems to stand out from the rest of the phenomena that we experience in the natural world. The body, hosting the brain, which hosts the mind, comes from a gradual world with gradual processes unfolding in a gradual way. But, belief in logical systems, something pertaining to the mind and not the body, doesn't always abide by these gradualistic rules.

In nature, everything takes gradual steps over time and decays if not maintained in some form. With logical systems, they introduce an opposite, sort of, lock-and-key effect that emphasizes what happens in one particular moment; not what happens over a whole bunch of them. This represents a flipping of a switch that is rarely apparent out in the natural world. The moment in time when belief in a logical system equates to flipping this switch is a point of what I'm going to call understanding; understanding here being a different concept than that of knowledge.

Understanding is deep and connected, knowledge is isolated and singular. We know facts, we understand concepts. Knowledge is being able to recite the pledge of allegiance (for my fellow Americans at least) after having not said it for X amount of years. Understanding would be realizing that it's a mild form of propaganda exposed to humans at unarguably one of the most malleable times in their lives. Knowledge and understanding both have the ability to last over long periods of time, but, on average, knowledge fades out of memory quicker than understanding does.

Understanding leads to flexibility in novel scenarios, not just rote memorization of something that was previously learned. The process of demonstrating one's understanding is inherently shown once that point is reached; there's no deliberate effort that needs to be taken once understanding of a concept is present in one's nonphysical and physical realms for the effects to play out as they do.

Understanding comes with connections of neuronal networks in our brains; relationships to what we already know. Knowledge is what is gained on the path to understanding; or, sometimes, not. Sometimes, knowledge has nothing to do with an arc at all. Did you know that rats can't vomit? Cool, right? An idea represented by, most likely, a relatively smaller amount of neuron connections in my brain compared to that of the rat scientist who understands why that fact is true for rats specifically.

It's not always about how much is known about a particular process that gives rise to the understanding of it. It's about *what* is known, and *how* it was learned, not just the sheer amount of all that is known. Although each of us will have predispositions that create varying levels of ease for understanding varying things, there are some things that, I claim, everyone—reading this text at least—has the ability to understand; given a proper bridge of knowledge, of course.

The most accessible example that will give context to the major benefits of understanding vs. knowing is the one that anyone with at least a public school education is familiar with (and, one of my all time favorite logical systems if you haven't been able to tell yet); mathematics. Mathematics presents us with a logical story built around symbolic cause and effect that is devoid of any emotional bias. It presents us humans with a very convincing story that we use to model what happens around us, and, it better, considering it was something that we had to birth into existence to fit our specific human viewpoint.

The power of understanding a logical system like mathematics is, in particular, two fold. First, is the permanence of those neuron connections, even when upkeep of the system isn't maintained. Someone who hasn't touched math in 40 years can still use it on a basic level, at a moment's notice, given that it was understood at one point in time. This isn't to say that, in the case of understanding, once believed in always believed in, because, as seen in the case of the people who burned women alive, the logical system does have the ability to change—given that the person believing in it is presented with evidence that gives rise to a reason to do so. It's more to speak on the idea of the mind showing the same outstanding memory with concepts that it initially understands when juxtaposed to that of the body's insane memory when it learns of new coordinated movement patterns. Essentially, when a concept is understood, the mind is extremely unlikely to forget about that concept; given neuro-degenerative diseases are absent.

Secondly, one of the powers that comes from understanding math is the efficiency that it holds as a data structure. You take someone who has never seen mathematics before, but has the pre-frontal cortex ability to reason about it, and within one hour of teaching them the basic principles of addition, these principles can be used to quite literally solve an infinite amount of addition problems. 60 minutes of time and energy that leads to understanding of a concept that can be applied to an infinite amount of problems given an infinite amount of time.

As someone who has a JV education in computer science, I drool over the optimization that naturally exists when we talk about this idea of “understanding” and the consequences that it has on a human's ability to efficiently retrieve, or compute information related to a novel context.

This concept of understanding marks a connection between the physical and the nonphysical in a way that we don't fully understand yet. And, as seen with the humans that put on the Salem Witch Trials, the things that we think we understand, well, sometimes, we don't.

Understanding of a logical system is a powerful thing, as it presents us with easily accessible avenues of thought, once and forever, that are flexible enough to account for varying scenarios. On top of that, if one is to believe that the logical systems that we are currently believing in can be manipulated in a way that produce net positive benefits for one's life, then understanding of these logical systems becomes even more enticing of an endeavor.

So then... how does one go about believing in a logical system that brings about more good than bad?

We're not quite there yet, for there's still some cleaning up to do before we get to the end. Before I attempt to wrap this whole thing up and place my personalized bow on top, there's still one last major idea that needs diving into; the combination of the body and the mind, happening over time: the self.

The me is where things can start to get a little tricky. The body and the mind both have very clear and very tangible bounds. Everyone reading this text knows what the body and the mind feel like because everyone reading this must have some functionality of both. But, the me, isn't so much the same.

For some, the me might not have ever been felt before; or at least, not remembered or categorized under this naming scheme. It's an average life to bounce back and forth between the needs of the body and the needs of the mind without ever zooming out and asking why to the whole thing; things are just moving, so they move. It takes a certain set of circumstances for one to get to feel the true essence of the self; especially when the perspective has been framed from the viewpoint of either the body or the mind for the majority of their existence.

There are external tools that one may use to gain access to the me in a work-free way, such as the use of hallucinogens and other pharmaceuticals, but external tools are not needed for one to gain access to the me. The most easily accessible way for anyone to gain a glimpse of what the me feels like is to go and stare at yourself in the mirror for 10 minutes. No distractions, no people around, no music playing. Just look and observe. And after those 10 minutes, you will come out of it knowing more about yourself—your true self—than before you went in.

A more time and structure dependent method that can be used to feel the me is one where someone feels the space that emerges from completely taking care of the needs of both their body and their mind. Some of you reading this may have never felt what true rest feels like because of the incessant need to do the next thing that must be done. For others, you may have a hard time imagining a life where the attribute of feeling yourself to the fullest isn't given as a freebie; maybe something that is only now realized to be a privilege that's being largely taken for granted. In any case, if the totality of the needs of both the mind and the body can be met, the moment that this is realized by the soul, it becomes incredibly easy to feel a sense of peace that permeates one's body and mind, a sense of self that's abstracted away from both the physical and the nonphysical, and a sense of recognition that there is something greater than just feeling the behavior that the body and the mind are constantly producing.

Lastly, the sensation of the me is easily felt and recallable by anyone who has ever been through a challenging "grind" before. This force is felt on those days where everything seems to be weighing just that much heavier than all of the other days. Those days that can be fully spent laying in bed instead of having to get up and do whatever the responsibilities of the day are. Those, middle of winter, 4:30AM alarm clock wake up calls from what only felt like 20 minutes of an actual four hours of sleep, where the thought of getting out of bed and starting the day of misery—the day of heavy weights or the day of heavy working or the day of heavy social interaction—that is waiting for you outside of the warm—oh-so-warm—comforter, is the farthest thing from your current desire. You think about having to wait for the shower water to get warm, and being cold as you do; you think about having to eat the same meal prep

for the however many days in a row now; you think about having to defrost your car in the pitch black, and the cold minutes spent waiting for everything to get going; you think about the cold hands and the cracked skin, and the shitty mood, and the tired disposition, and you keep on thinking for exactly 9 minutes, until the snoozed alarm clock goes off again, and now you're forced to act upon the misery that is starting your day. Out of bed, cold ground, short night, closed eyes, the body is one tired bag of bones, being overworked and under-slept, and the mind is doing everything in its power to come up with a rationalization as to why not starting the dreaded day is actually a better option. But, despite all of this resistance, the body still gets up, and the work still gets done. And thus, the power of the third force is shown; the me.

A desire that exists outside of the moment that it is in, the me contains the ability to channel energy towards an avenue that might go against the feedback coming in from the body and the mind. The me is what gets you in a cold shower, it's what keeps you on track towards a goal even when the road starts to get bumpy, and it's the aspect of the human being that other human beings fall in love with. The me exists as a collective of energy that is much more than just the sum of its parts, and, from it, emerges a force of the universe that must be accounted for in any standard model. A soul that has effects on other souls, well beyond its own timeline; a connected piece of a network that causes ripples upon its removal, as it makes way for a new one to enter.

The me is defined by its past in its entirety; not just the good parts, not just the bad parts, but all the parts. It's something that's quite literally always changing with every passing second, as the states that the body and the mind just existed in get appended to the stack of the soul. Each person, a unique tower of unique bricks, able to interact fully with other towers of other bricks. We don't have to enjoy the stack of bricks that is our own; all we have to do is accept it.

We don't know where the me lives, because we don't fully understand the me. We know that there's a deep rooted connection between all the nonphysical and physical parts that make us up, and that we use the word consciousness as an overarching umbrella term to cover a lot of it, and that—those who have tried DMT will tell you—there's somehow elves involved, but, other than that, we don't have too much to say about the me in a scientific way. Luckily for us, science is not needed to understand something that we all inherently are.

The role of the soul is to exist as the puppet-master to the two parts that make it up. The soul is able to give direction to the body, the mind, or both at the same time. When I don't want to do that last set of push-ups, or I don't want to write that college essay, or I don't want to make that move out of the state that I live in, the power of the me kicks in, and forces a different reality than the one that would have been innately formed by going with the natural grain of energy.

Up until this point, there has been no incompatibility with any of the per-

spectives presented thus far. Time moves forward, sure, nature is a host of systems that's apart of it, okay yeah, human beings fit inside of this nature bubble with bodies and minds that are out of our control because of the influence of our parent bubble, yep and yep; all of these, stacking upon one another simply and smoothly.

And then, we get to the me. Moving forward, it would provide a contradiction to say that the me has influence over the body and the mind that make it up, when we're currently under the belief that there is no drop of influence that we're able to choose our way towards—living in a constantly chaotic reality that completely dictates our behavior. So, to account for this confusion, we'll have to develop another logical system on top of the ones that we've built thus far.

By default, no choice is existing in our universe, that is measurable by us in any way. The thoughts we have, the feelings we feel, the actions we take, the perspectives we believe in, all out of our control or say. But then, the me is introduced. And the me is something that's sitting outside of all of this, able to look at what it itself is made up of, and observe its components with neutrality. We say that there is the body and the mind, and how they are completely influenced by their state, and how we have no control over any of it and all of this jazz, and then, the me is just there.. watching all of this unfold; becoming aware of itself in the process. And, it keeps becoming aware of itself slowly over time, until, a point of digestion; a flip of a switch. And it looks something like this.

“Okay, so here I am, a person, a combination of a body and a mind that have carved out energy in space, over time, that other people have and can interact with; a body and a mind that behave entirely according to their state. A body and a mind that I've had no control over all along; no control over their desires, no control over their fears, no control over their mistakes, and no control over their successes. And then there's me.

What if, instead of trying to constantly control the body and the mind that make me up, I was to use this third entity now sitting at the table of influence as a viewpoint to just simply observe them? Observe them as if they were any other consistently behaving process in nature that is able to be studied. If me—the me—is able to believe that the factors that went into determining its individual body and mind that make it up were, and are, always out of its control, then surely, with the power of this third point of view, I can watch what my own body and mind do without any guidance as to how they do it.

Instead of telling them what to do, I'll watch what they are already going to do. Instead of telling them how to feel, I'll observe how they already feel. And instead of trying to fit them to an arbitrary schedule, I'll see what schedule they're already on.”

In this way, I begin to **understand** *how* I really am, instead of the narrative that I've come up with telling me *what* I really am. Through nothing

more than listening, I gain the possibility to understand myself to the absolute fullest, once I evaporate the notion of the me having to decide which paths are going to be the best ones to take.

By being able to learn about my own body and mind, by taking this perch way up high on top of a pillar called the self, I am able to learn about myself as if I was any other person. And in doing so, I gain a particular advantage; the advantage of manipulation.

The mind, showing different behavior over known knowledge vs. understood concepts, might start to act differently if it demonstrates an understanding of itself. These new, deep connections of already interwoven connections of neurons might express themselves differently through my behavior, if a point of understanding were to ever come. And, if it does come, the manipulation that would be gained would be entirely credited to my newfound ability to accurately predict my own behavior in a wide range of varying circumstances.

If our minds got to the point of understanding their own selves—being able to predict their own individual behavior—would the way that we look at choice change? Under this logical system of the me, and how it is a separate entity than the two that make it up (that has the chance of possessing different—sometimes conflicting—desires than its body and mind), is there some choice being exhibited here when it influences things to be some way that is other than the default? Does this choice only come once an understanding of our own bodies and minds is gained? Is it a choice that everyone possesses?

The perspective of the me existing outside of the body and mind, combined with the perspective of the body and mind having no choice in how they develop, create the opportunity for one to gain the ability to be able to study—and, possibly, eventually understand—their own body and mind, leading to the reward of eventual manipulation. By removing a lot of the superficial bias that would be present when taking the viewpoint of either them alone, once understood for how they truly are, the me then has the ability to direct action through the body or the mind by taking into account the natural behavior of its individual systems. This allows for one's behavior to flow with the current of energy with less resistance, making for a smoother experience of reality.

At this point, these perspectives are starting to get fairly abstract, so all of this makes more sense with an example.

Let's say that I believe in the Mother Culture perspective. That is, that I get to choose my behavior and choose parts of me and choose this and that.

Let's now say that there's a goal that I have in mind, something that I want to complete. When chasing this goal, because I believe that it is my duty to choose my way to success, an unnecessary stressor is artificially placed upon me when thinking about how much of my future choice has to swing in the right direction for this goal to be achieved. I know that I have to choose, and choose correctly, for me to be successful here.

And so, everyday, after doing whatever responsibilities that must be done, attention is directed towards behavior that will help me achieve my goal.

There's no time to rest, there's no reason to not be working, for, if I rest, or, if I decide to not work, there's a possibility that my choice in deciding to be inactive ends up playing a negative role in the end game of my goal. And so, everyday, even if I don't feel like it, as soon as I can, I force myself to get to work. Sometimes I'm hungry, sometimes I'm tired, and sometimes, I just really don't want to do it, but, even when I don't want to, I make myself do it anyway.

Over time, this becomes tiring. Always knowing that I can choose to be working towards what I want to have, leads to me having a restless body and an even more restless mind. And, over even more time, this can lead to having a very tired body as well as a very tired mind. Unless exceptional energy reserves are consistently present, the energy that is sucked out of me by the stress of constantly feeling like there's something that needs to be done is non-negligible to say the least.

Compare this to how the behavior would change if, instead, there exists a belief in the logical systems presented here, instead of the ones presented by Mother Culture. Say that I have a goal in mind, something that I want to complete. What do I do if everything is out of my control?

Well, surely, there's one very easy thing to do first. The very first step would be to mentally place it into the left side of my own personalized four things structure; the place for goal-defined behavior. With that in place, now, I must do nothing.

Nothing at all. There's nothing to choose, no path that must be taken. Not a single action that must be forced by my soul.

Because there's nothing to do now, I sit back in my recliner with a glass of ice cold lemonade, and relish in the fact that there's nothing I have to choose my way towards. I watch a little TV, finish my lemonade, and end up taking a short nap in the recliner that I'm oh-so cozy in. I wake up to a grumbling tummy, get up, make some food, pour another glass of ice cold lemonade, and get back to not choosing to sit in my recliner, but doing it anyway.

