

What I Learned On X

Applied Social Engineering

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Be so good they wanna fight you.

The only reason you look
Into my eyes is to
see your own reflection.
- Richard Kiernecki

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WHAT IS \mathbb{X}

What is \mathbb{X} ?

It means whatever the hell you want it to mean. - Elaine Benes

\mathbb{X} is a Pool Of Narcissus.

TRANSFORMING CONFLICT ON \mathbb{X}

1. The Apple Of Discord

Risk cannot be destroyed, merely transformed - Hoffstein

She came anyway, but this time, she brought a wedding gift with her.

A wedding gift that would kick off the Trojan War.

Eris, the goddess of Discord, wasn't invited to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis. Not to be deterred, she came anyway, and she brought something with her.

What she brought with her was a golden apple that had the words, "...to the fairest" engraved on it. And the three goddesses - Aphrodite, Athena and Hera - began fighting each other over it...and that's how the Trojan War started. It's also how Rome was founded, as the story goes.

So fights can create, and fights can destroy.

Everyone thinks Jobs was a good dude...until you ask Woz...

2. I Didn't Have A Choice

The way that can be spoken is not the true way. - Tao Te Ching

In a lot of ways...I didn't have a choice.

I got good grades because that's what was expected of me.

I joined the chess club because that's what was expected of me.

I went to university because that's what was expected of me.

I got a good job because that's what was expected of me.

I got a black car with tinted windows because...rap music...

3. Why Fights Are Creative

They don't want to talk; they want to dominate.

Fights are important. Really important.

Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine - they all learned from the fights of Socrates.

What's Love? Why do societies die? These were the topics that got everyone fighting.

And Socrates taught through the process of verbal sparring, a process the nerds call the dialectic. Timeless teachings, like The Analogy of the Sun, The Ship Of Fools, these are all stories that emerged from students trying to fight Socrates. Conflict can be creative.

You ask a question - Teacher gives an answer. You call the Teacher's answer into question...AND THAT'S where the learning begins. This question and answer process is called the dialectic, and it's how the greatest teachers of our time have chosen to spread their teachings.

Every argument starts with a position, which Hegel & Fichte would call The Thesis. The argument AGAINST the Thesis is called the Anti-Thesis.

Whether they're fighting over Jerusalem, or the Presidency, or the Sale, people trade their ideas and counter-ideas, theses and anti-theses, over and over and over again.

Language disguises thoughts. - Wittgenstein

Usually when you talk to people, they don't want to talk; they want to dominate. Most of the time, they don't want to have a conversation; they want to place judgment on your soul...and you can use this to your ADVANTAGE.

So the next time someone picks a fight with you, ask them a question no longer than 8 words. Emotional people LOVE answering questions.

And it's by their answers ye shall truly know them.

And it's by their answers that ye shall discover where their pressure points are.

And at the perfect time...

4. Physician, Heal Thyself

I'm not a professional; I just live among them.

If you're reading this, it's because we've probably talked long enough for you to know I'm fucked in the head.

I'm not a professional; I just live amongst them. There's a difference.

I didn't decide to be here, in Canada. I had no choice where I was born. I didn't choose the language I speak. I didn't choose to be Canadian, or Guyanese, or Indian, or whatever manifestation suits you.

Truth is, we're in the same boat. You didn't decide where you were born, the religion you grew up with, the friends you have. You didn't even decide the collection of metaphor frameworks that you use to parse the world.

You are the only person that is preventing you from learning. If you want to learn, you must first understand all of the barriers to learning.

And your belief that you already know everything is preventing you from growing...idiot.

And it makes sense, because the first enemy of a man of knowledge is fear.

- Carlos Castaneda

5. Don't Take The Words Too Seriously

...where we meet in the silence between the words. - Ram Dass

Ram Dass - one of Steve Jobs' heroes - said it best,

Now, each evening when I'm going to come out to speak, I invariably think of the line from the Tao Te Ching that says, "He who speaks does not know, and he who knows does not speak." And I see the absolutely bizarre humor of my predicament. I realize that I have to be both of those—I have to be that part in me that is not speaking that knows, and the part of me that's speaking that doesn't really know. Hopefully, they're connected.

