

POWER

I wake up in the morning with an insatiable lust for power. When you move your body along, the days feel long. However, when you live your life on standby, the time will pass you by. Through movement, weightlifting, and sunlight, we increase our will to power.

No one man should have all that power

The clock's ticking, I just count the hours - Kanye West, POWER

Positive mindset

I am becoming one percent more curious each day. I am becoming stronger every single day. Since wearing this weighted vest by Rogue, my posture is strengthening, my feet are becoming stronger, wearing barefoot shoes, my legs, my core, my back, are firing right now. All of my muscles are being triggered as I walk home from the Schuylkill River Trail while writing this essay.

The will to power

I just finished reading the book, *The Will to Power*, by Friedrich Nietzsche. Ultimately, what I've learned is that the will to power is the ultimate aim to strive towards. Happiness is a byproduct of the will to power. The ultimate goal is to overcome yourself, and to increase your power. I believe that power can be both a physical and creative pursuit. Through weightlifting and eating more meat, I'm increasing my physical strength. Absorbing more sunlight, I'm filling my body with more energy. This physiological power ultimately fuels my creativity. As much as photography is a visual game of making compositions, with notions of "layering," fill the frame, frame a frame, leading lines, blah, blah blah, it's also superfluous. It means nothing to me. A photographer is simply responsible for positioning themselves on the front lines of life. This requires courage, heart, and soul. This requires physiological power, and exerting that force in the real world. For the photographer is present, in the moment, physically. As much as it is a mental game,

it is certainly a physical medium. You must increase your physical power, and through that physiological effect, through Power, we can make photographs. As artists, power should be our ultimate aim. We should not deny our bodies, but champion them. For the body is the vessel, the battery, that will get you to those unattainable goals. Maybe striving for an unattainable goal, something extremely lofty, and higher than yourself, is the only way to aim. Upwards.

Keep an open mind

What does it mean to have an open mind and why is this important?

I believe having an open mind is critical in a world where we have many differences. I was born and raised Roman Catholic, attended a Catholic school, but I've also prayed in a synagogue in Jerusalem, learned about Islam and slept on the floors of mosques in Jericho, participated in the Seventh Day Adventist church in Zambia, explored Buddhist temples in Vietnam, and even celebrated Holi in Mumbai, India. I believe having an open and curious mindset is critical because it will unlock new experiences and opportunities for you to learn and grow. I think sometimes we get caught up with one way being the only way, with narrowmindedness plaguing most people due to dogma, tradition, and personal convictions. However, by letting go of anything that you think you know, and simply going forward with this curious and open mind, you'll be surprised at what you will find. However, after all of my traveling and experiencing life, despite our differences, I believe we are more similar.

While I grew up with mostly Caucasian people in my neighborhood, I would spend my summer days at my grandmother's house in West Philadelphia, with 100% African-Americans. My brother and I were always the only Caucasian kids on the block. We attended block parties, birthday parties, played football on the lawn, walked to the papi store, ate water ice together, and never really thought anything of it. There was never a time in my youth where I considered the color of other people's skin, and the differences between these two colors. For color is a funny notion, and you hear this thrown around a lot these days, right? People of color... why do we even think this way? To me, color merely separates us and divides us. I

believe that we are all people of color, with all different shades. I think we need to go beyond color, our differences, and these basic notions of identity. When I consider the idea of the United States, united as one, we are the American race. The American people. Maybe it's best for us to identify with our nation, and stop separating us based on our "color." I see a middle ground, between red and blue, left or right, black and white, and find peace in purple.

Matrix

We off the grid grid grid grid grid.

Life is a cyberpunk dystopian video game. Let's consider when you start a new game, like cyberpunk. Your characters are typically naked, and you build them from the ground up. Let's go back to that naked state, carte blanche, and design our character again. In cyberpunk, you can actually choose to play as multiple characters, and play the same game over and over again. The game will give you a different ending, depending on the quest you embark on, and the things that you do within the game itself. Design your character from the ground up. Let's start with the shoes, and remove them. What about the shirt? Remove that. Go naked, we came into this world without shoes, let's leave without shoes! Become an ascetic warrior.