And then, the point that relies entirely on the instinctual restlessness of the human condition is reached. After I finish that second ice cold lemonade, I take a moment to think to myself. Those lemonades were tasty, and that food was good, and this recliner is comfy, and that TV was interesting, but I'm starting to feel like I want to move around a little bit. When it's noon, and the sun is shining outside on a beautiful day, and I'm sitting here in my recliner, resting from all the work that I haven't done—and don't have to do—I start to get a little antsy.

Now, something important to note here is that, this specific moment is different from one that is fueled by procrastination of something that I don't want to do. This is different from me sitting in my recliner, drinking an ice cold lemonade, thinking about the work that I don't want to go to tomorrow, but have to anyway, taking away precious time from the recliner that I would be more than happy to live the rest of my life in. I would be more than happy

to drink millions of ice cold lemonades compared to having to go back to a job that I couldn't care less about.

But, when procrastination of something that doesn't want to be done is absent, one might find that the time they want to spend resting from nothing is filled with a natural curiosity to do something else instead.

And so, with no worries on my mind and no choices that have to be made, I get up out of my recliner, stretch my arms, and think about what I want to do with all my free time. My mind, primed to think in a certain way, about certain things (spoiler alert), thinks about the first thing that there is to the think about; the bottom. For, where else would it start?

Skipping past exercise, I coast right on over to the left. And, oh wow, would you look at that, there's something over there. Let's check it out. In an area defined by internally motivated goals, I find an internally motivated goal; imagine that. Accompanied by the four "W's" that I would have created for this specific goal upon placing it into my left side, I now have a what, a why, and a how to get this goal that I am interested in. And so then, just then, the moment that proves to be of value from believing in the logical system here vs. the one presented by Mother Culture finally presents itself. Without having to choose to do anything, **my behavior naturally begins to reflect the contents of my personalized four things structure.**

No choice, no deliberation, just a naturally flowing river of energy. Every step exists as the natural progression to the last, with the framework that is handing out these steps adapting to the change that comes once they're taken.

On top of saving myself from the unneeded stress of having to choose my way to success, I was also able to fully enjoy what life had to offer me before I got to the point of wanting to work. I was able to get the best of both worlds; I got ice cold lemonades and TV time and recliner naps, as well as getting work done on the things that I'm interested in, without ever having to create energy that wasn't already present; a riding of the wave (the ice cold lemonade, comfy recliner, and interesting TV all being metaphors for whatever activity I actually to spend my time doing, without having the ceaseless weight of having to choose the right thing to be done).

Over time, this situation plays out much differently than the one presented by belief in Mother Culture. In the first example, it was the case of me starting out strong, and diminishing in motivation and energy over time as the weight of the chronic stress of having to choose for things to be done the right way eventually becomes too heavy to not notice.

In the second example, the motivation and energy is something that increases over time due to the dynamics of how believing in these logical systems plays out. Instead of constantly being worried to have to choose my way to success, I think about all the time I get to spend drinking lemonades whenever I want, and watching however much TV that I want, and eating whatever food that I want to eat, and how, even though I get to spend however much time I want doing all these fun things, there exists a point where I begin to naturally

crave something other than just resting. When not pressed to do the things that go against the current grain of energy, I find that I'm much more interested in doing the things that it feels like I'm choosing to do, even if I'm not choosing at all. Time and energy isn't spent forcing a particular reality; it's spent enjoying the ones that already exist.

All of this separation of the soul from the mind, and how they act differently and have different desires and offer different viewpoints, might all just be a self containing story that exists all in the insanely complex mind. But, this wouldn't matter at all, for the truth value of this statement has no influence on the consequences of believing in it to be this way.

To summarize what this way is—in a summary that might not actually be a good summary at all—the me is an entity that can exhibit choice over the natural defaults of the body and the mind by, 1) realizing that the behavior of the body and the mind that make it up are completely out of its control, and by, 2) studying its own body and mind so that their natural tendencies can be taken advantage of in a way that creates less resistance when it comes to the effort put into the work of life.

But then, we realize that this “choice” that the me is exhibiting over its body and mind—even after acceptance and understanding of them—is still no choice at all, because the me is still completely defined by the two parts that are forever acting in accordance to that which is out of its control—even if it has the ability to sway from one pre-built channel to another.

A third force of the soul that only gets introduced once certain knowledge about itself becomes present, and then, immediately gets drowned out just as quickly as it showed its head by an even more zoomed out lens that takes away the power of control that it just gained. It's all one big circle jerk here where, the me has no say over the body and the mind, until it does when it learns that it doesn't, but actually it doesn't because the stack that is itself was also formed out of its control, thus meaning that all of the desires that it will have over the body and mind will still just be controlled by that which is uncontrollable. It's an argument that personifies as a snake eating its own tail, and, because of this, we now are able to move on; a self closing logical system that can be referenced to whenever need be.

To further encapsulate the benefit of believing in this pseudo-choice that the me has over its body and mind, comparing it to a commonly used metaphor is handy.

Imagine that life is one long river. When you're born, you get placed somewhere along this river to float down it for the rest of your life. Some of us were given really nice tubes—accompanied by orange slices and snickers bars—as we go down this river of life; and others were thrown in with nothing other than a fear of the water. We don't get to choose our circumstances down this river of life, just as we don't get to choose the path that it has carved out of the land that it runs through.

The ideas of chaos and no choice from the perspectives told earlier translate here to, the direction of the river, the rocks underneath, the types of currents, and the temperature of the water, all existing completely outside of the desires of the people floating down it. Our individual path down this river of life is one that is constantly being dictated by everything that is happening around us; everything that is out of our control.

One of the current metas for the average human floating down this river has been to do the following. When you're floating down this river, paddle alongside of it. Paddle, paddle, paddle, even when your arms are tired, even when you start to get hungry, and even when everyone else is telling you to slow down. Then, when you see the river start taking you to the left, again, paddle alongside of it. Paddle, paddle, paddle; match the direction and the speed of the river itself. And then, when someone over in the right side current—next to the one that you're in now—yells out to you, “Oi mate! How did you get over to that left side current?” you answer with, “I went down the left side current because I paddled towards the left side current!”

This is what we are currently doing; using rationalization as our reasoning tool to take pride in the directions that we paddled in. But, the river—having a mind of its own—was to take us down the exact path that it did, without the need for anyone to ever have to paddle in the direction that they did. It had its own plan in mind, abiding by much larger laws on much larger timescales; ones that we don't get the chance to interact with on a day-to-day basis.

Learning that we operate entirely according to what this river presents us with is then translated into the metaphor as us putting up our paddles to watch the currents, instead of trying to swim with them. And, by leaning back in the raft—instead of paddling with the currents—a new feeling emerges; a feeling of tranquility.

A tranquility that has never been felt before, when one realizes that they can very easily live the rest of their life enjoying this river without ever having to paddle again. No stress, no worry; the river takes care of all of it for you. And, upon sitting back in your raft down this river, and giving your arms a much needed rest, you take a moment to do nothing other than just focus on your breath.

Time to think; time to smell the air, feel the breeze, and look around to see other people on other rafts. Waving to this person, waving to that person, watching others needlessly paddle as you want to shout out to them that they don't need to be, and watching a few others leaning back in their raft just as you had recently learned how to do. And then, you see me, with my, put-together-ass raft, rippin down the currents, blunt lit, rum ham in lap; just livin baby.

Given enough time sitting back and enjoying the breeze, one can only relax with no worries for so long until the mind gets bored, with its not-so-new freedom any more. Just because it doesn't need to do anything, doesn't necessarily

mean that it doesn't have to do anything; time is still plentiful, and action is still free to take. And, upon this boredom, one might learn something of particular value in regard to this metaphorical river that they are floating down. They might observe that a well-timed paddle is much more powerful than an effort-filled one.

That, by looking far enough down this river, if one sees that the left current up ahead is going to be really bad, as opposed to the mild right current, and, if they're floating in the middle of calm water now, they realize that a shove now to the right side, in preparation for what is to come, is much more handy than either, using energy to swim where the current is already going to take them, or, trying to swim out of a current that's too late to swim out of.

Learning about our own individual bodies and minds through the use of neutral observation from the viewpoint of the me translates into this metaphor as it being the same as learning about what makes the river flow in certain ways. Studying the rocks, studying the weather, studying the water, studying anything that is willing to give consistent information. The more that is studied, the swifter the pushes become. Small signs, leading to big changes, avoided or prepared for with minimal energy; an optimizer's wet dream.

This skill, of neutral observation turning into prediction as to what's to come, is naturally developed under the viewpoint that everything is acting out of anyone's desire for it to happen. Learning when to push instead of devoting all one's energy to mindlessly pushing, can prove to be a much more beneficial endeavor when considering the total energy required, over the course of one's entire life down this river.

Sure, we can do what we've always done, and keep paddling, and boast our paddling skills; or, we can stop and observe, and learn a very powerful skill in the process. One that saves us energy over time just as well as well-being in the present.

So... do we have choice? Do we not have choice? Does free will exist? Do we get to have a say in who we are? Well, it's complicated. But to boil down this whole argument to a single sentence; if we say that we do, then we do. And if we say that we do, we get the added benefit of saving us moments of unnecessary energy expenditure, both in the short term and in the long term.

This conclusion is great and all, but, getting down to the brass tax, how does the me actually exhibit this choice? Is it inherent? Is there effort involved? Does attention need to be shifted one way or another?

The me has exactly one means of control over the two systems that it is the puppet-master to; **the me is the decider of intent.**

The decider of intent, this is very important. What is intent? Agh, if only words were so ply-able.

Intent is such an inherent feeling that everyone reading this has felt it at some point, and is feeling it, most of the time as well. For example; after you

read this sentence your intent will be focused on your breath. After you read this sentence your intent will be focused on your blinking rate. And after you read this sentence, your intent will be dead set on reading the words that I have put here as your self waits to change its direction of intent once more.

Intent is felt when wanting to win really badly in a competitive event. Intent is felt when one has had a 12 hour work day, and rides the bus home visualizing getting into their own bed. Intent is someone getting out of bed at 4:30am to do the run that they really don't want to do.

Intent is like looking through a straw; you only see the things where it is pointed at. Someone can point the straw in any direction that they may like; looking at this, looking at that. Moving quickly between things, focusing on one thing deliberately; it completely depends on the person looking through the straw. Intent may only be one straw, but it's the only straw that one needs; point-able in any direction, even internally, intent is the chokepoint that opens up to infinity. It's *one* thing that gives rise to *anything*.

Intent is the channeling of the one force that the soul possesses; a focusing of energy that is already present, but is uneventful in its scattered state. Similar to how the rays of the sun can't start a fire on Earth on their own, provided a magnifying glass to channel this naturally occurring energy through, the effect is an intensified local cluster of energy that was already present, but is now able to sway its environment in ways that it wasn't able to do before.

Intent is the one ability that the me possesses as a way to make change to itself; everything else is out of its control. Constantly being appended to by an ever-changing, out of control, body and mind, the me has only one tool that it can use to grapple with the chaos that is forever creating it; the channeling of intent. One ability, once and forever; the only ability that a soul ever needs.

With this, a door opens up to limitless other doors; the science of straw pointing. Different people, choosing different directions, all with uniquely decorated straws; we live in a wonderful expanse of life. The channeling of intent is what gives us our ability to do something—anything—meaningful in this world; a gateway to a field of our own expression. Intent is only one thing, but it's also *everything*.

Just as a fun little teaser that allows one to imagine the mind-boggling amount of avenues that they can point their straw of intent at, consider this direction. I'm going to point your straw in the direction of something that I want to call manifesting.

Now, manifesting is quite the loaded term now-a-days, not because of manifest destiny or anything like that—we've already killed everyone that needs to be killed—but instead, because there are groups of people alive today that have stumbled upon pointing their straws in the same direction as the one that I'm about to present; groups of people that are going to be thinking about a *range* of different concepts over a *range* of different experiences. Because of this, the arbitrary, single-word, eleven-letter categorization that we use to describe this

range of different ideas is going to be more generalized than it is specific, as it's an umbrella term that encompasses a whole lot of variety.

So, I'll define it here by barely defining it at all. Manifesting is nothing other than finding *a* path from A to B. That's it, it's that simple. A path, any path, granted that it's a **complete** path, that starts somewhere and ends somewhere else. This is all manifesting is. A consecutive series of thoughts that join together in one cohesive train with a well defined beginning and a well defined ending.

Coinciding with our recent development of pre-frontal cortices, we gained the ability of scope as discussed in the detailing of the mind; and, in particular, the ability to project forward in time. We have the ability to predict the future—sometimes accurately—and use it as a practical tool, even if the predictions are sometimes wrong. Most commonly, we see that this ability of being able to predict the future before it comes happens as an isolated variety within a spectrum of cohesiveness. That is to say, it's easy for me to imagine my death, but not easy for me to imagine every single step that leads up to it.

From a computational standpoint, it becomes exponentially more difficult to accurately predict in succession—the more that one tries to squeeze into their hypothetical land of what-if's. Our minds don't currently have the capability to think of long, thought out, trains of thought at a moment's notice; it's much easier to think of just B instead of having to think of a complete path to B.

With a definition backing the label, one might understand why the concept of manifesting—as described by the public—hasn't worked out for them just yet. It's not about visualizing yourself owning a million dollars; it's about visualizing a path (whether it ends up working or not) that could get you to the point of owning a million dollars. It's easy to visualize swimming with the dolphins in the Bahamas, but coming up with a detailed plan to get there from where I'm currently at, is not so easy. But, if we are able to come up with a complete path from A to B, then something magical happens.

Once and forever, this path is brought into the existence of the universe, with its presence not ever being able to be denied; not once, not ever. It's here now, the mind knows of such, and will always know of such (thanks for the help, entropy). A truth that can no longer be denied, the mind has no choice but to accept it as having some value—recognizing it as valid and possible—regardless of it being the specific path that brings success. The important part here isn't that this path is the one that works, or even that it's good, what matters is that it's **complete**.

After thinking of a path from A to B, the hard part is essentially finished. Because, with the perspectives presented here, there's no other action to take but to channel intent towards the path just created. Coming up with a path from A to B doesn't invalidate all the perspectives that came before this one; the river of life is still going to do what it wants to with us. Once thinking of a path from A to B, let go, and just be an observer as to what is to happen. Optimization and adaptation will naturally come from us having an optimized and adapted infrastructure.

Presented with any unexpected roadblocks—the case of experiencing a path that gets broken somehow during its traversing—the step going forward would be to follow the same ideology as one would do if manifesting something brand new; come up with a new path. Manifesting isn't always a one-and-done, as much as we wish it could be, as it often requires adaptation to the chaos of life. But, so long as complete paths from current location, to that location over there, are able to be thought of, the process of manifesting can continue.

One skill that is of use to us—in an ever changing world like the one that we are currently living in—is one that focuses on one's ability to quickly and efficiently change the direction of their intent; ideas of non-attachment and anti-fragility bundled into one. It's a much more valuable skill to know that I can manifest many different paths from many different endpoints instead of being really good at creating just one fairly hard path from a very specific A to a very specific B.