If you are open to the possibility, let the words merely quiet your minds, and let's meet on the other level where we meet in the silence between the words. We come together to speak about the Unspeakable because the rational analytic mind, the intellect, only knows objects; it only knows what it can think about.

What we come together to talk about are really matters of the heart that are known subjectively, not objectively. They are always hidden from the eyes of the thinking mind. Yet, I'm in the word business, so we just have to take the words very lightly. A very great Mystic poet, Rumi, once said, "I am a sculptor, a molder of form. In every moment, I shape an idol, but then in front of you, I melt them down. I can rouse a hundred forms and mix them with spirit. But when I look into your face, I want to throw them into the fire." The "you" in this case being the Beloved or that higher part of ourselves.

Our minds keep creating realities. We keep creating models of ourselves. We keep creating expectations about the world. We create these forms of clay, and we try to breathe life into them. But the minute you look directly into the eyes of forms, they all seem to dissolve before your eyes, and you're left speechless or heartfelt.

6. Attacking The Funny Bone

Because people can't disagree with you when they're laughing.

Do you know why the best politicians are stand up comedians?

Because people can't disagree with you when they're laughing.

People used to think that comedy wasn't useful...until a comedian became a President. Love him or hate him, when you consider the laughs per minute he gets, Donald Trump is one of the most prolific touring comedians of our time.

Don't be mad, just know it.

There are two people in the kingdom who can interrupt the King: the Queen and the Joker. Why is that? I'll let you sit with that one.

There are three ways to relay a message...

7. I Am Because You Are

*What the learner learns is a function of what they already know.
- The Kullback-Leibler Divergence*

One time I was teaching a student at Jane & Finch how to play a song on the steel pan. I wrote the notes on the boards - the actual letters - and asked different students to play a song. All the students had to do was play the note on the board.

Then I ran into a problem. One student just wouldn't look at the board. He wanted to watch me do it so that he could copy what I was doing.

I was confused. Why wouldn't he just look at the notes on the board?

Then it hit me. "*Uh oh...I don't think he can read...*"

What the learner learns is a function of what they already know. - The Kullback-Leibler Divergence

There's an assumption we make when we talk to people. The assumption is that the other person organizes information in the same way we do, and nothing could be further from the truth.

The medium is the message. - McLuhan

Why did Trump win the election? Because he understood television. Heck, he had ten years to perfect and position his public persona on The Apprentice before running. Plus, TV is a medium of entertainment, and so to the most entertaining go the spoils.

In The Act of Creation, Koestler outlined three ways to express any message...

APPLIED SOCIAL ENGINEERING ON X

0. Applied Social Engineering on X

It's simple...not easy.

People are primarily interested in themselves, so if you're not talking about them, they're probably not going to be all that interested in you.

The only reason you look into my eyes is to see your own reflection. - Kiernecki

Most people on TwitterSpaces talk about themselves; there's your opportunity. People don't want conversation - they want a spotlight. On them. So, put them in the spotlight. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, it isn't.

I've heard you talk in Spaces. You only talk about yourself. Your stories. Your work. But you never ask about the others in the space. Their stories. Their work. And that's why your relationships are paper fucking thin...

1A. Starting From Scratch On X

It's all about reply-driven development.

When you first start out, nobody knows you.

Nobody follows you. Nobody cares. And why should they?

They don't know you. They don't owe you anything. And besides, who the hell are you anyway? What makes you so special?

So, if you have an account on X that nobody cares about, that's OK. You're at the beginning of a success story. What you need to realize is that you're not going to get followers by just posting content..

1B. Gaining Trust On X

Content isn't King...CONNECTION IS. - Mohit Rajhans

When you start on X, it's hard to gain people's trust.

You might think that the quickest way to gain someone's trust on X is to interact with them on Spaces. The problem is, if they don't know you, they probably won't let you up to speak because they're afraid you'll embarrass them.

So, if you want to gain someone's trust, you can't just jump in their TwitterSpace. You have to prove to them that you won't embarrass them when you unmute your mic. There are adults in the room. Clients in the room.

So how do you gain enough trust in a prominent speaker's mind so they'll let you up to speak on Spaces? Simple...

2. Evacuating On X

The world is flat...but haven't you noticed?

How do you evacuate when you can't move?