Now that your character is primal, let's focus on those stat points. Let's increase the strength to the maximum it can potentially be. Let's become a tank, like Blitzcrank in League of Legends. I remember when I used to play League of Legends I would play as the tankiest character, the most heavyweight, the most impenetrable and indestructible character in the game. I would arm him, and send him down the middle lane, taking all of the shots. I would absorb all the hit points, but allow my teammates to take out the enemy for me. I'll take all of the arrows, I'll take all of the shots, I'll be the tank.

Eat meat

A few months ago, I was inside one of those salad bars where people get lunch. They smell like dirty, stinky socks, and a locker room. It's so gross inside. I don't know why, but any of these restaurants and places that have these assembly lines where they construct a meal for you and put it in a plastic bowl are just disgusting. Think of Chipotle, or a salad bar place. Why do we eat stinky slop?

What is the fastest way to increase your power? Firstly, sunlight, secondly, walking or weightlifting, and thirdly, sleep. However, we must consider what we consume more. The more meat you eat, the deeper sleep you will receive, and the more power and energy you will wake up with in the morning. Go to the Halteman farm in the Reading Terminal Market, purchase a pound of beef liver, it's around \$2.50. Also, if you buy 3 pounds of ground beef, it only costs \$20. Just see how much you can eat before you go to sleep. Fast all day, and wait till the end of the day to eat. Let's get the Genghis Khan gains.

Nocturnal

So what is the number one source of power inside of a man's physiological makeup? Perhaps our semen. Let's not release it. For over two years now, I haven't released one time, no pr0n, no fap. I think this is one of the hardest things for young men to overcome. Just think, an orgasm is literally five seconds of pleasure, a little bit of gooey stuff that comes out of an orifice. Stop blowing your load, blowing your energy, and conserve it. Just allow the overflowing power you conserve to release through nocturnal emissions instead. Stop allowing hedonistic and grotesque women on a screen to control your physiology.

Is hell real?

"You're gonna be burning in fire forever!" says the Bible thumper.

I think we should be skeptical of anybody who takes the Bible too literally. While Dante had his fun with the Divine Comedy, describing his inferno, I don't believe in it. I feel as though hell, eternal torment, was something utilized as a threat during medieval times, to keep the peasants in line. With the threat of hell, everybody would be their most virtuous selves, which may seem good on paper. However, with this threat of hell, I believe it introduces notions of guilt, shame, and fear. We should be skeptical of anything that promotes these ideas of shame, guilt, and fear. Fear of hell, fear of death, there is no such thing. We will live here, in this world, as imperfect souls, striving for greatness, but without the fear of this fiery burning hell. For me, hell doesn't exist. Hell is for the king, the tyrant, the person that will inevitably get out of line with their power. The threat of hell is needed to keep a king in check.

Osmosis

Think of a plant and how one small seed is buried under the soil. As the water pours from heaven above, the small seed is filled with nutrients that it needs to grow, survive, and thrive. When the soil is nice and damp, the plants can then absorb these vital nutrients. As the plants grow, and the water flows, they stand upright, tall, looming into the sky. Without water, the plants would not be standing upright.

Like plants, humans stand upright and tall. We need water as a vital source of vitality. Water is needed for every cell in your body to function properly. Let us not forget that our body is comprised of these cells. As we drink water, the nutrients are carried throughout all the different cells in your body. Water will give your body energy, keeping your body happy, which inevitably will allow you to think clearly.

Strong body, strong mind.

Let's go back to that childlike state, and create anew. Go back to the small seed, and grow again. Plant your roots deep, and give your body the nutrients it needs.

Stop caring about what other people think about you

Thinking about shame, guilt, and fear, it's best that we set aside what other people think about us. Just stop caring. Let the chips fall as they may, and let go. When you detach yourself from other people's perceptions of you, you can become your true and authentic self.

"I don't need your pussy, bitch, I'm on my own dick." - Kanye West, POWER

Just forget about all the boring social norms, and restrictions people set on themselves. Speak your mind more. Do you.

Life is outside your door

Embodied reality is real reality. Real life is outside of your door. Step outside into the unknown, and champion this life that we live. When I wake up in the morning, before the sunrise, I'm going forward with power. I'm up before the power, our sun, is up. And when I wait for it to rise, and I stand firmly in Logan Square, watching the waterfall pour over, and the sun beaming beyond the horizon by the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, and it enters my eyes, I'm absorbing all of the sun's power.

The world is ours.

DANTE