

Become the Übermensch

Become your own hero.

In a world of mediocrity, it is time to give birth to the Overman, the Superman, the **Übermensch**.

In Friedrich Nietzsche's book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, he introduces the concept of the Übermensch, or Overman, as a call to action for humanity. The Übermensch represents an individual who has transcended the limitations of conventional morality and societal norms to create their own values and purpose. Nietzsche urges us to overcome our basic and weak nature, to rise above mere survival, and to strive for greatness through the development of our creativity, power, and individuality. The Übermensch embodies the highest potential of human existence, living life with strength, courage, and authenticity.

Perhaps God is dead, but now is the time for us to give rise to Zarathustra.

Overcome Yourself for Yourself

I start each morning on a walk, in nature, as a hike up the cliff, behind the Philadelphia Museum of Art. I stand on the edge of the cliff, gazing at the horizon, watching the waterfall and the ripple of the waves in the river. I stand on the edge; the wind could push me off, a bee could sting me in the back of my neck, a spider could startle me, or even an eagle could swoop down and push me off. Consider an eagle, the apex predator in the sky, the symbol of America, and the way in which it kills its prey, a goat on the cliffside. The eagle needs to use zero force, simply nudging the goat off its balance, allowing it to fall to its death, by simply nudging it, and then feasting on the meat at the bottom of the cliff. The eagle is clever, strategic, and knows how to pick its battles. Like the eagle, humans too have ingenuity, we have wits, and ways of using technology or tools to kill our prey, and to show dominance amongst the animal kingdom. So, with this in mind, let us strive to become the eagle, the apex predator, the new king of the streets.

Show Me Your Body, Show Me Your Soul

Our bodies are our souls. With this in mind, how should we treat our bodies? How should we elevate this human, physical form, to a transcendental height?

I believe that when you look at somebody, you are looking at their soul. Our bodies are merely a holographic projection of our human experience, decisions, and choices we make along our journey. Our soul is on display, so let's treat our bodies this way, by making it the strongest and most beautiful version that it can possibly be.

During my recent trip to Florence, I found admiration for the sculptures of Hercules, Achilles, and David. When you gaze at these sculptures, these heroes, both biblical and in ancient Greek mythology, it prompts the viewer to strive to become like the demigod. When I look at the sculpture of Achilles dead in the arms of Ajax, it reminds me of the permanent nature of life, and death can be a beautiful aspect of our human existence. When I see the physical form of Hercules, it prompts me to strive to become strong, hard, and courageous as Hercules during his 12 labors, overcoming my own personal challenges.

Think of Hercules as he came to the rescue of Prometheus, who was wrestling with the eagle. Prometheus was punished by Zeus to have an eagle eat his liver eternally. Hercules, during his labors, came to the rescue of Prometheus, conquering the eagle, and freeing this immortal god. Hercules, son of Zeus, was a demigod. I say, let's become the demigod in the flesh and give rise to the Übermensch. The only difference between us and Hercules is our labors are our lives, our mundane world, our banal existence in modernity. We overcome nihilism through the pursuit of greatness and conquer ourselves instead of the eagle.

Tune Out the Noise

Most chatter is radio static, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Tune it all out—all of the gossip, celebrity news, media, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Focus on the moment right here, right now. Listen to your heart, the sound of the heartbeat, the churning of your gut, and trust your instincts.

Let's focus on our passion, photography, and our creative pursuits as our ultimate aim in life. Art gives life meaning and affirms the moments that are fleeting. However, we must recognize that strong street photography requires discipline and long-term commitment. How can we focus to the maximum on this passion of ours?

The street photographer requires a free schedule with no distractions. The ultimate goal is for us to have no social obligations, to focus all of our efforts on our creative pursuits, and to tune out the noise. Just tune it all out, turn the channel onto your own heart, and follow the beat of the street. The noise of chaos, cars honking, people screaming, and urban life becomes music to our ears.

Sunlight and Testosterone

If you're a depressed man, what should you do?