If the world was to ever flip on its head, the value of my ability to go from very specific A's to very specific B's immediately fades into dust as I haven't yet developed the skill set to focus on anything other than just that one manifestation pathway. What's of more use to an individual living in a world that seems to rewrite the rules for survival every few decades; knowing that they can adaptably solve problems while being hungry, anxious, and sleep-deprived? Or knowing the complete pathway that they would need to take in order to get a specialized education of their choice?

With your mind now forever unable to repress this direction called manifesting that intent can be channeled towards, it's time for you hooligans to go play. See what you can come up with; test your manifesting limits. The bounds on what someone is capable of doing is only known upon tripping over an end post; at which point, it expands it even further out.

Those fortunate enough to have been told that anything is possible by their mom as a kid might find the truth held in that statement, for, when we imagine what we want, the result is already going to be bounded by our own ability to imagine. Me wanting to be a millionaire is going to be different from a millionaire wanting to be a billionaire, which is going to be different from a billionaire wanting to be a world ruler. Each of what we conceive of as being desirable is going to be limited by the scope of what we have already experienced.

There is incredible fun in discovering the extent to just how much we can do as individuals, and manifesting is one means to make it happen.

Besides manifesting, it is my duty to direct your intent for a short period longer towards another direction that needs to be looked at.

In a world where people believe that they are largely—or entirely—operating under no free will, the group of people that are bordering a very blurry line into the realms of what we now call psychopathic, are going to default to wanting to rationalize all of the terrible things that they are doing and are going to

keep doing. And, with the perspectives held here, there's no getting around this.

Bad people are going to do bad things just as good people are going to do good things; this text isn't to rid the evil from the two, it's to level the playing field between them. The only thing that we can do to account for the inevitable continuance of malevolence is to add one more small logical system on top of everything said about the me thus far.

Unfortunately for those who were dealt a shitty biology, the argument is real simple. In a society that is to have order, there must be accountability for the actions taken within it, to avoid the anarchy that would naturally arise from a bunch of competing, power hungry monkeys otherwise. The simplest and most clean cut way to delegate responsibility across an ever-changing global population of billions of people is to do a simple one-to-one; every body and mind responsible for their own body and mind.

The unavoidable truth of that is that, for some people, this really fucking sucks. Some people are given an absolute shit hand, and have to spend their whole, miserable life dealing with such. And, to these people, we say the same thing to those who were born on yachts; no matter what behavior comes out of your body and mind, whether channeled through intent by the self or not, is yours and yours alone. Every single one of us is responsible for the constant output of the three forces that comprise of each of our essence of energies that we call by a two word name.

No matter what arbitrary lines are drawn to categorize the different sectors of a human being's presence, whatever behavior is put out into the world of other souls is forever attached to its creator through the connection of accountability. It is this way because it has to be this way; order—with the current architecture that humans have—isn't something that gets naturally sorted out over time. It is something that must be implemented with a framework.

And, the easiest implementation that scales while being robust is the one that says that, unfortunately for those who were dealt a 2, 7 with nothing on the flop, you've been dealt it, and now you must play it. Deal with it, don't deal with it, your intent when acting isn't considered when ruled against the jury of life.

Bezos, my mother, and school shooters, all judged by the same court of perspective; no matter the behavior, no matter the intent, no matter the mind and the body, each and every one of our souls is responsible for the actions that they produce. We aren't to blame as to what we produce, for we've already covered how that is out of our hands; we are only responsible.

This can make the frustrated crew even more frustrated, but let's just hope that they get golden grapes in the afterlife to account for the suffering that they must deal with in this plane of reality.

With an explaining of the one means of control that the me has over its body and mind, the power that is contained within the framework of manifesting, and the responsibility that it must take over what they produce as behavior,

there's only one last direction that I have to channel your intent towards as I wrap up this penultimate chapter.

The me, defined by things out of its control—individualized to each of our own stories—is stunningly unique. But, we don't live in a world where uniqueness is necessarily valued—or even judged as a useful parameter for that matter; we live in one where profits are. Because of this, it's easy for one to want to channel their intent towards whatever activity that better helps them mend to the norm; hoping to have their future selves fit within the average. And to this, I gag.

The best that people have to offer this world comes from a place that's devoid of external influence. With all of the defense mechanisms picked up in primary school, and all of the enemies that were made in middle school, and all of the copes that were developed in high school, it's easy for one to build a layering of their sense of self with artificial nonsense that serves no purpose other than to mask their true originality.

For someone to exhibit behavior that is truly out of the ordinary from what we're used to experiencing, it takes a ridiculous amount of courage for one to do so in a public setting; a uniqueness that is often shunned by the average, for, uniqueness isn't going to be rewarded in a society where repetition is the default.

But, if one does find the avenues that are able to peel away these rotten layers that exist on top of an otherwise pure and innocent soul—whether it be from psychiatry, self-reflection, meditation, shrooms, or anything else—they will probably come to the same conclusion that I wish to end this chapter with.

You are remarkably beautiful in your own uniqueness. There is no need for you to change anything about who you are; you are perfect with all of your idiosyncrasies, imperfections, bumps, bruises, and scars.

You are who you are, and there's not a soul in this plane of reality that should be able to convince you that who you are needs to be different from the way that it is now. There is no need for you to have to fit to any mold that someone says that you have to fit to, when you can go out and make a new one for yourself.

You are beautiful, accept it. If to no one else, then, at the very least, to one person: me. I crave things that are different from the average—a craving for deviations from the norm. A craving that only gets strengthened in a society where everyone currently seems to be subconsciously uniting together to be apart of the same NPC hive mind. And so, to me, you are beautiful. And, as I would be willing to bet, to a whole lot of other people as well.

Love the tower of bricks that you are, because it's the only one that you're going to get. All of the chips and all of the discolored bricks don't make for something to be shameful over, they make for something to be celebrated over.

There is beauty in your exact uniqueness, no matter if society tries to tell you otherwise.

Love the me, express the me, accept the me; what I'm going to get painted on my walls instead of Live, Laugh, Love. It's the only sensible avenue to take in a world where we're stuck with only one soul for as long as we experience a lifetime. And thus, love yourself; you are yourself.

When we're all done revolutionizing, and tricking our minds, and loving ourselves, everyone meet back here so that I can attempt to tie this whole book up in just one last chapter.

A Coordinate Change

The final beginning; it's bittersweet really. I've enjoyed my time on the stage here but my god am I ready to get off of it. But, before I get off of it, there's some finishing up that I have to do.

I need to be honest about something.

I've been lying to you guys about a whole lot. For the majority of this text actually, I've been lying to you all.

This lie... I've gotten your mind to believe in something that I am about to change. Just as quickly as I was able to spark new connections of neurons inside of your brain—just from reading the words that I've put here in this text—I will now aim to destroy them.

Destroying connections of already functional neuronal networks isn't always an easy process. It can be very uncomfortable, because it doesn't just change one belief with one set of neurons; it changes every belief that was somehow connected to the ones that are no longer living. This is a process that can be fairly energy expensive, depending on how many other neuronal networks the now dead one was to touch.

When we live most of our lives not thinking about one very specific set of ideas, it's so much easier to reject any notion that would lead to a reshaping of our brain chemistries, so that we can still go about what we need to go about without being constantly distracted. Changing a belief that is anchored to many other beliefs takes a lot of stumbling around in the nonphysical to find the exact connections of neurons that best suite our individual psyches. This stumbling around is a privilege to say the least, as some of us don't have the free time to go about contemplating the philosophy of our own lives.

But, I hope to present information in a little bit of a different way; a ripping off of the band-aid, if you will. I recognize that not every one of you reading

this is going to have your life change in the way that mine just did, even if I give you the best blueprint available. But, no matter, because, if everything else goes smoothly, you won't have to worry about a damn thing.

You won't have to worry about a damn thing because, there's no need for you to change your own life if it's something that I can change for you.

You see, the leg work for the change that is about to happen is already completed; by both of us. All that needs to happen now is for me to point the direction of your awareness towards the already built structures that both of our minds are currently aware of. These structures fully come together with the telling of one more story that brings us all the way back to the beginning. There's one more story about time.

Where did we start? Time; always moving in the same direction, and continuously so. Now, it's time to look at time from a different point of view. In order to tell this new story of time, there are a few concepts from mathematics that I want to bridge over to this abstract way of looking at the world, as they prove to be of use in this last story.

This transition of taking concepts that exist in pure logic and laying them on top of word-based logical systems isn't going to be perfect; but, it doesn't have to be. Our world is imperfect, just as imperfect as we are; and so, when we abstract formal logic into a general form that we will apply to domains that it wasn't created from, the perfectness of how its pieces match up with the pieces of this different fabric isn't important, so long as it's close enough. Because, close enough is enough to move forward; even if the steps forward are to go back and do it in a different way.

The first concept from math to bridge over is the idea of a partition; but even before that, a set. A set is nothing more than a collection of objects. There is no repetition of objects and there is no order of the objects—even though they are usually written down in some order. A set is as simple as $\{1, 2, 3\}$, or it can be as complex as the collection of all the atoms in our observable universe.

A partition of a set is a way to arbitrarily divide that set up so that every element belongs to one and only one of the smaller sets. For example (ignoring traditional notation because it will complicate the visual appeal), $\{1\}$, $\{2\}$, $\{3\}$ is a partition of the set $\{1, 2, 3\}$.

With this in mind, there exists a partition on the arrow of time that will be of importance later on; the one that separates all of time into just three sets: the set of all past moments, the set that holds a single moment that is this exact moment that we are experiencing, and the set that holds all the moments that are to come but haven't arrived yet. The past, the present, and the future.

With this partition, every moment that has ever existed, and, every moment that will ever exist, belongs to one, and only one, of these three sets—even if it makes a one time transition from future to present to past. Although

sets are defined to be unordered, they can be organized in any way that one sees fit. The natural ordering of the elements contained within the large sets of both the past and the future moments is as apparent as the natural ordering of the states that we experience; the order in which we perceive them to be.

The second concept that I want to bridge over from mathematics is going to be one with a little more nuance, and a whole lot more confusion. There's a concept called the Induction Hypothesis that is famous for confusing the majority of math students that are learning about it for the first time.

At first glance, it may raise initial speculation since it has the word 'hypothesis' in its title—something that might change in some years from now—but, despite having a label indicative of uncertainty, this tool is widely used and accepted by the most prominent of mathematicians in the twenty-first century. And besides, we already knew that the transition from formal logic/numbers to words/ideas was going to be messy; this is just one of the spots where the overlapping of perspectives don't mesh together quite perfectly.

But, in any case, what is this thing about?

For those who don't know, as one advances farther into the branches of mathematics, there becomes less of a need to be able to successfully do computations of arbitrary problem sets, and more of a need to be able to prove specific statements using specific theorems. The Induction Hypothesis is a method of proving certain types of statements, that requires a certain type of setup for it to be of any use. But, in the cases that it does work for, it works for elegantly.

Instead of giving the explicit definitions, it's much easier to understand through a classic example.

Say I lined up a whole bunch of dominoes standing up, all the same distance from each other, ready to be toppled over once the first one is pushed over. Then, say that I wanted to make a claim about my line of dominoes. My claim being that, if I was to push over the first domino, then all of the other dominoes would fall over as well. With a claim like this, there would be, in particular, two ways that I could prove it.

The tedious of the two would be to prove that, one by one, by looking at each individual pair of dominoes, every first of the pair of dominoes pushes over the second of the two, if the first one is to fall over in the first place. This would require a whole lot of proofs, and if the line of dominoes was really long, it would quickly become more and more burdensome to prove it in this way. The other way that one could prove this, is through the use of the Induction Hypothesis.

The Induction Hypothesis works in two steps. Under its logic, if we can prove that, a) the first domino can be knocked over, and that, b) if we were to assume that any one of the dominoes was to fall over arbitrarily, then it follows that the next one falls over as well, then we've proven that every single domino will fall over without actually having to push all of them over.

Part a) of the requirement is straight forward enough. Obviously, if the first one can't be knocked over, then how are we to expect for all of them to be able to fall over? Part b) is the more nuanced part of the concept that throws the noobies for a loop.

Essentially, what it gets at is, if we can show that the falling over of an arbitrary domino—any domino that's in this line of dominoes, but not a certain one in particular—pushes over the (still arbitrarily) next domino, this logic can be applied to any pair of dominoes that exists in the line.

If it's proven for an arbitrary pair, then, this logic could be applied to dominoes 2 and 3, it could be applied to 3 and 4, it could be applied to 5 and 6, it could be applied to $n-1$ and n in a line of n dominoes. This arbitration leads to comprehensiveness when it comes to thinking about how any single domino in this line can be thought of as a part of a pair that's destined to fall over so long as the first one does.

Under the proposition of logic given by the Induction Hypothesis, proving components a) and b) equates to proving the original claim of all the dominoes falling over—with just a push of the first one—without having to go through the rigor of proving that they will all fall over in a case-by-case basis.

This is the power of induction, it's a way to prove a statement about all the dominoes falling over, without any of them having to fall over in the first place (besides maybe the first one, depending on the statement that it is being applied to); induction represents confidence in the future before it happens.

But, this story isn't about dominoes, it's about time. Transferring this concept over to human behavior and arbitrary words instead of non-arbitrary numbers and pure logic, it would look something like... being able to produce a behavior in an initial case, and, being able to prove that, assuming it happens arbitrarily in the future, it happens in the moments to come right after as well, would be enough to prove the claim that that behavior can be done anytime, anywhen, without having to go through the rigor of proving it in a moment-by-moment basis.

And, this is fortunate for the sake of this argument, because, the direct approach to proving this claim isn't one that we even have access to. How would we be able to prove that we could produce some behavior, anytime, anywhen, without first being able to teleport into the future to see if we can? This is where the Induction Hypothesis will come into play.

In, again, a pseudo-mathematical fashion, I wish to prove a claim regarding human behavior and the partition of time from earlier. But, before I get to this claim, there's one last bit of setup that puts the upcoming informal proof on a somewhat fair pedestal compared to the ones that the logically perfect math ones sit upon.

In math, all proofs are binary. A proof is only called a proof if it has flipped the switch of trueness; trueness under the logical system of formal logic. It is a 1 or a 0, always, in every case. This isn't true when transferring the idea of say, the Induction Hypothesis, over to that of psychology, because, for one, brains

and reasoning and thoughts and ideas are all abstract and continuous and abide by imperfect logical systems—not the seemingly perfect ones that we’ve created with math—and two, because time itself doesn’t necessarily operate under the same logic that is present in the human creation of modern day mathematics.

So, when transferring this idea into a domain that it doesn’t necessarily belong in, instead of me trying to flip a binary switch of the informal proof being true or not, I want to view it as the following metaphor.

Imagine a circle. The circle is empty. When I begin the proof, every piece of evidence that I provide as I go along the main arc of the argument begins to fill in the circle from the outside in. What I plan on doing is to give enough evidence so that the circle gets almost entirely filled in except for the very center of it. For, the very center is never going to be reachable because of the imperfection of nature getting in the way of the seemingly perfect logic. But, hopefully, by filling in the majority of the circle, it will be enough to create a significant change in thought pattern, regardless of the last little bit of unchanged behavior that is left over from not entirely filling the circle in.