Can't use the roads; they'll put a gun in your face and send you back where you came from.

Can't use the bridges; they've been destroyed to prevent the Russians from quickening their advance.

Definitely can't fly out; the airspace is perhaps the most dangerous option. There were even reports of The Red Cross being tossed aside during the heat of the battle over Sumy, Ukraine, a once-picturesque town right on the border of Russia.

SpookyTheManiac, a vocalist from Takoradi, Ghana, was awakened by his friend who was studying medicine in Sumy, Ukraine. Overnight, things went from bad to worse to critical, and his friend was desperate for a way out. But with the roads, bridges, and airspace locked down, they didn't have any options. Furthermore, with supplies being progressively locked off from the Western town of Sumy which lies close to vacuum-bombed Kharkiv, even water was becoming a precious resource.

Spooky did the only thing he could do - he opened up a Space on X - an open mic on Twitter where anyone can join in a conversation - and called it #SaveSumyStudents. Soon after, the med students in Sumy started pouring into the open mic...

3. Going Viral On X

You don't need a following to go viral.

You don't need a following to go viral.

If you don't have a following...and you wanna go viral...you just have to build a relationship with someone who already has a following. Someone who's already gone viral.

Like I said, going viral on X is simple...but it's not going to be easy.

This is how we created the Theme Song for TwitterSpaces...er, I mean, X...

4. Gaming The Gamers On X

Why use demographics and psychographics when you can use gamification.

If you want to become a social engineer on X, the very first thing you have to do is to understand the kind of games people like to play.

Once you understand the games they're already playing, you can choose the gamified design experiences they enjoy the most.

People play games to experience core drives. There are six core drives...

5. Finding Love On X

*How is the love of your life going to find you
if you're dressed up as SOMEONE ELSE.*

How do people find love on X?

Aristophanes knew the answer 2,000 years ago, but who cares what a comedian has to say, right?

Everyone from Shakespeare to Charleston White has attempted to define Love...but Aristophanes nailed it. I should know; I'm divorced...

6. Getting Hired On X

If you're a debt collector in the favor economy, you're doing it wrong. - Anon.

Capitalism is built on the Favor Economy.

Most sales are made by people who just happened to do a favor for the right person at the right time. I've gotten all of my clients in the past few years by doing work for them for free that provides so much value that they don't want me to stop. And when they don't want me to stop, we discuss the figure for the first invoice.

You can leverage the favor economy by doing favors.

KC just made \$150 from a favor...

7. Selling On X

You're selling to an amygdala dressed in drag.

As Klaff said, when you first encounter an animal in the wild, you have to decide whether you're going to:

1. Eat it
2. Fight it OR
3. Fuck it

Same thing applies when you're in a sales situation...

8. Channeling The Ancients On 𐍚

I wanted to study cognition unpolluted by language - Dr. Herb Roitblat

The blockchain? You mean Indra's net.

Sequencing the Genetic Code? You mean the I-Ching.

Strategy? You mean The Art of War.

Dr. Fernando Castro-Chavez told me that the fifth industrial revolution would occur when we combined our fourth industrial technology with the wisdom hidden in our ancient manuscripts.

He wasn't wrong...

9. The Game Of X

Twitter is a game...so don't hate the player...

When people talk about gamification, they usually center their discussions around PBLs - Points, Badges, and Leaderboards.

And it makes sense why. After all, consider that Twitter is a game...

THE VILLAINS YOU'LL MEET ON X

*If God grants you the ability to turn a curse into a blessing,
then wander the land collecting curses.*

Walk the dual path; hope and soothe.

- Bob Cactaur

1. The Troll

When you give them what they want, they won't know what to do with themselves.

The first villain you're going to face as a social engineer on X is The Troll.

The Troll is someone who wants to disrupt the social experience by pitting your friends against each other. As my Trini teacher told me, "Not all grin teet' is ah smile."

Here's the secret: you can turn a destroyer into a creator. You can turn a Griefer into an Influencer.

What a Troll wants is CHANGE. And so, if you can transform their destructive tendencies towards creation, they'll often rise to be the most influential people on your team.

So the next time someone tries to troll you and disrupt your conversation...give them what they want. If you give them what they want, you can give them what they need later on.