I remember during the COVID-19 lockdown pandemic, I was working from home, working in Zoom calls, and doing tedious computer work. It was very tiresome, to be honest, and put me into a bit of a depression for a while. I basically never saw sunlight throughout the day and was eating processed junk from the store nearby because it was the quickest way for me to get food and go right back to work, as time was of the essence, and I basically had no time to live my life. I was a slave, and through being stuck inside, in a box, staring at a box all day, it certainly messes with the hormones of any man. Think of a man, as we have testes, two balls, that dangle between our legs. We must be most critical about the hormones that we possess as men, our testosterone. If you ever feel yourself depressed, anxious, or mentally uneasy, believe me, I've been there, and it's normal. It's very easy for mold, depression, because when our testosterone levels are low, you'll instantly feel low. However, we can elevate and go higher through increasing our testosterone levels. It's actually very simple. If you feel depressed, just don't do anything stupid, stop moaning and groaning, and get some sunlight. Spend the maximum amount of time you can in the sun, eat red meat, and get good sleep. It sounds so simple, but it is true. If you're a depressed man, let's pull ourselves up from it, and go upwards, endlessly, recognizing the importance of testosterone and sunlight, and how we can focus on our hormonal state of being.

Make Things for Yourself and One Other Person

When it comes to our creative pursuits, whatever they may be, we should create for ourselves and one other person. Don't worry about an audience or any external validation for your work. Just focus on the process itself and continue producing each day. This is my way of overcoming myself, through creating for myself and challenging myself each and every day. Even by writing right here, right now, I'm challenging myself to make something, to write something, just for the sake of doing it, so that I'd become in tune with this process and improve over time. If one other person finds anything I say useful, so be it. If not, I will still be pushing onwards, doing what I love, simply because I enjoy the process itself.

Have you ever seen that episode of Black Mirror where everybody is running on treadmills, locked into this strange compound, grinding to get points so that they can finally go onto the show, which was essentially like American Idol or America's Got Talent, called "Hot Shot," to prove themselves to the audience so they can finally be famous? It was called "Fifteen Million Merits." You would see these outrageous scenes where these fat guys are running on treadmills, watching pornography, and actually even one of the characters, when she finally gets to the show, and has a really talented voice and is a good singer, is pressured to become a porn star instead.

I think we're living in that right now, in a very funny way, and it can be drawn metaphorically to the current landscape of social media use. If you remember the outcome of the episode, that one man grinds all of his points just to go on and threaten himself with a shard of glass to his neck while on the show, giving a monologue about how exploitative and oppressive the system is, and trying to motivate everybody within the system to wake up. The irony is, at the end of the episode, the judges coerce him to continue giving his monologues about the explicit and oppressive system, by making him have his own show, as he now lives in luxury as a part of the system.

What if we can use our voice to break through the glass ceiling, or to smash through the wall of the Truman Show? Just get a GoPro, and start using your freedom of speech, stop censoring yourself, and become your authentic self. Let's be like the protagonist in that episode of Black Mirror, but not sell our soul to the oppressive system. Have you ever seen the first video on YouTube that was ever published? It's

titled, “Me at the Zoo.” It features one of the creators and founders of YouTube, simply filming himself for 15 seconds, describing how he’s at the zoo, next to an elephant, and how they have really big trunks. The video ends abruptly, and that’s it. It’s the most simple and rudimentary video possible. However, if we were to return to the ethos of the creator’s vision for YouTube itself: sharing your authentic and unique perspective through unfiltered, raw videos, sharing memories and thoughts. I find that YouTube is becoming stale and stagnant, with the same old creators popping up, feeding the algorithms with these clickbait titles, and stupid videos about camera gear and the drama of photography. It’s so obvious that people are making things for views or money. Let’s assume that everybody on the internet is a bot. Would you want bots commenting and liking your videos? No, if you are to make things, simply make things for the sake of making things. Disable all analytics, all likes, and all comments. We are going into a future that is unknown to us, with the wake of artificial intelligence. I believe in a future of social media being backed by the Bitcoin standard itself, where individual users must make a deposit of satoshis, a fraction of a Bitcoin, to verify that they are a real user. This way, there is skin in the game for each user, and we can trust and verify the authenticity of internet users. Think of the 2016 election, and the infiltration of bots and fake accounts promoting all of this news, and causing division, throughout Facebook comments and other social media platforms. We should go forward assuming all of the content on the internet is fake until we adopt a new standard for the internet. We finally have the capability with the advent of Bitcoin.