All of this complexity to say that, most is enough in the case of trying to informally prove statements about logical systems that don’t just abide by 1’s and 0’s. It’s about collapsing in to a forever unreachable state, getting as close as we can get to the very center, and then, upon getting to a point that provides diminishing returns towards moving any closer, we forget about the whole thing and move on to something new; the beauty of the human condition.

So, to begin, a stating of the claim that is going to be representing a circle that I’ll be trying to fill in using reason provided by the logical systems presented in the third part of this text.

Claim: To the experience of a human being, the moment that it currently exists in is the only one of importance when viewed against every other moment that has been or will be. In other words, the channeling of intent by the soul has one very clear and precise target of value, true for every single person that has ever existed, in every single moment that they will exist in: the moment that is right now.

Proof: To begin the proof, create a partition on the arrow of time that we experience like so.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{[past moments)} \quad \text{this moment } \{.\} \quad \text{(future moments]} \\ \hline \phantom{\text{[past moments)} \quad \text{this moment } \{.\} \quad \text{(future moments]}} > \text{time} \end{array}$$

What I aim to show is that deliberation on both the set of past moments as well as the set of future moments provides an individual with extremely quick diminishing returns in favor of desirable behavior, the farther out that is ventured from this current moment; essentially squeezing our perspective of time down to a constant, yet, ever-changing, state that is focused on the current moment that we are all experiencing. To do this, I’ll prove it in the

individual cases of both the past and the future. I'll start with the past.

The argument for dismissing thought patterns related to events that have already happened occurs naturally as a consequence of believing in the perspectives presented here regarding time, nature, the human, and the components of a human; even if it hasn't been explicitly organized in your pre-frontal cortex yet.

When we assume that chaos happening in our environment is influencing our bodies and our minds to the point where we have no deliberate say in the actions that we perform—and the thoughts that we have—there comes an advantage of this belief that shows itself by relieving any feelings of grief or anxiety towards what has already happened. What is there to gain when one can't question their behavior with statements like, “why didn't I do it this way?” or, “I should've done it this way instead,” or, “if only I would've ...”?

If we're all just acting and thinking in the ways that we do, both of which are out of our control, where does there arise the need to deliberate on what has already past, if there was no action to take in the first place?

“Ugh, if only I would've...” would've done what? Go back to relive it in the exact same way? Go back to feel more regret as you now have to experience it again? Go back to try and change the grain of reality that will do as it wishes regardless of your request?

On top of this, the effect that the passing moment had on the body, mind, and soul that experienced it, has already been absorbed by the necessary components of each. The inherent modes of communication that exist between the three are able to process and react to the chaos that already came and went, without it necessarily ever having to be explicitly organized in the realm of the conscious mind. Just because we don't always recognize this processing happening—or even the change that can be produced by it—doesn't mean that our lack of awareness of it is going to stop it from constantly happening anyway.

One can visualize the process of us continuously processing whatever our realities throw at us as a forever planting of seeds that are given to us in the single moments that they exist in. Every passing moment that we experience, presenting us with chaos that is to be dealt with just once and forever, planting a seed of influence on top of our soul stack in the process; one that gets watered simply as a consequence of time moving forward.

The farther out that is ventured into the past sequence of events, the more unlikely that one is to wring an effect out of the deliberation of it, for there has been so much more chaos processing placed on top of the effect that it either had or didn't. Chaos processing that might have changed your perception towards it, even though it was a behavior that was performed by the same essence of energy that is now deliberating it.

For example, the farther that we look back at our school pictures, the more ridiculous we see that we were dressed. But, in those moments that we decided to dress in those ways, those outfit choices were not ridiculous to the mind

that came up with them. The viewpoint taken in the future presents conflict when compared to the one that existed in the past, as the me is quite literally a different specimen with the passing of every moment.

Trying to constantly rationalize what happened in the past is a fool's game, for, not only is the ground for debate always changing with every passing moment, but also because there's no need to do so when the effect has already been had without any further deliberation required.

Thinking about the most immediate past moments can provide relatively small benefits—things like aiding in the explicit learning process of picking up a new skill—but quickly diminishes to meaningless once one travels even just a little bit further out than the events that just happened.

That is, unless, trauma is involved. Sigmund Freud is probably rolling in his grave as I tell a widespread group of people that thinking about what has already happened to them provides no benefit whatsoever. Here is the first of two large weaknesses in my argument that will lead to me only being able to color in this metaphorical circle in a patchy manner at best.

In specific contexts, deliberately digging into one's past events does have its uses. Knowing what your relationship to your mom was like as a kid can prove to be very valuable to explain your behavior now; just as valuable as evaluating and accepting past trauma can be. The message that I mean to provide by saying that deliberation on the past is completely worthless is one that has to be given with the finest touch possible. What I aim to give is a default channel that leads to a train of thinking that has the chance to be overwritten given a strong enough stimulus.

I can go about my daily life without having any thoughts related to what just happened due to the default deflection provided by these logical systems that provide me with the quick reasoning that it's a waste of time, while also possessing the ability to open up in a therapy session if prompted to. Just because it's the default doesn't mean that it is the action that will be taken in every scenario ever; just, the majority.

Despite this gap in my proof, there's still another reason why deliberating on the past gives more reason to be detrimental. On top of trying to feel already felt emotions, as well as trying to process already processed chaos, a bubble is created that increases in size with every passing moment; a bubble that creates a detachment with the processing of current reality.

The fundamental nature of the soul is to only be able to channel intent towards one thing at a time; hence, the metaphor of the straw. Although it has the ability to switch between directions at an almost indiscernibly fast rate, we—as a collective species—are fairly confident with the baseline of bounds that seems to be present on our perception of reality; the ones stating that our souls are only able to channel intent towards one direction at a time.

By creating this bubble that is devoid of processing one's current reality, all the attention directed towards what has already happened is directly taking away from processing what is happening right now. Once the mind snaps back

to perceiving the current moment that it exists in, it realizes that it just missed everything that went by, and how, it thinks, that by thinking about everything that just went by, this will somehow provide explanation to its reaction to the chaos that just came and went; the game of rationalization.

This creates a continuous game of playing catch up with trying to process all of the information that's already gone, and trying to come up with some reason as to why it came in the way that it did. In the reality presented here, it came in the way that it did because that was the only way that it could've come, no matter the justification that the mind comes up with afterwards. But, this reasoning isn't as flashy and sparkly as the unique rationalization that gets dished out at a moment's notice, simply as a consequence of having a moody biology.

In this way, not only is thinking about the past a worthless endeavor (again, not a binary, but a quickly, ever-decreasing function of distance that approaches 0 and one that only applies to a majority of situations), but it also takes away from the time that someone will never get back by creating this bubble of lost processing.

For both the body and the mind, the past has played its effect, and is now gone forever. It has influenced the chaos of the single moment that it existed in in the exact way that it did; with no justification required. Further deliberation on what has already happened can't change the effect that it already had; the moment that just went by is now forever a part of the soul that experienced it—something that can never be removed or altered.

The past is baked into us as if we're all unclean-able cast-iron pans; except, there ain't no scrubbin away this rust baby! Every scar, every battle, every emotion, every experience, every processing of every bit of chaos, makes up the grand total of exactly one soul; ours. Whether we are pleased with this or not has no effect on the nature of our existence.

There is plenty happening behind the scenes of what we are always experiencing, and trying to reveal what's behind the curtain is not only a pointless endeavor, but also one that can be an act of curiosity that kills the cat. We can never know what's truly behind the birth of our behavior because we don't possess that capability yet; but, by attempting to reason about it as if we do, we create stories that may or may not have to do with any of the factors at play that give rise to the specific behavior that they did. In the case of a story that is detached from what's actually happening behind the scenes, this can create an invisible ceiling for someone who thinks that they're constantly dealing with something that doesn't even exist.

We leave the past where it is because there's really nothing else to do with it; plain and simple.

Now, for the second part of the argument; the side that looks at how thinking ahead into the future is usually just as pointless as deliberating on the past.

This argument comes in two parts. The first part is meant to cover everything that exists in the long term. The second part is then going to cover everything that comes before it; the short term and the medium term.

The first part that covers the long term future falls out naturally from believing in the ideas of chaos. The more that we try and predict in succession, the more unlikely that our predictions will be correct. When trying to guess unguessable chaos consecutively, the chances that this person keeps predicting accurately will exponentially become smaller and smaller. If I was to ask you what is to happen in 5 years from now, you would probably also have to know what happens in 4 years from now, and 3 years from now, and 2 years from now, and next year from now as well. All of which are difficult on their own, but become even more difficult when attempted to accurately predict in succession.

The location of this end-post in the hypothetical future, where wandering past it makes one's predictions worthless, is going to be dependent on the individual brain thinking about it. For some, they may be able to accurately predict their very safe, very comfortable lives years in advance. For others, predicting what's waiting for them on the other side of their nightly sleep might as well be predictions as to what is going to happen to them ten years from now.

So, the argument for why thinking about the long term future is simple; it can't be done. All attempts will fall short of the actual circumstances that the long term future will bring, unless you're some sort of savant of the nonphysical. Venturing out further and further into the set of future moments becomes harder and harder to draw any meaningful conclusions from until those moments get closer and closer to the moment that the mind thinking about them exists in.

Now, taking care of the beginning and the middle portion of this future set is going to be a whole lot more nuanced. There exists a whole lot of variability when we talk about behavior, and predictions of behavior belonging to the initial portions of the future set of the partition, making it very difficult to have a grounded conversation between one and many—with all the biases that could be present.

In one sense, thinking ahead into the future is what allows for the human mind to have such an insane capability of affordances to take. It's an advanced feature that our mind has picked up along the path of its selection that allows for better survivability for the ones who have it.

But, in another sense, thinking ahead towards what's not currently here yet can be a form of anxiety presenting itself as preparation for dealing with the unpredictableness that belongs in the future. In an attempt to make its current state safer, the mind looks ahead to see what it can do now to better prepare itself for what is to come. This can easily be presented as anxiety; a worry for what isn't here yet (and might not even come).

A lot of people that do this often will argue for the point of it being a necessity, an unavoidable truth that comes hand in hand with living—not just in the general sense, but especially in the modern world. And, to the latter half of that statement, there is some truth. We do have to know of our appointments, our deadlines, and our schedules, all before they happen, to be a functional human in the modern societal world.

Here is a spot where the average has built a societal framework that must be adopted by everyone, at the cost of those who aren't built for it; the second weakness in my argument that exists solely because of the societal pressure to be apart of society itself.

With the past, it very quickly becomes meaningless when wandering in that direction, where, with the future, this rapid decline is not as quick, and not nearly as substantial. And, until we live in a reality that opens the doors to a wide-scale deployment of flexibility towards everyone being able to live drastically different lives of their own pleasing, the need to mentally travel ahead to what's not currently here yet is going to be artificially placed on us by the societal pressures to plan ahead.

But, similar to the weakness with the argument regarding the past, there's still a line of reasoning that exists—even in today's day and age—that can still be referenced to as the default deflection for not wandering into the set of future moments (one that has the possibility to be overwritten in specific scenarios). And, to explain this argument, I will use the help of induction.

The claim states that, the me that exists in the future moment (that is, once the future moment becomes this moment—the me that exists in that moment) is capable of handling whatever chaos is presented to its body and mind, no matter what it is.

In order to prove this with the help of the Induction Hypothesis, I will have to prove two things; that the first domino can be pushed over, and that, by pushing over an arbitrary one, the immediate one after it falls over as well.

The cornerstone of the entire argument for the part of the proof regarding us being able to push over the first domino is going to be revolved around the idea of us always having an accessible way to push it over—no matter the human, no matter the circumstances. The initial case of us pushing over the first domino for this specific claim would be to prove that the me that exists in this current moment right now, no matter what it may bring, has a means of control to deal with whatever chaos that it is currently being presented with.

To do this, the assertion takes advantage of an evolutionary quirk that presents our biologies with a constant barrier to jump over. When our very distant ancestors first made the transition from sea to land, it placed a demand on the biologies present during the transition that, millions of years later, still hasn't been resolved by mammals.

Not literally, but practically, we have to be breathing every few seconds of every single day of every single year, for our entire lives. More importantly,

the rate at which we do so is, one, not fixed, and, two, directly controllable by anyone who has ever lived. Our brains have developed the hardware and software to be able to very easily give direction that shifts the breath in any way that we tell it to.

If I tell you to hold your breath, you can do just that. If I tell you to speed up your breathing, you can do that too. If I tell you to slow down your breathing, you can do that just as easily as speed it up. And, if I tell you to rhythmically breathe in sets of threes—with slight breath holds at the end of each—you can do that just as well. Any permutation of breathing patterns that I can come up with, whether performed before or not, can easily be instructed to anyone who is listening.

Although the body and the mind are the two entities that are hosting this process of breathing—two entities whose behaviors are out of control by the sayer of intent behind them—the me is always able to channel intent towards some breathing pattern in any moment that it experiences; due to the incessant need for the body to breathe regardless of its desire to. In this way, by being able to control our breathing in any moment that we exist in, and, because of the constant nature of us always needing to breathe, each and every one of us *always* has a means of control over our bodies and our minds in any moment that comes down the pipeline of our individual future-current-past progressions.

This solves the base case. Control over breath is something that the me can shift its intent to, in any moment, at any time, allowing us to push over the first domino whenever we please. Now, for the inductive step.

In math, the inductive step works like so. First, assume that an arbitrary domino falls over. Then, show that the one immediately after it falls over as well. The argument has to be sound for every single domino, and, by assuming that the initial one to fall over is arbitrary, the argument reaches this point of comprehensiveness upon proving that the ‘next’ domino always falls over.

Translating this idea to this domain, it would look something like, assuming that in some arbitrary moment, the me has the ability to exhibit a means of control over its body and mind (more specifically, through the control of breath), why is it the case that this would be true for the moments that follow directly after? And the answer to this question is entirely supported by the nature of nature itself.

The gradualism of nature, and the continuity of time, combine to give us the inductive step for free. In any moment to come, the next moment is guaranteed to come right after, even though the pace at which it does might change. This is the nature of our reality, it’s what the entire set of perspectives here is built upon. We experience life gradually and continuously, we feel emotions gradually and continuously, and, importantly, we breathe gradually and continuously. And so, if we assume that in some arbitrary moment, that we have control over our breath by directing our intent towards it, well then, saying that we have control over our breath in the moments that come right after it

is given simply as a consequence of living in a gradual, continuous world that's always shoving the next moment down our throats.

Even in the case that one can't keep their concentration on their breathing, they always have the ability to redirect it towards the one thing that their bodies have to be doing at all times anyway. And, with getting the inductive step for free by nature of our universe, this completes the proof by induction.

We've shown that in any arbitrary moment, we can always push over the first domino by channeling our intent towards the one activity that we have to be doing at all times—in all locations, in all settings—and, also, that assuming that we can do so in an arbitrary moment that exists in our futures, this automatically leads to us being able to do it in the moments that come right after.

Wah-lah, my pseudo-induction style proof on collapsing our perspective of the future set of time down to this very moment. Well, not comprehensively, but, close enough to play a large effect in behavior. There's no need to worry about anything that is going to happen in the future, when the future you that will exist in that moment has a foolproof way of handling whatever it brings. The rest is to be taken care of by however the body and the mind react to whatever they are presented with; where no extra deliberation of choosing the 'right' behavior is needed.