Have you ever heard of bait? It's a very effective technique in jiu-jitsu...

2. The Know It All

The Way that can be spoken is not The True Way. - Tao Te Ching

A lot of people will tell you how IT ALL IS. Idiots. As if you could stuff the nature of reality into 26 letters strung in logical order. Truly, the Know-It-All's can be a formidable villain. They've never considered what Hitchens realized a long time ago,

Perhaps the universe is stranger than we can suppose. - Hitchens

The Ancient Chinese had a completely different way at looking at the nature of things than Westerners. Ask any Marketer in America and they'll tell you the way you tell a story is by following the Hero's Journey by Joseph Campbell...but there's another way to tell a story...

3. The Penguin

Language disguises thoughts. - Wittgenstein

Penguins are people who waddle down wall street.

These Penguins are ALL OVER THE PLACE On \mathbb{X} , and they're the WOOOOOORST.

Most of the time, they're not interested in a dialogue but rather a pitiless monologue. They trade fact after fact after fact, never getting anywhere.

Many people complain about the economy, the culture, AI...all shit they have zero control over.

If only they knew how to separate the things they can control and the things they cannot control.

In business, like in life, there are the things you can and the things you cannot control. It'd be wise to figure out which is which.

In business, here are the things you can control...

4. The False Profit

Don't be fooled by your doctrine of metaphor frameworks. - Dr. Whetsel

Tesla. Turing. Genghis Khan.

The Great Person Theory says that every now and then, a great person comes along and single-handedly changes the world. Maybe you're that great person.

It's a hopeful theory. Maybe I can change the world! If I read enough biographies, maybe I too can change the world! An internal locus of control, the nerds call it.

The other theory about history is the exact opposite of The Great Person Theory.

The other theory about history is called The Trends & Forces Theory of history. It states that people are merely pawns in history, subject to the evolution of the species.

In simpler terms, The Trends & Forces Theory of history states that if it wasn't Elon Musk, it would've been Delon Dusk. If Steve Jobs never came back from India, another person would've taken his place at the head of Bapple.

But wait...another theory about history has emerged...

5. The Bitcoiner

Even The Garden Of Eden wasn't complete without a python.

The Bitcoin People on X are the WOOOOOORST.

They really think that Bitcoin is going to bring back The Garden Of Eden. Riiight.

Even The Garden Of Eden wasn't complete without a python.

Eventually, the digital currencies prophets will begin explaining where value comes from, and that's where brains go to do.

But it's a good question...where does value come from? Why is money worth something?

Jesus...where do I start.

I could start with The Creature From Jekyll Island...OK let's start there. The Federal Reserve was created in December 1913.

Need I say more.

I could start with the Rule of 72, which shows you how leverage sinks Titanics...

6. The Ascot-Wearer

Philosophy – [and Religion] – begin and end in Wonder. ~ Whitehead

The philosophy and religion people on X are the WOOOOORST.

If you want to see what happens when nerds get power, listen to them argue about philosophy and religion. They're so interested in dominating each other that they forget they're supposed to convert.

Maybe they think that by embarrassing someone with knowledge they can create a convert. I guess even a broken clock can be right twice a day I guess.

In the end, *Philosophy begins and ends in wonder. - Alfred North Whitehead*

You could probably say the same thing for religion. Religion begins and ends in wonder, too.

The purpose of philosophy and religion are the same...

7. The Scientist

Beware The Oblivious Olympics.

The scientists on X are the WOOOOORST.

They think they can get closer to the truth by arguing about it. I mean, it worked for Socrates, right? Yes and no, because there's a difference between knowledge and application, known by the nerds as the gulf between techne and episteme. There's a difference between knowing about something and knowing how to do something. And the people who don't know how to do something ARE OFTEN THE LOUDEST VOICES IN THE ROOM.

So the next time a prophet on X is telling you when the sky is going to fall, when Bitcoin is going to go up in price, or how World War III is going to start, remember that the way that can be spoken is not the true way. And the only science worth doing is running an experiment,

We'd be good to remember that,

Science is not done by consensus. - Planck...

8. The Professor

Overcoming Bloom's Two-Sigma Problem

Learning how to code SUCKS.

