

I'm the Main Character

A few months ago, I had somebody ask me, "Why do you think you're the main character?"

He was playfully asking because he always notices me creating something—whether I'm making a photo, video, writing, or reading when I'm on my breaks at work. I'm always doing push-ups and yoga at any chance I get, and I'm basically just always in motion.

As we were talking, I was trying to explain to him that **you too are the main character**, and that you should embody that, man. What—you wanna be an NPC? He was a gamer, so he definitely understands where I'm coming from. But really, at the end of the day, **we're all born into this world alone, and we leave this world alone**. The only thing that you take with you are the experiences you've had, the memories and wisdom you've gained along your journey, and your relationship with God.

Don't Be Jealous Because I'm Just Doing Me

What I've realized is that as my relationship with God grows—each and every day for years now—I become so empowered, and this feeling of being the main character increases more and more.

When you realize how trivial everything is, how short our life is, and how your relationship with God is the only and most important thing in your life, then everything else becomes either a purpose or a distraction.

Validation from others, critique from others, whether they approve or disapprove of you, whether they say negative or positive things—**genuinely none of it affects you at all**.

It's not out of a sense of apathy—it's almost a deep sense of empathy. You just want

other people to feel this love and joy in their hearts. You want people to simply focus on themselves—and for **each person to become a main character**, rather than sitting on the sidelines as an audience member or a spectator of life.

Don't Let Life Happen to You

This morning, I'm watching Logan Square Fountain, and it's kind of overflowed because of the rain—there's a lot of flooding going on around the edges of the street.

Well, I think it's important to just go with the flow, to hop in the stream of life and enter the stream of becoming: **the revolution, transformation, and change**. Perhaps the true way to do this is to *go against the grain*. You gotta kind of push yourself upstream, as everyone else is going the same way.

My favorite way to do this is by cranking the grain to the max and all the contrast in my camera settings to the absolute maximum, haha.

As everyone is going that way—I've always just wanted to go this way.

Yes, I'm a contrarian by nature, but I think that's what makes me so great.

Why Kill Your Ego?

There was a student in my yoga class who was really frustrated because the teacher was critiquing him about his posture and what he was doing in class. It was all new to him. As he was frustrated, I was trying to explain that you gotta **kill your ego** in this kind of class.

And I genuinely meant that in the moment.

Because ultimately when you're practicing yoga, and you have to do new movements, and you're trying to learn, of course you have to be disciplined. There have to be some sort of rules and guidelines. You have to obey the teacher and make sure you're doing things in proper form.

I think most guys there are just weightlifters and don't actually have the strength or mobility to do all these different kinds of yoga or mobility movements.

Yesterday, I did a mobility class and all the stuff I was learning was completely new—and there were these small women doing these crazy movements and stuff that I could never dream of doing. I was like, **what the heck—how do they do this?!** But it's a completely different game, and you kinda have to kill your ego and not feel the shame.

However, *why* kill your ego?

I think it's important to have a healthy relationship with your ego.

For instance, **I want to become the best that I can be.**

Ego means "I." So if you want to empower yourself, why not think highly of yourself?

I know that I'm the best at what I do.

Stop Focusing on What You Don't Have

I think one of the biggest tragedies and downfalls of social media is comparison. Most people look at social media and compare what they don't have to other people—whether it's someone traveling the world, or someone who has a material thing you desire, or a lifestyle.

You dwell on it, and pretty much feel jealousy in your heart because of it. This is very natural. Comparison is definitely normal—but it's definitely not healthy.

I think it's really important to **just focus on what you have, rather than what you don't have. Just be grateful.**

Once you have gratitude for the simple things in life—like the ability to stand upright, to walk, to see, to hear, to feel the sun on your skin, to have clean water in a cup and meat in your fridge—everything else is in abundance.

Start becoming more grateful for the small things in life.

Start to be like the birds—who fly in the sky without a care in the world, who have everything provided for them by God.

The birds aren't out there comparing themselves to other birds, wondering why their wingspan is larger, or why their nests are better.

The birds are simply enjoying their day, flying about, nibbling on fruits from the trees.

The birds are grateful to have a tree, a canopy to dwell in, and the open sky to roam.

I feel like these birds.

Grateful to simply have an endless expanse, an open world for me to walk upon—and to photograph.

Victory or Nothing

So if you were the main character in the video game, aren't you gonna want to **beat the boss and win?**

I don't understand this lame mindset and desire to be the NPC in the shop, who just has the same line to say over and over again.

I know it sounds harsh and rude to think this way about most people—but it's true.

The modern world is carving out a system of mediocrity.

Just look at the public schools and the way they indoctrinate the youth as they grow older. Everyone's taught the same silly things and comes out with the same silly desires.

Stop dwelling on the outcomes and the destinations that other people have arrived at.

Start treating yourself like the main character, on your own quest, on your own journey, that is uniquely yours.

You don't have to do the same things as everyone else.

You don't have to get the same job.

Your path is not the same as others.

For instance, my path might be one of the most unconventional of anyone I know. I don't know anyone else who has lived with both Israelis and Palestinians, slept on their mosque floors, wandered throughout the desert of Jericho learning about Islam—while also milking cows on a kibbutz in Israel, learning about horticulture, which now inspires me to practice this as my current passion and job in daily life.

Or my journey to Zambia—sleeping under thatched roofs, documenting baptisms and funerals, working in fish farms, creating youth groups, and praying with the Seventh-day Adventists in their churches.

All of the things I've done in my life are simply due to **my inner curiosity, my inner child.**

When I was a little kid, I spent my time in the Wissahickon Forest on my own—building teepees with sticks, bridges with stones, and simply exploring the unknown.

I was always someone who loved adventure, who thrived in solitude, and who took the path less traveled.

Speaking of going against the grain—I would literally, as a little kid, create my own trails and blaze out my own paths in the forest.

So the moral of the story is:

You kinda have to return to being a child again.

In all actuality, you gotta really be in tune with your inner child—that little kid inside you that just wants to come out and play. But everything around you is trying to suck that out of you.

And so by following my little kid, my inner child—everything has come to me in abundance.

Everything is beautiful again, and everything has worked out exactly how it

should—because I followed my inner child.

That inner child *is* the main character.

That divine spark connected to God.

That wants you to go out there...

and have the adventure of your lifetime—

on the frontlines of life.