With the completion of the right side of the proof, this also completes the entire proof. In just two sentences, there's no point thinking about the past because there is no valuable effect to wring out of it when so much of our processing is inherently happening behind the scenes—and constantly so. And, thinking ahead into the future doesn't become as meaningless as quickly as thinking backwards into the past, but there still exists an argument that can bring the end-post of future related mental activity down to a point as close to this moment as one is prepared for life for; the argument that relies on one's ability to always channel intent towards an activity that is always happening inside of them, and thus, can always be felt (okay, two and a half sentences, but who's counting).

I would QED this bitch, but, hopefully, there is a much more significant one on its way.

The complete set of perspectives has now been told. The perspectives that began and ended with time, and can now be symbolized as a pyramid of beliefs that is topped with an infinitesimally sharp point that represents the unique moment that we are forever experiencing.

Now, a recap might be useful.

Everything starts with time. As we experience it, time is always moving forward, and always moving in the same direction. Time happens continuously, with no gaps or breaks in its flow. The rate at which we experience it changes constantly, but has no place in the needed set of perspectives to get to the peak that I want to reach.

With time, comes space. Space is a physical arena for physical things to happen. Physical things are localized collections of energy or mass that exhibit gradualistic behavior—even though their atomic components might not. These localized, gradual collections of energy and mass that carve out a presence in space with the passing of time, are called processes.

A process is a localized cluster of energy that has a beginning and an end; a statement that we are always able to assert because of the dimension of time that always flows in the same direction. Some processes are similar, some are not; but, as we perceive them, *all* processes abide by the rule sets imposed on them by the fixed, constant, quantitative relations produced by our individual universe. There's a base layer rule set that everything that we can perceive abides by; things like, the speed of light in a vacuum, the gravitational pull on objects with mass, or the bounds that are present at the edge of our observable universe.

On top of this base layer rule set that is emergent by the workings of our individual universe, there exists more precise ones for certain processes of certain forms within this universe. In particular, we categorize a large group of processes that are existing on planet Earth by their inherent behavior to act as dynamic energy pumps within dynamic environments; those that we call 'living.' Processes that are 'living' abide by rule sets containing laws for more specific attributes related to their individual characters; things like cellular respiration, replication of nucleotides, or rate of growth in mass and size.

These principles that both the living and the nonliving abide by are collected under a single label called nature; a system of processes that abides by fixed rule sets. Further rule sets are then given out to each unique process occurring in this larger system called nature.

The more zoomed-in the rule set, the more that the effect that it has on the individual process is noticeable. For example, the sea-lion first abides by the rule set stating that it can't break the space-time continuum by going backwards in time, and then by the rule set that gives it its internal motivation to pass on like genes, and then finally, by the rule sets that exist specifically for sea-lions—their max swim speed, their exact mode of passing on genes, and so on.

Within nature, one of the similar groups of processes that exists is the one that we call the human being; the one of ourselves. Although each one of us is a unique bundle of energy carved out over time, there are patterns that we all share—similar rule sets that we all abide by. Although some of us think that we've evolutionarily outgrown our primitive roots, we still exist in dominance

hierarchies, we still have an internal motivation to pass on like genes, and we are still tied to the physiology of our bodies.

A—possibly—radical belief, on top of the unarguable ones presented thus far, is then stacked on top of the heap of perspectives with what the combination of the laws of nature and the process of the human being give rise to. The claim being that the influence that is placed upon the human being from its parent system of nature is enough to completely dictate its thoughts and behavior. The argument for this belief goes something like... in nature, there is measurable unpredictableness. This *chaos* that is apparent, is playing a large enough role to erase the notion of our ability to “choose” any reality otherwise.

Unarguably, chaos is apparent and influential to the process of the human being; but, as to how much, is where the argument begins to open up. The belief that will be used going forward for the sake of this text will be that the rule sets that our bodies and minds abide by play enough of a role in the influence of our experiences, that we have no choice in the way that our environments (continually) forge us. We act in accordance to what we have learned, and what constitutes our genetic material; not what we say or what we choose.

In any case, no matter where one lands on this scale of beliefs (choice vs. no choice), the unarguableness can continue with zooming in to what the natural laws are applying themselves to; the deeply and wholly connected domains of our bodies, our minds, and our souls.

The body shows incredible features in the process of learning when using the ideology of unattached, neutral repetition of a physical activity. It has a seemingly endless memory of anything that it learns how to do just once, with ease of recall being a function of how much time has passed since the initial learning process. It has a wide range of capability, with the capacity to specialize in—again—a seemingly endless list of activities.

Once the practice of detached practice is developed past the initial stages, the rate at which we are able to learn new physical activities only ever increases as time goes on. Yet, despite all of this potential that we all hold, we have been collectively brainwashed to believe that our bodies are nothing more than vessels of meat, destined for nothing other than to meet the capitalistic expectation for them to become stagnant past the point of high school.

Similar to space being a physical arena for physical things to unfold, the mind presents us with a nonphysical arena for nonphysical things to unfold. A dimension that can currently only be accessed because of our minds’ recently developed ability of thought, one of the most interesting features of the mind accessing this realm is shown in its ability to understand the process that is itself. The ability to talk about a mind, with the entity using this language being a mind itself, is something that we don’t think any other organism on planet Earth has gained the ability to do.

Along with self-awareness, we have a couple of other umbrella terms for generalized abilities that the mind can perform. In particular, two of them are, its ability to both remember the past as well as project into the future

(exploration of time's arrow before it has come or after it has passed; i.e. scope), and its ability to do what we call 'understand' a consistent logical system (a deep and semi-permanent connection of neurons that leads to flexibility in many problem solving directions related to it in the future).

The single entity that is combined of this all-capable body and an incredibly advanced mind—with the passing of time—is called the self. The self is an always increasing stack of layers of experience; layers of experience that are always being perceived by an always changing body and mind. Changing moment to moment, the soul is the sink for the set of desires that don't initially appeal to the body or the mind.

The soul has exactly one means of control in an otherwise uncontrollable body, mind, and environment; the channeling of intent. Or, if you prefer, the directing of one's attention. Being a single stream that has the ability to unite all three forces that exist within the localized bundle of energy that every individual person is, the channeling of intent is the single key that opens up the door to any pathway imaginable. This makes the stability and duration of this continuous stream of attention the most valuable currency that one can have, given that it can easily be converted to any fiat currency of choice.

This pyramid of perspectives is then topped off with just a single point; a single moment in time. The moment that we are forever experiencing, the only one of importance. The effect of the past has already been played, and, if need be, can continue being played behind the scenes, through the inherent modes of communication that exist between the body, the mind, and the soul. The chaos that the future has to bring can't currently be predicted, an act that becomes exponentially more difficult the more that is tried; and, whatever chaos that the future does bring, the future self has a fool-proof way of dealing with it—once and forever.

This moment is all that matters, and the channeling of intent is the only means of control that we have on our lives. These two combine together elegantly to make the most compressed data structure that exists; the one that is just a single point. Channeling intent on what this moment has to bring is the only statement that makes it out alive after the ripping away of choice and control of influence from our lives.

We have only one action that we can ever take, in only one moment that we ever exist in, and yet, this is enough to do anything and everything that we can ever dream of. Forever paused in a moment that's always being ripped out from under our feet, concentration on what it has to bring gives us the one means of control that we have to grip onto our ever-changing realities.

This creates a self closing loop of perspectives that fit together as if they're pieces of a puzzle; one that starts and ends with time, and has room for everything else in-between.

Now, the fun begins.

What has been the point of all of this? What is there to take away from all the nonsense that I've been spewing? Why do authors even dedicate their souls to writing books in the first place?

We write books because we have a message that needs sharing; a message that brings more than just the words on the paper that they're printed on. These messages can be fictitious stories, they can be a labeling of how someone views the truth, or, they can be nothing more than a long winded tale that ends with a good chuckle.

No matter the intent, no matter the inspiration, no matter the story, we write because there is something that we have to say. A story that we tell ourselves which doesn't realize its full potential until it escapes the bounds of the being that created it. And, for the story that I want to tell, I am no exception.

I have a story that does me good on its own, but will do myself, and everyone else, much more good, if I can share it with as many people as possible.

With my story, I wish to give much more than just the experience that's gained by reading this far into the text; I wish to give a message that brings a feeling that lasts.

I want my message to be one that alters the course of human lives in a way that was previously thought of as being unimaginable. I want my message to be one that makes even the most skeptic of skeptics scratch their head full of skepticism. And, I want my message to be one that changes the world; as any power hungry chimp would want as well.

You see, my story is all about the ending; the pinnacle that has been reached after all of this climbing. Everything that has been said thus far has been cool and all-possibly making change by itself, possibly not-but, all of it has just been setup to give context to the reframing of modern life that I want to spread across the globe.

What is this reframing? Well, it helps if we take a look at what we will be reframing. The current metaphor that's constantly rattling around in the cultures spread across the entire globe goes something like this.

Here we are, human beings, mankind. Most of us here believe that God is the almighty power that gave us the experience of life, but, origin belief plays no part in this perspective. To us, life, is like so.

As mankind, it is our duty to work. Work is what mankind was made for; to build, to labor, and to produce. If we didn't spend our time working, what else would we do with it; nothing at all? There must be work, there has to be work; we prioritize work, we love work, and we are work.

Traditionally, we work five days of the week, but, most of us here prefer six or seven. Most of us prefer just doing one activity for work until we wait for

the day that we can finally rest; why go through the trouble of having to learn something new? But, if doing just one thing for 40 years doesn't interest you, I know that there are some of us here that have done two or three; I even think that there's a guy here who has done up to 7! Can you imagine? 7 different jobs until retirement? That must have drove the lad mad!

We start young, and work far into our old age, to the point where our bodies start to give out, and our motivations start to dwindle. Then, and only then, do we deserve to swim in the spoils that we've built with our own backs along our work-filled paths. Except, not actually swim, because, for most of us, this point doesn't arrive until our once capable bodies are now riddled with injuries, asymmetries, and chronic pain. But, no worries, for all of the injuries, asymmetries, and chronic pain have all been worth it; dedicated to the almighty cause, we have no problem sacrificing ourselves for the only thing worth sacrificing ourselves for—those oh-so-sweet paydays and pensions.

We work, then we retire, where we rest, and then, we pass; a life well-lived. You might be wondering... what is all this work for?

We work so that we can earn.

Earning is important, earning is what gives us our value in society. We work so that we can earn so that we can feel good about ourselves and live a wholesome life. How else would we go about living a wholesome life? With the amount of time that we have on this Earth, it only makes sense for us to fill the majority of it with an activity that brings us our worth.

Earning serves as such a useful reference point for understanding each other, that, by looking at the decisions that people make in order to earn in the ways that they do, we can learn most of what we need to learn about that person in order to build a short spark-notes of their personality. It's quick, it's easy, and it's damn sure effective. We use it as a metric to judge each other, we use it as the placement for our positions in the fictional societal hierarchy, and we use it as the basis of value for everyone's experience of modern day life.

Besides, if we didn't earn, how else would we be able to consume all of the advanced technology that exists for us in today's modern day and age? We take joy in the fact that we get to live in a time where we get to experience the most that technology has to offer. So many tools, so many toys, so many games, so many movies, so many shows, so many streams, so much media—never-ending media; how could someone not be impressed by all of this?

Luckily for the ones who only have to work five days a week, they get to spend their anticipated weekends enjoying such advanced technology. Endless games and endless movies and endless popcorn and endless laughs and endless good times; how much envy the weekend-getters get from the ones constantly working. But, all is still well for the ones who constantly work, because, they still get to do the one thing that brings the ultimate joy: the joy of earning.

For those who don't earn—those who are too lazy—they don't get to enjoy any of this advanced technology that society has to offer. How miserable such a life must be... not earning and not being able to enjoy the spoils of earning must bring an emptiness that can't be filled with the presence of anything else.

Oh, how those pesky twerps often grind our gears; the ones that are too lazy to get off their sorry asses and go get jobs—taking all of our tax-payer money just to sit on their asses and do nothing all day. You know, I hate to say this, but, I mean, it's obvious that we're all thinking it... those lazy ass fuckers that beg on street corners need to stop being so goddamn lazy and decide to work instead. Don't they know? Don't they know that they can work so that they can earn, so that they can work some more? How could they be so foolish?

But, the point is simple, because life is simple. We're born, we go to school, we learn, and then, boys become men and girls become women and everyone gets to the whole point of this thing called life; we work. We work until we're tired, at which point, we work no more, and we're able to look back upon having lived a life worth living. Oftentimes, we get to enjoy the last of our days in the presence of others doing the exact same thing in neat little facilities where they wake us up, and give us our pills, and wipe our assholes, and even hand out cherry flavored jello on Wednesdays; how neat is that?!

Those who can't work in our society, for whatever reason it may be, are labeled as "problematic." Because, if they can't work, what will they do? How will they fulfill their role? How will they ever feel complete? The only thing that they'll end up doing is turning to drugs and porn. And, we can't have everyone turning to degeneracy all willy-nilly like that, so, the way that we avoid this, is through work.

Unfortunate for those who are too unwilling to work and those who have problems with themselves that keep them from working, they will never get to feel the ultimate purpose that one can have in this lifetime. A life that's forever incomplete, we take pity on the ones who don't actualize their potential by applying their energy towards an earning of their choice. We're here to work; it's what we do, it's who we are. If you can't, well, then, it's likely that you are going to live a fairly difficult and incomplete life.

Keep your head up when times get rough, get good at picking yourself up when you fall down, and always push through the pain; we're warriors, not pussies.

This is the current default for the average. This is the current default that is reinforced in public schools, this is the current default that is selected for in a competitive work environment, this is the current default that is present throughout the majority of the world. Work hard, and then let the work do the rest.

Ugh, how this view churns my gut; so closed-minded.

Equipped with the logical systems presented in the third part of this text, this needs changing; a reframing. It begins with a reframing of the way that problems are viewed; but, first and foremost, how about a word on how these problems are being dished out by the average like candy on Halloween.

To the average, they view problems as being anchored to the limitations of one's ability to work; a seemingly simple concept. But, behind this facade, there lies some unavoidable truths that I feel are necessary to point out.

When we look at the subset of nature that we call 'living'—as a generalized system—we see that it hosts imperfect processes that are rewarded for, in particular, one characteristic; adaptability. Those who have been able to adapt to the change that they've been presented with in their environments are going to be the ones that are far more likely to pass on their genetics to the next generation.

If something can't adapt to the different climates that it lives in, or, if it can't adapt to being able to defend itself against something that would otherwise destroy it, or, if it can't adapt to being surrounded with different fauna and flora, life for this entity becomes very difficult. This makes for a very natural selection of a trait related to one's ability to adapt to the demands of the circumstances that it exists in particularly apparent.

A subset of lifestyles that are lived today still abide by this filtering of one's ability to adapt to novel stressors. There are still people that live in the tundra, there are still people that live in tribes without silicon technology, and, there are still people whose lives are completely dictated by the availability of wildlife and vegetation that surround them. But, there's another particular subset of lifestyles lived today that are much more applicable to the common man. A subset where this evolutionary ascent of our genomes slowly headed towards becoming gods of adaptation has plateaued with the stagnation of the modern day Homo Sapien. With the abundance of convenience that we now have around us at all times, adaptability is no longer nearly as favorable as a trait as it once was, as our current lifestyles are lived the majority of the time through immobility and monotonous repetition.