No More Complaining

Yesterday, during my walk, I was speaking to some youth on the top of the Philadelphia Museum of Art steps. They were smoking weed and, after a conversation, complaining that they cannot buy anything, buy property, or even own a house one day. They were saying that BlackRock or Vanguard owns all the properties and were pretty pessimistic overall that they will never own anything in their lifetime. In this capitalist society, we must find our escape hatch, our life raft, to get us out of these dire situations. Don’t be pessimistic, but be bullish and optimistic, realizing the potential of technology and how we can wield the future in the palm of our hands. I’ve been spending the last few months studying Bitcoin. I remember during my walk on Market Street, at the beginning of this year, January 2024, seeing the announcement from an electronic billboard promoting the Bitcoin

ETF, which you can purchase now through your bank. After hours of research and reading, I've realized that Bitcoin may be the answer to the problem our generation is currently facing: ownership. The banks own the homes, and we basically own nothing; this is obvious. However, think of the immigrants coming from Europe to Ellis Island in New York City, probably some of your ancestors, and how they pulled themselves up from these situations, going from the bottom to the top. Think of the men and women who purchased property in New York City, and now have long-standing generational wealth. Isn't that what we want, generational wealth? Imagine if we could buy property like this, a block in Manhattan? If we could, and it was easier than ever before? Just buy Bitcoin.

Let's face it, the economy is obviously on the decline, but maybe instead of sitting around and whining about it, we can do something about it and invest in the future. I hear people talk about how they're never going to have a family one day because they cannot afford to be comfortable while raising a child. It's becoming really sad to me when I hear these things, and it's such a nihilistic and pessimistic view. Let's do whatever we can, and put whatever small amounts we can into a true scarce asset: digital property.

Think about gold and how it used to back our United States dollar. This is no longer the case, as we can print money to infinity. It's obvious that the currency is basically fake at this point, as the government has control over how much they can print out whenever they feel like it. Also, if someone were to announce today that an ounce of gold will be worth \$1 million, obviously legions will form, people will get together, and go out there into the world, mining for gold all day. We will infinitely find more gold. Gold is not a real scarce asset. There's bound to be gold out there somewhere on this earth. You could keep finding it, making it not a true scarce asset.

Also, imagine traveling from place to place, with a suitcase full of gold bars. This is such an old and outdated form of wealth or capital that we must move on from. However, Bitcoin is a true scarce asset because it is cryptographically sound. Humanity has finally reached this evolution, this point in technological history, where we even have the capability and supercomputers to create such a technology. This is why most people don't understand Bitcoin, because they think of it like video game money, but the irony is, our fiat currency is the same thing. The only difference is, Bitcoin gives the power to the people, and nobody can control your money; it's the first time in human history that you can actually own your own

property without any intermediaries. Visit hope.com, or michael.com, and watch the 17-part series on what is money. Also, read The Bitcoin Standard if you're interested.

So what's next for us?

Let's strive to become the real life embodied Übermensch.

"I am a god. Even though I'm a man of God. My whole life in the hand of God. So y'all better quit playing with God." – Kanye West If you haven't already, read Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Buy a weighted vest, barefoot shoes, and start walking early in the morning, as a way for you to increase your strength. Think of Goku, and the way that he trained with weights, sprinting with the vest on. Let's go super Saiyan, in real life, and give birth to the new pantheon of demigods. We the Hercules, the new Achilles.

Meet me in the center of the divine, in the middle of the Wanamaker Building, and listen to the World's largest playing pipe organ with me. Bring an iPad, if you want feedback on your photos, or a free workshop on photography.

Just meet at the Eagle, any day except for Sunday at 5:30pm.