It's the WOOOOOOORST.

And it's the worst for a reason.

Without a tutor, studies show that we learn VERY SLOWLY.

So, if you've ever tried to learn how to code and failed...have you ever considered finding a tutor?

"But where am I going to find a tutor?"

That's easy - on X...

9. The Thankless

Beware The Messiah Complex

I once helped someone.

And helped and helped and helped.

And it was never good enough.

Learn from my mistakes. Beware of The Messiah Complex..

10. The Sage On The Stage

SHADDAAAPPPPPPPPP...

AI is going to...VR is going to...Data Gravity is going to...Blockchain is going to... You've heard these conversations before. They're the WOOOORSSSSSTTTT...

They're the WOOOORRRRSSTTT because the future is not to be predicted; the future is to be achieved. - Tapscott

Folks try to be NostrAldamus because it gives them the feeling of being a Secular Preacher...

11. The Nostradamus

SHADDDAAAAAAPPPPP....

So you think you know the future.

Lemme guess: you know the future and want to tell me ALL ABOUT IT.

SHADDAAAAAAPPPPPPPPP.

You don't know shit about shit. First of all, logic is only as effective as your access to information.

What does that mean? It means that even if you have the right equation, you're probably using imperfect values. It's like trying to calculate the area of a triangle with wrong measurements...

12. The Drug Lord

We don't die from what kills us; we die from what keeps us alive. - Quinn C. Martin

You have to be very careful with this one.

If you ever find yourself in a fight, before you go all haywire, ask yourself this one, simple question, "Am I talking to someone under the influence of stimulants?"

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13. What Are They Doing Here?

We don't die from what kills us; we die from what keeps us alive. - Quinn C. Martin

Why the hell are people on X in the first place?

Where do our desires come from?

Girard would say that we don't choose our desires, but rather observe the desires that OTHER people have, and COPY them by copying their desires.

Maslow would say that we progress from desire to desire, from desiring food to security to love to self-esteem and then self-actualization...whatever that means.

Others would say that our desires are driven by the fungus in our brain.

Veblen would say that we have a core desire to convert our work time into leisure time. He says that we act as if The Garden Of Eden is a world where we don't work anymore and eat fruit all day...

14. So You Think YOU'VE Got It Bad

SHAADDAAAAAPPPPP....

I think we're trying to tell everyone that risk cannot be destroyed; risk can only be transformed.

As much as it might be easy to despair because of all the negative environmental externalities, I think it's important to remember that all of us are essentially facing the same negative externalities. The race is still going; whoever crosses that finish line is who we're going to talk about, and everybody else, we won't talk. Now, we ask ourselves...what do I need to do to generate revenue on X?

Now, I can go into goals, objectives, plans, strategies, and tactics. I could talk about target market segmentation or the six environments, like the political, economic, socio-cultural,, technological, competitive, geographic...look: you could have a PhD in business, but if you do not believe in yourself and believe that you personally have control over your own situation, I'm not sure what education can do for you.

I see a lot of people that are coming to this country for the first time, and they have more hope in their eyes than the people who have been here for a long time. There's a saying, 'History is filled with the sounds of silk slippers going downstairs and wooden shoes coming up.' There are people who have prepared themselves for this moment and those who have not.

There's no easy way to prepare someone for the fourth industrial revolution overnight because software has eaten the world. So, how do you bank now that software has eaten the world? How do you build a career now that software has eaten the world? A lot of people think they should become a data scientist. Sure, we could become software engineers; sure, we could become data scientists. But I think when things get so confused, our compass is turning, and sometimes we forget to strike that balance between what the market wants and what our soul needs. I don't think there is an easy balance there, but I know you can't be on any one extreme for too long.

So again, if you feel you are at a disadvantage now, you are probably right. But I'm sure you wouldn't want to trade positions with someone who may not be where you are, who may not have access to Wi-Fi.

We have never been presented with so many threats, but just like energy, the value is not being destroyed; value is changing hands. If you're going to go somewhere, your mentor should be someone who has gone there already. And you can find that Mentor - Talismans included - on X. They'll help you defend yourself against the villains you never knew existed.

15.The Extrovert

Don't waste your breath...

Beware the extrovert. They're not interested in buying...they're just lonely...