It's no longer about being able to adapt to hunting different types of prey, or to digesting different types of food, or to traversing different types of terrain, or to studying the migration patterns of predators, or to having knowledge on whatever concoctions of varying plant and animal parts give rise to natural medicinal soups. It's now about being able to type the same things using the same programs in the same settings around the same people eating the same lunch at the same times, all in climate controlled, square box, LED-lit facilities made of concrete.

We take the same roads in the same vehicles, seeing the same sights, parking in the same spots, going to get the same groceries on the same day at the same store with the same aisles, where constant buzzing, beeping, and hubbub is to be expected. We watch the same shows on the same TV laying in the

same spots in the same ways at the same times to watch predictable, pre-programmed, passé programs of prearranged lengths of time that even tell us when to laugh, when to clap, and when to cry.

It's no longer about being able to create fire that's needed for survival in the rain, snow, heat, or cold; it's now about knowing which ambient sound smartphone app plays a never-ending video of a fire crackling so that time can instead be spent relaxing in an, oh-so-very, velvety plush couch. It's no longer about the extent of the various roles that one can play in a small tribe; it's now about how well one can specialize in an extremely specific role that is completely detached from the natural world that we thrive in, all in a mega-corporation, familiar, yet still foreign, setting. It's no longer about if one possesses the malleability to bend themselves to the environment around them that best sustains their survival; it's now about being able to bend all of the sources of convenience around us to our stationary selves, so that we can make our lives as static as possible.

There are some of us that are still so deeply intertwined with our roots to the natural world, that adaptation to non-adaptation is nonexistent in our timelines. Some of our biologies still prefer the million year old, tried and true way of living, that brought us to the heights of our now global culture.

Our bodies and minds, having inherent knowledge that the environments that they are currently living in are far off from the ones that they were bred from, don't always possess the ability to adapt to something that they are viewing as an overall net negative. When adaptation to non-adaptation can bring immediate physical distress to a body and mind that are aware of this disconnect to their natural environments, it would be a scope and hope to say that they will adapt to it if they're just given enough time. That, by doing the exact same thing over and over again, until the point where suffocation by boredom takes over and rots a person into becoming a mindless NPC, the adaptation to the new way of living will come just as naturally as the arrow of time moving forward. That, it's not the circumstances that need changing, it's you that needs changing.

Despite some of us being able to see and feel for ourselves that the current default standard of living is one that is directly leading to the internal suffering that some of us are constantly facing, we are the ones that are deemed problematic.

We are the ones that are deemed incompetent, or unable, or "unfit for work." We are the ones whose brains need solving, whose problems must be dealt with, whose behaviors must be changed. We are the ones that must gulp the pills and cope the cope and have to manage living in a world that was never made for us.

If we don't possess the ability to stand still, or sit still, for two, four hour chunks, for 5 consecutive days, for 40+ years worth of weeks, we are deemed to be the ones that are unfit to live in the world that the average has completely taken into their own hands. We are the ones that are medical mysteries, we

are the ones that nothing seems to work for, we are the ones where something remains to be off when everything else seems to be right.

It's kind of funny how the ones that are now labeled as neurodivergent come with the connotation of them being below the bar in some form, when none of the inherent skill sets that a species would need to survive are being tested for. And, when I say funny, I mean disgusting.

Before SSRI's are handed out, the one seeking an end to the suffering isn't given the chance to see how they would perform in a society that is more closely tied to our species' roots. One where a small to medium sized group of people live as a tribe, where everyone has a role that they must fulfill for the greater well-being of the tribe, and, one where stories are shared around campfires while eating slowly cooked meat and drinking from nearby natural springs; one where one's competence isn't judged by how well they can survive in a concrete jungle, but an actual one instead.

For those who are unable to adapt to this new way of living, they are given permanent brandings that they must carry around with them for all future job opportunities, doctor visits, and parent phone calls that will forever display their incompetence to the rest of the world. Unable to be, here lies a group of people that are sub-par; assistance to be required.

Our competence as human beings is being tested against a system that is already setup for some of us to fail, but, I didn't even need to say any of that, because the reframing of how we look at problems is going to change anyway. I just wanted the people that are hurting to know that it's not them who are the unable ones.

A simple reframing of how we look at what is even deemed a "problem" in the natural world allows for so much more pliability of the human condition that's naturally geared towards positive change in an individual's life, when we compare it to the default caging procedure that seizes all of its patients as lifelong victims; consider it, a coordinate change.

First, we look at how the notion of what is currently being labeled as a "problem" changes when viewed under a set of perspectives different from the global default. Through this new system to reason about what is happening around us, how might we define a "problem"?

Here's a thought experiment to get us going... when looking at the individual processes within nature, at what point do we say that a process has a "problem" with it? Do we say that the tree that didn't grow perfectly vertically has a problem with it? Do we say that the river rocks that aren't perfectly smooth are dysfunctional? Do we say that the water filled clouds that didn't rain need therapy?

No, we do not, because those concepts don't even make sense in nature. The concept of an ideal is far detached from the reality of any entity—living or otherwise—existing as a process in nature. When every process can only exist in the exact way that it was developed, how is a completely made up ideal to be chased when there's no deviating from whatever the destiny of that process

was in the first place? When we look at this system of nature as happening in the only way that it could have, where do we interject the notion of a choice that could've been made for an entity to be something that it isn't? At what point was that tree, or that rock, or that cloud, able to choose to be a way that was different from the chaotic blueprint that was laid out for them by their environments?

When looking at the way that the tree develops from its own point of view, it sees no problem at all. It's currently living, its leaves are healthy, its roots are prosperous, and its soil is nurtured. So, what's the problem? A twisted trunk? A branch of leaves that got cut off? The woodpecker pecking away at its bark? The fact that it adapted to its environment in a way that kept it alive and well for all of these years? These things don't represent problems; they represent states.

A state isn't necessarily a problem. A state is nothing more than a description of the moment in time that existed as the state passed by. The whole notion of calling a state a "problem" is such a human made concept. Problems only exist in the minds of the creatures that come up with them, for, the states that these creatures are experiencing are otherwise neutral to the viewpoint of the states themselves, regardless of the human label that they're given. There is no such thing as an objective problem in a system that only hosts processes whose beings are defined by imperfection and randomness.

Problems don't exist to the crabs with only one claw, problems don't exist to the dogs without tails, and problems don't exist to the plants that don't bloom, because all of these living entities experience their reality without hanging onto the mental weight of thinking that they are indeed problematic. They either survive or they don't; there's no need for the entire notion of a problem to exist for any species on Earth besides the humans that think that there's something to gain from doing so. Us using this language of "a problem" is forcing a hypothetical ideal onto a non-hypothetical unideal; the imperfect system of nature.

This metaphor of problems in nature not really existing as problems is nice and all, but humans are still going to be a little bit different from trees and rocks and clouds and crabs and dogs and plants. We don't just simply negate all of the pain that comes from our kinks by realizing that the pain is actually no pain at all; we have a physical biology and a nonphysical mind that say otherwise. We have a consciousness that is able to reflect on its own pain—the ability to feel pain just from the idea of feeling pain—something that I imagine is quite different from the trees and the rocks and the clouds and the crabs and the dogs and the plants.

Even though we are markedly different from the other living organisms on this planet, we still share some similarities between the other processes in nature that are worth pointing out.

Just like the trees, and the rocks, and the four other things that I need you to imagine that I typed out, there exists no sole, perfect form that can be chased

by any one human being. If we are to say that there exists a human ideal, who would this ideal be? Is it someone who has already lived their life on this Earth? Is it someone who hasn't existed yet? A fictional superhero? A character in a manga?

Is it someone who is nice all the time, just to get stabbed in the back by someone that they trusted? Is it someone who rules with an iron fist, knowing that change can only come with the swallowing of bitter pills? Or, someone who creates an entire religion around the privilege and time that was handed to them in order to discover themselves?

Any answer to these questions is predestined to fail when tasked with objectivity, for, any of them would perfectly capture the bias of the human coming up with it. Of course the Buddha is going to say that the perfect person is most like him. Of course Adolf Hitler is going to say that the perfect person is just like him. And, of course Jesus is going to say that the perfect person is the one that's preaching the same ideas that he is.

Of course any emotional, imperfect monkey is going to say that the ideal monkey is going to be one that exists similar to how they are now, for, even they cannot imagine something that they're not. Since ideals only exist hypothetically, of course the hypothetical-er is going to make their ideal one that suites their own individual psyche. This includes scientists, this includes priests, this includes cult leaders, this includes every person living on this planet that's inside of the average or otherwise.

The point that's even more important than this hypothetical ideal being subjective and fictitious is that, even if it was to exist—the perfect person that everyone could agree upon—what actions could one take to chase it that would otherwise negate the environmental influence that's continuously forging them? At what point is this person able to choose to be different from what their DNA, their epigenome, their parents, their childhood, their education, their culture, their heritage, and so much more, have laid out for them?

The perspectives that have lead us this far are based on the belief that choice is missing from each of our souls' toolbox of abilities—except for the singular ability of channeling of intent—so, how does one choose to be different from how they are when they lack the tools to do so? How does one choose to be something other than what they were meant to be, consistently going against the grain of the energy fields happening around them all the time? How does one choose themselves into a better reality when their ultimate fate is going to be determined by something that they can't determine?

For example, let's say that this hypothetical ideal existed, and it is someone who is only ever nice, generous, and forgiving—no matter what happens to them. What do we tell the developing kids that have no father, drug-addicted mothers, and are born into dangerous neighborhoods where gang gravitation is a much more important dog-tag to carry around than what any sub-par education they could've gotten from a public school containing underpaid and overworked teachers would've given them instead? What do we tell the ones who get busted for doing a crime that they didn't commit by a racist cop who

wanted to prove to himself that his racist ideals were legitimate and valuable, thus having to live a chunk of their innocent lives behind bars to suffer on cold concrete floors in deep states of anguish and frustration?

Do we tell these kids that, no matter what, they have never been, and will never be, this completely made up hypothetical ideal that exists solely in someone's subjective mind? That, for their entire lives, they have never come close—and will never come close—to being the one thing that everyone else is aiming to be? And that, for the rest of their days, they must now live inside of an invisible cage placed upon them by a biased human being; just as much as the physical one that they will keep getting sent back to as every single one of their mistakes costs them the ultimate price: an uninterrupted, sizable chunk of their time that they'll never get back?

It's no wonder that some people would prefer being sent back to jail rather than have to live in the "real world;" it's probably more comfortable in there than the reality of Redditors that waits for them on the outside.

The stories that our minds are able to fabricate and force upon others are what separate us from every other living process inside of nature; not the blood that's running through our veins or the cells that make us up. Not only do we have thinking minds that are able to construct pseudo realities where ideals exist that are forever detached from our actual realities, but, we also have thinking minds that are easily convinced that these glamorized realities actually exist as reachable states.

The way that this inherent behavior of our bumptious minds manifests its way into our society is through a global re-labeling of an otherwise neutral series of states into things that we now call problems. The kinks, quirks, and imperfections that we have aren't viewed as kinks, quirks, and imperfections, but as deviations from a completely made up ideal. A series of states that could be transient, a series of states that could almost entirely be determined by a single environmental factor, and a series of states that don't define the entirety of a human being, now stamped on their foreheads of the individuals that stray from conceptual perfection with big red ink that outlines a defective label in all caps for everyone to see; the marking of some arbitrary bucket's lasting permanence.

We take a look at a person, one who has adapted, survived, and coped in the exact ways that their environments have set up for them, and we say, let's imagine a world where you're not how you are. Let's imagine a world of what-if's, a fantasy world with fantasy characters, where there's a perfect ideal, one that only exists in theory, and then let's imagine how you aren't it. A flaw, a problem, a splinter that needs removing. Something wrong about you that needs to change in order for you to be accepted by the eyes of the others; because, you aren't where you need to be with where you are right now.

Instead of looking at individual humans for the individual beings that they are—kinks, quirks, imperfections and all—we assign them the lifelong homework assignment of trying to solve a problem that only exists arbitrarily. We throw out a label that is nothing more than an arbitrary categorization of an oth-

erwise continuous phenomenon of behavior that stays with a human for their entire life. This nips in the bud any change that could have happened in an alternate universe where they're instead told that they possess the power to change themselves into something that they're not. Instead of giving them the option of malleability, we gift them with the lifelong burden of having to wear ankle weights with anywhere they go or anything that they do; ankle weights that can prevent an otherwise capable person from flying.

Best seen in the case of the kid that's under 18, they're given a label of an arbitrary bucket that becomes engrained in a part of their entire developing existence. Like a psychiatrist placing their hand in the wet cement that is this child's developing brain and signing the patient's custom bucket below in cursive, this creates a groove that will end up dominating this kid's thought patterns for the foreseeable future. The first digging of a groove that is now forever unnoticeable; a seed that can no longer be ignored.

This label becomes a part of their developing identity, as it finally gives them something to grapple with; a beast to conquer. And, for some, they might spend their whole life fighting this beast that might have started out as nothing more than a diagnosis related to a series of transient states. A case of a permanent diagnosis given to an unpermanent condition, where they must handle the burden of their flawed development well throughout their fully developed timeline.

The connection that this kid builds with this label goes far beyond something that can just be put onto a blank, "Hello, my name is _____" sticker. This kid builds friendships around this label, they get community support from others that have also been given this label, and, because of all the connections that they make that are revolved around this label, they feel somewhat attached to calling themselves a proud member of having it. A bit of Stockholm syndrome towards a situation that might be scary but is at least known, this natural condition to befriend the beast that they are facing now dictates how the future layers of their life's experience get added on top of their individual soul stack. For a chunk of their life, this label doesn't represent a part of them; this label *is* them.

There's a different way to go about this. One where permanent marks aren't given out as invisible ceilings on a person's capability to change. A way that treats mental "problems" with a delicate touch, instead of the harsh scarring that exists as the current default.

Instead of anchoring the notion of a "problem" to one's inability to work, why don't we anchor it to something else entirely? Why don't we try to anchor it to the only line of reasoning that makes it out alive after digestion of the logical systems created by the perspectives contained in the entirety of the third part of this book: the channeling of one's intent.

There are two things that fall out of this complete structure of perspectives; the me's ability to channel intent, and this moment being the only moment in time that is of importance to a human being. These two combine together elegantly to form an even simpler model than the one presented at the very beginning of this text; thoughts and grooves are good and all, but, we can go even simpler.

The combining of the ability to channel intent along with all of time collapsing down to a single moment represents a data structure that is just a single point. One action, in one moment; forever and always. All of the complexity that is captured by the complex machines reasoning about all of this is boiled down to just one stream of reality in one exact moment; we couldn't be any more minimalistic if we tried.

The new concept of a "problem" is now directly tied to how well, and for how long, one has the ability to concentrate on a single task at a given moment in time. The quality and quantity of one's attention span can be used as a new marker for the starting point of a diagnose-less procedure, where, the person on the receiving end of this conversation is transparently given the importance of which aspect related to their perception of reality is going to change over the course of treatment; a trait that is well-defined, incrementally reachable, and completely palpable for anyone seeking a change in state.

With this shifting in the cornerstone of the way that we reason about what we call a problem, everything that was originally anchored to this fundamental principle changes entirely. Instead of calling **deviations from one's ability to work 40 hour work weeks** as being **problematic**, we now call **deviations from a state of unbroken concentration** as a **state** that exists away from a well-defined one.

Anyone who is unable to continuously concentrate on a given task at hand for an arbitrary length of time isn't viewed as being problematic, but viewed as existing as a unique data point in a complex graph (one that accounts for all variability) that exists in some region that's away from a central origin point. This point that they exist at represents the state of their current state, and exists alongside many other unique points representing many other unique states. All of these unique points are going to exist as being away from a central, ever-unreachable state of an on-demand, pure stream of unlimited concentration. In this way, points away from the center don't represent flaws that *must* be changed; they represent unique states that have the *possibility* to change.

By doing nothing other than just giving someone the option of malleability, one might imagine that a diagnosing procedure that details specificity and individualism over generalizable bucket-placing is going to play out differently in society when compared to telling people that they have permanent problems or disorders with themselves that need fixing. When we tell people that they exist as an unpermanent state that has the possibility to change, not only do we invoke the natural human curiosity inside of this person to find out where they exist in this hypothetical graph that contains millions of other people, but,

we also give the combination of their bodies, minds, and souls the opportunity to change their location in this graph to a more desirable one—given that they find a way how.

If someone knows that they exist as a unique point that isn't well-defined, but that, there exists a point that *is* well-defined—one that brings many advantages if they were to reach it—might their true position in this graph be swayed by the mind's ability to think that it's closer to the singularity than it actually is? Is it possible that by having a mind that hosts thought patterns related to trying to figure out where it itself exists in this graph, that it subconsciously finds ways to move itself closer to the center before it lands on a perceived-to-be-in location? Can it be that someone can change the symptoms that they are experiencing now by simply believing in a perspective that's different from the one that they had no say in being shoved down their throat as they grew up?

When we give clusters of symptoms as nothing more than a description of possibly transient states instead of a definite, long-lasting label, we replace the pressure and the stress that would've been created for this individual to strive towards what *must* be strived towards, with curiosity and exploration towards a state that is *wanted* to be strived towards. All the pressure and stress is lifted once they realize that they can be exactly how they are, without anyone forcing any sort of change upon them whatsoever, and be perfectly content with so; unless, that is, they don't want to be where they are right now. Then, every step towards a well-defined point is marked as a success in their mind, coinciding with a nice release of dopamine along the way. If the unique position that they exist at isn't well-defined, then it's going to be very hard for the mind to convince itself that any particular step can be regarded as a failure, when it can just adjust where it thinks it sits in this network without any resistance as it does so.

At any point along this path towards unbroken concentration, one is more than free to stop their travels, and relax with the peace of mind knowing that they can live the rest of their lives without having to go through any more change on this front at all. Relaxing for days, relaxing for years, relaxing until they die; the choice is theirs. And, as soon as they decide that they're tired of relaxing, and that they want to start doing again, they naturally take the well-known path that they have already taken before that will get them closer and closer towards the state that they've already made lasting progress on.

Compare this to when one-size-fits-all disorder labels are dished out and googled-upon by the masses. The person doing the googling gets told that they are one and the same with the millions of other people that have been given the exact same diagnosis as them, and that, there is no deviating from what this label with 100 symptoms is going to bring in their future. This can lead to a self-reinforcing loop where this person acts in the way that the disorder thinks that they should act, instead of them being open to the possibility that they possess the ability to change. Instead of spending time trying to change their state to something that brings more fulfillment, there's a period of wallowing

where they do nothing but rot with the idea of them being broken in the same exact way as the millions of others just like them; a period that, for some people, can last forever.

The whole notion of touching the mind's of children delicately through the use of an explanation of their individualism is easier said than done. It takes a very gentle touch along with an understanding of their ability to change into something that they're currently not; neither of which can be fabricated or forced.

Without the use of broad labels, it can be more difficult to prescribe medication, it can be more difficult to relay information from psychiatrist to general practitioner, and, it can be more difficult to store information related to reasoning about the similarities between patients, friends, and family in the brain of the one who is primed to think about all of these things. For every sentence containing a few word label that covers a broad spectrum of conditions, five are needed to explain the context of individualism and how they don't actually exist as that label; something that gets burdensome over time, especially when considering that there are so many people that don't necessarily think in this way.

But, just because it's difficult, doesn't mean that it's impossible.

In this way, instead of someone getting a lifelong diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, they are told that the general region that they exist in away from a state of pure concentration is one that's revolved around hyperactivity of the brain and nervous system; and that, this unique position that they currently exist at has the possibility to change region, encompass more than just one region, get closer to the central point, get farther from the central point, or any combination in between, as time has its way with them.

Instead of someone getting a lifelong diagnosis of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, they are told that their stray from unbroken concentration is due to uncontrollable, mental looping patterns; and that, these looping patterns have the possibility of going away with time—given a change in environment, a change in brain chemistry, or simply a change in perspective.

Instead of someone getting a lifelong diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder Type II, they are told that there exists a state of continuous concentration that they have the chance of getting closer to if they learn how to manage the uncontrollable mood swings that may or may not change over time; and that, there exists medications that inhibit these natural mood fluctuations so that, if direction towards this point of unbroken concentration is desired, the path will come with a whole lot less resistance.

Instead of someone getting a lifelong diagnosis of Generalized Anxiety Disorder, they are told that their environment is presenting their easily-grooveable minds with easily accessible triggers leading into grooves that bring them harm; and that, with the help of medication, talk therapy, meditation, cold water immersion, or anything else that one can come up with that helps, they are able

to negate the effects of the unwanted grooves by replacing them with positive ones.

And, instead of someone getting a lifelong diagnosis of a Personality Disorder, they are told that the layers of their soul that have accumulated up until this point have lead to this, this, and this set of behavior patterns; and that, by channeling intent at pre-discussed key moments in time towards something other than the default, they have the ability to influence how the new layers of their soul are stacked on top (which may lead to drastically different behavior).

Instead of the person that experiences just a few mild symptoms of some arbitrary “disorder” getting the exact same diagnosis as the person who is so physiologically and mentally crippled that they don’t even have the energy to forever end their suffering by killing themselves, they are given a platform that might lead to a full negation of the symptoms clustered together into a label that was once-thought-of as permanent.

Instead of setting people up to fail at a task that’s defined by a completely hypothetical ideal, we inspire them to make as much change as they possibly can towards a point where every step closer to unbroken concentration is rewarded as a success. Instead of trapping people into a narrative of them being forever unable to change, we let them know that not only is change possible, but that, it’s also likely. And, instead of us valuing a completely made up metric that gets measured in green sheets of paper, we recognize the pain that is being brought to the individuals whose biologies are unable to adapt to the—dare I say—decline of a once prosperous set of global civilizations.

Such a subtle change that we could make in the diagnosing procedure that is backed by a logical system that is not a subtle change at all. This tiny shift in the way that we present “dysfunction” to people who are learning about it for the first time inspires hope into the members of a species that has done incredible things with the power of this feeling alone. You tell them that their position is not fixed, and that they currently exist as a state, not a disorder, and that there’s a point that—although maybe not perfectly achievable—can be worked towards that allows for unlimited freedom, and then, just sit back and watch.

Watch what happens when a species isn’t defined by permanent labels. Watch what happens when a species is told that change is possible and that change is accessible and that change is real. Watch what happens when an entire generation of “mentally disabled” kids realize that the only disability that they have is the thought pattern that’s been spawned into their minds from the gas-lighting propaganda that has made them believe that they are incompetent when compared to the rest. Just watch.

With a change in the way that a “problem” is viewed, there comes a re-framing of what it means to call something a “solution,” just as well. Without problems, there are no solutions, but, just because the words have undergone a coordinate change doesn’t necessarily imply that all of the suffering that went

along with the previous “problems” will disappear just as easily as the label did. The concept of a “problem” and a “solution” still somewhat exist in this new framework, they’re just presented in different ways.

A problem, representing a location that is undesired, makes a solution represent a direction towards a location that is more desired. In this way, solutions aren’t called solutions anymore; they’re simply called changes in state.

The modern day state changes that are provided for the ones existing in a location away from unbroken concentration oftentimes begin with a disconnect to the reality of the intensity of their current suffering. People don’t just *start* therapy, people don’t just *start* medication, and people don’t just *start* asking for help. People don’t just start running more, eating better, shitting regularly, or sleeping all of the above. People don’t always just make that phone call that they need to make, people don’t always just organize their thoughts over time, and people don’t always realize that a fundamental part of their experience of reality has the possibility to change.

But, because some people seem to believe otherwise, old school solutions commonly lead to empty phrases that are conveyed as nothing more than a transient set of vibrations; no feeling, no understanding, and no changing. Phrases like, “just try harder,” or, “go out and get a job,” or, “start making positive changes in your life”; thanks Einstein, I think you just solved the problem as quickly as you handed it out.

When living in modern day society is essentially like being handed at least one bout of major depression as a ticket of admission, chronic fatigue is never factored into what it takes for someone to get better. And, if you think about it, why would it be?

Why would anyone try and come up with a solution that demands energy out of someone without any? You don’t consistently create energy for a person who doesn’t even have enough to get out of bed to take a piss. You can’t get someone to do work that they can’t do, and, climbing out of the hole of depression is certainly a whole lot of work. So, coming up with a long lasting state change to the ones who don’t think that they could be any worse off would be an impossible task. Right?

Ahh, how Mother Culture’s view of society churns my gut. I’m telling you... so closed-minded.

Mother Culture has made us believe that reward only exists in the presence of work; the baseline of the life view. And, beyond just our culture, this seems to be a large part of our natural experience of life anyway. When we work, we almost always get rewarded in either currency or dopamine, and oftentimes, both. The problem that I have with Mother Culture’s view has nothing to do with challenging the notion of this natural human phenomenon of us getting reward only with the presence of work; it’s because of a single word that I just typed in that sentence: only.

When we live in a physical world that seems to have laws of energy and conservation that claim that energy isn't created out of thin air, it's hard for us to imagine any sort of reality where energy can be created for those without any. I mean, come on, free energy? Really? That definitely sounds like a hoax.

And, to the physical world, I would agree. But, luckily for us, we have access to another one.

The nonphysical realm, accessible by the mind, might have some scary things hiding behind some unknown doors, but, it also has some pretty neat effects of what it can do to the human being accessing it.

The nonphysical realm is a bit different from our physical one. In the physical world, if you want kinetic energy, you have to work for it in some form. You have to climb that hill, or eat that food, or spend that money, or do some action to get you to exist in a different state. In the nonphysical world, If you want kinetic energy, all you have to do is channel the energy that is already there.

The mind has access to a world that has unlimited energy; at least, to the perception of the mind accessing it. This isn't something that needs a scientific backing for because anyone can feel this for themselves. Especially in the case of someone who has gone through at least one major depressive episode can tell you that, even when the body is so physically tired that it can't even crawl out of bed to get a glass of water, and, when the soul is so hopeless that it has flipped the switch of idealizing passive suicide, the mind is acting in the complete opposite regards.

Constant thoughts and constant anxiety and constant reflection and constant suffering, all of which get faster and faster until a strong enough stimulus is presented that lifts the depression, or, until the integrity of their soul is mutilated and mangled by the brutal bludgeoning that depression will do to it quicker and quicker as the days that bring undying despair get longer and longer.

In this nonphysical world, even though the content of what we are accessing is changing all the time—completely dependent on mood and well-being—the availability of energy is something that is constant no matter the condition of the mind accessing it. When we're in a good mood, we have good thoughts. When we're in a bad mood, we have bad thoughts. But, in either of those cases—or anywhere in between—there's always thoughts. Energy in this realm is always available, until death or comatose of the one who wants it.

Because of this, instead of fighting the thoughts, why not channel them?

Following along the lines of, if you can't beat em, join em... if the thoughts don't ever stop, why try and make them? It would be much easier—and much more effective—to channel the energy that is already present in the mind, rather than try and tell it to behave in a way that is detached from how it is actually

behaving. Someone flying down a hill on a fixie bicycle is going to get real tired legs if they spend the majority of it trying to slow down; but, is given a newfound freedom once they learn how to manage the speed.

But, this too, is easier said than done. Even though the energy in this realm is always available, this doesn't necessarily imply that knowing how to channel it is clear, intuitive, or even easy. Someone who is experiencing the full force of the nonphysical energy fields in a state of extreme distress can tell you that, yeah energy might be available, and yeah, channeling it is cool and all, but how the fuck are they supposed to do so when they feel like they can't do anything at all?

Which raises the question... how do you get someone to channel energy that is always present, when they don't know how, and they feel like they can't?

Isn't it obvious? You give them a lens that does it for them.

You give them a lens, to know where to look, and how to look, even in the scariest of situations. A map, that contains everything that they need to know, in an efficient way of storing information. A home, where they can feel comfortable and safe, no matter if they have a physical one or not. A platform, that holds them up when they can't do so themselves. An easily shareable boiler-plate, that allows for it to be used by anyone and everyone. A dialogue, that's understood and useable by all the components that make up a human being. A story, that can be referenced to in any scenario that could ever exist. Hope, in something that's explicitly defined, but not here just quite yet. And, you give them an identity, even after theirs has been ripped away by the hands of a monstrous disease.

What you give them is a groove. A groove that provides warmth. A groove that is easily accessible. A groove that can be memorized with nothing other than four dots. A groove that exists as the ultimate cope for someone looking for a non-pharmaceutical answer to handle this unnatural world that we are currently living in; the one with no downsides.

If you don't see it yet, I'll get you going in the right direction.

I want you to do the following. First, take one big breath. Hold it in, for 10 seconds. Count to 10 in your head while you do it. When you're done, let it out, close your eyes, and imagine four dots in the shape of a diamond.

Now, open your eyes, and smile. You're done.

That's it, you're done.

A moment of beauty, right here in this second. Right now, just now, if you did that simple little exercise, you have just set yourself up for the rest of your life.

A groove that has just been explicitly watered for the first time, this marks a connection between the physical and the nonphysical in a way that can now never go unnoticed by the mind that has just been given the framework that mine has already built. I spent my time writing this entire book just to lead up to this moment; the one where I've tricked your mind.

The mind, wanting safe and comfy-cozy, doesn't always like to be taken down roads that might bring something scary. This is why it often needs someone else to do it for them. When your mind knows of its own 'vet,' and realizes that it has the possibility to change itself to a state that is more desirable than the one that it is living in now—given a set of actions that might be uncomfortable—the first step is always going to be the hardest one to take. Making a move when any move seems treacherous doesn't always happen for a human that's been forced into a defensive stance that they can't get out of; but, it doesn't have to be if you have someone to make it with you.

It might be beneficial for some of you if I was to explicitly lay out what I have just done here. Unfortunately, this is impossible for me to do. Chaos is still chaos, and unpredictability is still unpredictable. But, just because there is some randomness involved in the way that each of your lives will now play out, it doesn't stop my mind from speculating what might be.

With the seed that has just been watered for the first time, what happens next?

Well, let's see... the reason that I claim that doing that simple little exercise is going to set you up for the rest of your life isn't because of the specific thing that I have created, but because of the specific thing that *you* are going to create. It doesn't matter if you use my exact template, it doesn't matter if you believe in all of the perspectives that I do, it doesn't matter if you think that I'm a crazy loon. None of this matters, because, now, your mind has no choice but to accept the one truth that my mind is transitioning to accepting for itself as I write this exact sentence; *a* solution exists.

Just like how shooting Joe off into deep space wasn't the best solution that could've existed, neither is mine. But, perfection is overrated for a species that can never be so. Knowing that *a* solution exists is enough for your mind to ponder one for itself. How do you look at the "problem" that you've been told that you have? What perspectives regarding how you view your world around you are you holding onto? Are the statements that I have made been reconciled with perspectives that you already believed in, or have they been absorbed as they are into an otherwise empty canvas?

Essentially, what I've just done is passed your neo-cortex a ball that it didn't even know existed, that it is now forced to take some action with. Throw the ball away, play with the ball for a little bit, or, put it on a shrine in your man (or woman) cave, it doesn't matter. I don't care what you do with this ball because my job was never to get you to accept it; it was to get you to think in a way that you haven't thought of before.

"Solutions" don't have to be perfect when they work, and, at the very least, I've given your mind one that works for exactly one case; me. I'm 1/1 when it comes to paradigm shifting, and I don't think that this is where the statistic will end.

To get your mind going in the direction that I want it to, it might be worth looking at some of the changes that have happened in my own life after full implementation and familiarization of the groove that I've given you all has sunken into the core of my being.

Before, I had thoughts like, "my whole life is worthless, I'm such a piece of shit." Now, I have thoughts like, "oh right, this is just a chapter of my life, not the whole stack."

Before, I had thoughts like, "I can't stop thinking of that embarrassing moment." Now, I have thoughts like, "oh right, the past has already played, and by continuing to think about it, I'm presenting a gap with my processing of current reality."

Before, I had thoughts like, "I'm worried that I'm not good enough." Now, I have thoughts like, "the only good enough that matters in the system of nature is the one where I'm still living."

Before, I had thoughts like, "I'm so worried about what other people think of me." Now, I have thoughts like, "I've had no say in the way that I have developed, and I am the only way that I can be; worrying about it serves as nothing more than a waste of time."

And, before, I had thoughts like, "I can't get over this trauma." Now, I have thoughts like, "maybe by accepting my soul for the way that it is instead of trying to change it, I'll be able to move on from it much easier."

Before, I had all of these thoughts. Now, I have none.

Before, I had so much going on in my mind at once that it left me incapable to take simple actions that would have naturally ceased some of the thought patterns that were turbulently ricocheting in my skull. Constant thoughts, constant worrying, constant remembering everything that must be remembered. Now, I *do* what needs to be done, instead of *thinking* about what needs to be done; as my next action is always served to me on a silver platter.

Before, I had reoccurring thought patterns that only seemed to bring me harm. Anxious thoughts, regretful decisions, and self-embarrassment over what

had already happened. Now, I haven't thought bad thought about myself ever since I was depressed; despite constantly feeling physically anxious over something that's a story for another time.

Before, I was worried about my inability to learn. Everything looked like a large mountain to climb, everything looked like it would bring adversity on the way, and everything looked like it was out to get me. Now, I want to learn everything, as it's no longer about the hardships of the journey, but rather, the rewards.

Before, I tried justifying everything around me as happening for reasons that were always dependent on how I felt as I came up with the rationalization—both of which were often shitty. I tried explaining that which can never be fully explained, and ended up nowhere other than inside of an echo chamber that only contained my own speculative stories. Now, I deflect any rationalization I come up with to the logical systems contained within this text that dissolves the speculative story to one with a solid and shareable ground.

Before, I had no choice but to put my own survival before any one of my other wants or desires. A constant drive to pacify the suffering that I was forever feeling inside of both my body and my mind. Now, my life is filled with how much choice I have; not how much pain I must endure.

Before, I was caged. Now, I am free. And, you can be too; hopefully, very soon here.

This groove of nothing more than four dots represents power. Power that's accessible by any chimp on this planet that is capable of reading the words that I've organized in this text. Which brings me to the second part of my agenda that I had mentioned from earlier on. Revolution is great and all, but there can be a prerequisite for it that puts it on a much healthier platform than a violent one.

At the beginning of this chapter, we looked at what we were going to reframe. Now, with the coordinate changes that turn problems into states, and solutions into state changes, we're finally able to look at the actual reframing.

Here we are, human beings, mankind. Most of us here believe that God is the almighty power that gave us the experience of life, but, origin belief plays no part in this perspective. To us, life, is like so.

As mankind, it is not our duty to do a single goddamn thing. It is not our duty to do anything at all because that statement makes no sense in a stack of perspectives that doesn't contain cosmic gospels that remain true without the point of view of an observer. We do, as we do—as nature has us do—without the need of an artificial rationalization placed on top of why we do what we do.

The motivations and desires that each of us have are going to be inherently inside the three forces that make up each and every one of us; the three forces that govern all of our individual behavior. And, it is not our duty to direct this collection of energy towards any specific direction whatsoever.

Our existence in the fabric of reality begins by us being placed into the river of life, alongside of millions of other people that have been placed in the same river as us. We don't get to choose our circumstances down this river of life; in fact, we don't get to choose much about this river at all. We don't get to choose what sort of raft we're given, we don't get to choose the direction of the river that we're going down, and, we don't always get to choose what sort of rapids take us in the sort of ways that they do.

Some of us are given the easy route down this river, coasting along calm water as they get to enjoy the smell of the air, the rays of the sun, and the company of everyone else floating down this river surrounding them; while others are tasked with the objective of becoming skilled sailors in a rough sea that they never asked to be apart of, as they must fend for themselves in the turbulent waters that throw them curveball after curveball.

Each of us have predispositions to act in certain ways as we traverse the river of life; predispositions that are completely out of our hands. We don't get to have a say in who our parents are, or what our DNA looks like, or how we are raised, or our heritage, or our culture, or our beliefs. We must deal with the predispositions that we each have, unique to the individual that must find them for themselves.

For the small chunk of reality that we get to experience while existing in the plane of the physical, we are free to explore as many avenues as our path down the river of life allows for. We are free to learn in as many domains as we want, we are free to push our bodies pass limits once thought of as impossible, and, we are free to connect with as many other souls as we can bond with in just one lifetime. There is no limit to what we can do; except for the ones that are externally imposed on us by the laws of the universe that govern us, and the ones that are internally imposed by our own individual beings.

The state of the river that we are currently headed down is one that looks bleak for many of the members floating down it. Ever since we have assumed the duty to control our paths down this uncontrollable river, we have by and far ruined the system of processes that hosts each and every one of us. We have spit in the face of our ancestors, tarnished the river that we're all floating down, and have ruined much of the planet that hosts this river that brings us our very lives. We have globally siphoned its resources for money, we have artificially warmed it by a few degrees, we have spread micro-plastics to the greatest depths of the ocean, we have completely exterminated numerous species of animals living alongside of us, we have bombed habitats around the globe, we have cut down the trees that gave life to the wild and have replaced them with concrete that's unbreakable by even the strongest of roots, and, we have a set a world on fire and are looking around to see who's to blame. Motherfuckers, it's us.

The natural world is looking primed for a reset, but not as quickly as the societal one; for, that one seems to forever loom in the, possibly-tomorrow category. What we do as we wait for this reset is largely unimportant. We can try and clean the oceans, we can try and stop the burning of fossil fuels, and we can try to implement global change in the way that we view other human beings, but, there's no avoiding the bed that we've made for ourselves that we now must lie in.

But, as we wait, it's important to me that I try my best to make the suffering of some of the luckless souls floating down this river around me just a little less painful. In a plane of reality where suffering seems to be unavoidable, there's still something to be said for the ones who have been given a whole lot of it to endure.

It's easy to think in the ways that the ones that have come before us have thought before—just as easy as it is to believe in the viewpoints that have been shoved down our throats without any of our say in the matter. It's hard to challenge commonly accepted ideas—just as hard as it is to change one's beliefs to something that wasn't forced upon them before.

But, no matter the vast variance contained by everyone floating down this river of life, there are a few things that I can say for certain about each and every one of you without needing to account for all of the individual predispositions that you all might have.

In a society where our value is based on scores out of 100, it's easy to make entire generations believe that possessing a low score is something that equates to incompetence. It's easy to make entire generations believe that they must change to something that they're not in order to be accepted in the eyes of the others. And, it's easy for them to believe that they don't belong in a world where other people are telling them that they don't.

In a society where our value is based on our ability to work, it's easy to make entire generations believe that their inability to do so equates to assistance needing to be required. It's easy to bring internal suffering to the ones that sit outside of the bell curve when the suffering is never felt by those inside of it.

In a society where we are told that our decisions, our choices, and our actions are what are bringing the ceaseless suffering that we have no choice but to endure, it's easy to make entire generations believe that they are the ones that failed the system, and not the other way around.

And, for those who have been convinced of way too much by the sheep that have been doing the convincing, I have some convincing of my own to do.

With a set of perspectives that give rise to celebration over our own uniqueness, it's easy to make entire generations believe that there is not a single fucking thing that is wrong with them that needs changing. It's easy to make entire generations believe that their individualism that has been forged by an unnatural world only needs changing in the ways that they themselves want to

change. And, it's easy to make entire generations believe that they aren't the ones that are incompetent after all.

With a set of perspectives that give rise to internal value that is anchored to one's ability to concentrate, it's easy to make entire generations believe that they can change themselves in a well-defined way that brings more joy out of every aspect of life. It's easy to make entire generations believe that they are not defined by their position in a bell curve that only favors the ones inside of the majority.

With a set of perspectives that says that our decisions, our choices, and our actions are out of the hands of the ones experiencing them, it's easy to make entire generations think that it is not them that is failing the system, but the system that is failing them.

There is nothing different that could've happened to make you into something that you're not. You are who you are, and there isn't a goddamn soul on this planet that should be able to convince you of otherwise. You are perfect in your own imperfection, and any one who thinks otherwise can be disregarded as a clown of this Earth who derives their self worth from ridiculing that which they are unable to accept.

You are not incompetent, you are not unable, and you are not the failure that they say you are. You are not here by mistake, you are not serving no purpose, and you are not alone in your suffering. Even when the hurting gets real bad, it's imperative that I know that you know one thing about yourself that has nothing to do with perspective or choice or deliberation or anything that I've said up until this point.

I need you to know that you are loved by at least one other person on this planet; me. It doesn't matter if you had a parent tell you so while growing up or not; I'm telling you now.

That you, a human being living on this Earth, no lesser than any other human being living on this Earth, is capable of being loved, and is loved, by another human being on the same Earth. No matter what they say, no matter what they do, no matter what you have to go through to get to the end of the suffering that you feel in this plane of reality, you must not forget that you—**you**—are a person that is loved by another person.

Every single one of you reading this is connected to every other person that is reading this through the unbreakable bond of love.

That's power. That's love.

Now, it's time to get back to the original question that this entire book is built off of... how does one go about solving the problem of obsessive thought? Well, that's just the thing. They don't.

You don't solve a problem that doesn't exist; you change a state into one that is more desirable.

As to how to go about changing this state to a more desirable one?

Well, it's fairly simple. All you have to do is close your eyes and breathe. As for the rest? Well, the rest is the rest.

If you made it this far into the text without skipping past any of it, a sincere thank you from me to you for the attention that you were willing to give to me and my crazy stories. It has been an honor and a pleasure to have had your center stage, even if just for a little bit, in a world where there are so many other beautiful souls doing so many other beautiful things on so many other beautiful stages. For this, I am incredibly thankful and fortunate.

To sum up my entire book in just three sentences for you prick bastards that skipped ahead (or you poor souls who are still looking for that bitcoin link)... Don't worry. Just breathe. It's the only thing that you can do.

Salud.

I hope to see you all on the other side; where one of you fuckers owes me a shot of vodka.

□

Closing remarks

Man, how good it feels to be done with that. Look, I'll keep the ending real simple because I've already taken up enough of your guys' time.

I am a human being, living in modern society, no different from other human beings. As a human, I possess needs. In particular, needs of the monetary sort. And so, I want to end my stories with a request for you all, in return for selling my soul to the devil for the ones that now don't have to do so themselves.

If one of you reading this just so happens to have your money situation figured out—much unlike my current one—would you be so willing to give to the spoiled fuck who doesn't want to spend his time waging the rest of his soul away?

These food stamps are only going to last for so long, and, as much as I would love to keep sucking off of the teet of the government, I wouldn't. Words can't describe the feeling that financial security would bring to me—or to anyone for that matter—as fighting to stay above the water is something that some of us get oh so tired of.

Along with being spoiled, I also want to act with arrogance when I say that I think I am special in one specific regard. Giving money to me doesn't just come with the sole benefit of widening my own wallet, but, it also gives me the platform to be able to give to the ones that aren't going to be able to share donation links of their own with the rest of the world.

I truly believe that I could help a lot of people on this planet; help people in ways that would allow for them to go on to help even more people besides the ones that I touch myself. I want to spark change in this world, even if it doesn't necessarily come from the skin of my own hands. This isn't something that I get the chance to do when I wake up every morning to sweaty armpits due to the anxiety of worrying about whether or not I'm going to become homeless again because I can't afford my rent. Personally speaking, I am unable to help others when I am too busy helping myself.

As to how I would help other people? I don't know just yet. I haven't had the chance to develop that train of thought yet. But, given the chance to do so, I have absolutely no worry in my ability to be able to do so. I know that I can come up with schemes to help the masses just as quickly as the worry of my financial security would dissappear if I was given a sizeable chunk of cash.

The change will come as it comes, and there's no need for me to get started on something that I am currently unable to get started on. But, with your help, I *can* get started on it. I *can* get started on helping other people, I *can* get started on easing some of the suffering, and I *can* get started on fulfilling a purpose much greater than just my own life.

Help me be free; I like to fly. And, by letting me fly, I can let a whole lot of other people fly as well.

For anyone who is gracious enough to help me out with my financial situation, a sincere thank you from my heart to yours, as your contribution will mean something to me that I won't ever have the chance to forget.

I would do something about my financial situation myself, but, the only thing that I can do is breathe.

:)

Donation links

GoFundMe: <https://gofundme.com/f/dvparadigmshift>

Paypal: <https://streamelements.com/uncleD0m/tip>

Venmo: @DominicVicharelli

BTC address: bc1qcq8dedxjxrhjkt0pw2q4g2wvemmcfpt8hyuz56

XMR address: 44zQq2QZJy7Y2vvPVsh2V56FQ1WbiQpXeQvApzBN7mW87RphNRnsM69QqWULSMzkjT9NjBobkJN6AfBbp85TozmQDma997G

ALGO address: JASWGW6SMXXCGOOOPWIDCI5DY64O7SMIKQNO7OHAPX2ENYZH36AK5WCDUU

For anyone who is interested in sharing their own implementation of their personalized four things structure with the rest of the world, send me a completed version of it in some form so that I can post it on a public Instagram profile (@_paradigmshift).

If you would like an example of what one of these may look like, I've given three in the repository that this book is hosted in (available at the following link: <https://github.com/dominicvicharelli/dominicvicharelli.github.io>).

And, for those of you who have something to say, say it. I'm all ears.
paradigmshift.dv@gmail.com

Have a great life everybody. I know that I'm about to start.