

What Do You Truly Desire in Life?

So this morning, I'm thinking about desire—and what it is that I truly want from life itself. The thing is, when you think about *desire*, it's typically about longing for something that you don't currently have, which can maybe become a problem. However, recognizing exactly what you truly desire—what you truly want out of your life—is perhaps a good idea. That way, you can make a roadmap to get there.

And so when I look at the word *desire*, it derives from:

desiderare — “to be without your star” or “to miss the stars.”

I find this interesting because the more I contemplate my desire—what I truly want, seek, and hope for in life—it's actually all about following a guiding star... the sun.

My Ultimate Goal: Never Miss Another Sunrise Again

The other day, I sat on a bench talking to a stranger about my ultimate desire: to stand upright, never miss another sunrise again, and walk toward the light perpetually throughout my lifetime. When I said it, it sounded like it would be a cliché response, but the more I think about it, the more it is genuinely an authentic expression of my desire and what I see in life.

Like for instance, as I'm writing this essay right now, I'm walking and voice dictating, heading toward Logan Square's fountain because I know that this is the exact time of day, at the exact place, that I can actually catch the sunrise peering above the horizon and allow it to emanate in my eyes.

My philosophy behind never missing another sunrise is simple: it's all about my will to power.

Photography Is My Will to Power

And so as a photographer, of course I'm drawn to the sunrise—it's naturally beautiful and a great time of day to photograph. However, I think it goes beyond the aesthetic beauty of the sunrise and more so toward the *philosophy* of being simply eager and curious about life itself.

I find that the more I'm in tune with my intuition and curiosity, the more joy I find in life. And the more joy and love I have for life itself, the more I'm gonna be waking up early just to catch the sunrise.

This is my will to power.

Waking up for the sunrise, bringing my camera along for the ride, and Snapchattin' my way through life.

Stop Waking Up to the Alarm Clock

One of the weird modern-day phenomenons is waking up to an alarm clock. Just become in tune with the sun. Rise with the sun and sleep with the sun. It's very simple...

Just eat one hour before the sun sets. And then, when the sun is setting—going beyond the horizon—you should be naturally falling asleep at that time. Whatever that time is, it doesn't really matter. What matters is that you're allowing the sun to illuminate through your eyes right before it dips, and this will set your circadian rhythm.

You will then naturally wake up and probably even have really vivid dreams, at the perfect time that your body needs to rise.

And then, when you rise without an alarm clock, you have this abundance of energy. And then when you're finished taking your shower and shaving and shit, by the time you go outside, it's gone—and there's the sunrise.

You really do set your body up in the perfect sort of way when you just align with the light and align with the sun.

And so once again, my ultimate aim and desire—*golden life*—is simply to never miss another sunrise again. Because I find that when you align with the sunlight, literally everything else falls into place.

Without vitality, there is no curiosity. Without curiosity, there is no enthusiasm.

Become Possessed by God

The word *enthusiasm* derives from:

enthousiasmos — “*having a god within*” or “*being filled with the divine.*”

And honestly, doesn't this make sense? When you're enthusiastic and eager and smiling and joyous and full of power, there's this feeling that is very *divine* that flows from within. And then ultimately, through photography, I make an outward projection of that enthusiasm through my images.

If you're not waking up enthusiastic—eager for the day, eager for the sunrise—why would life even be worth living?

Prioritize Your Physical Vitality

The reason why I'm so big on weightlifting, vitality, eating clean, fasting, etc.—it's because as a photographer, I recognize how *physical* the medium is. Our goal should be to simply be able to stand upright and walk throughout the entirety of our day.

And so I highly suggest you pick up the Vibram Five Finger EL-X Knit version shoes—because ever since I started wearing these about 2 ½ years ago, I’ve become so much stronger, and can walk way longer distances.

Not to mention, they slow you down.

You have this tactile feel about the surfaces you walk on, and it feels like you become much more connected to the ground, the earth, *everything*.

It may sound woo woo, but seriously, it puts you in this meditative state when you’re walking and you *feel* everything.

Eat Like a King

One of my life hacks that I’m starting to think more critically about is meat—and why you should only purchase the highest quality meat. And so, by reaching out to a local Amish farmer, going directly to their farm, actually meeting them in person—specifically in Lancaster, Pennsylvania—you’re gonna be getting the highest quality meat you can possibly find in the country.

The Amish have been using the same farming practices for centuries. This is why I trust the Amish more than any other farmers. Not to mention, they’re just such great people.

I’ve got my Rogue squat rack with pull-up bar and dip bar at home, my Nuobell adjustable dumbbell setup—and a big deep freezer behind my couch where my home gym is. It’s like 14 ft or something, and it fits a full half cow, butchered by the farmer, with cuts of steak, ground beef, burger patties, thinly sliced steaks, liver, iron round roast, chuck roast—just a variety of cuts.

I eat about half a cow every three months. Two cows a year. That’s the move.

People say I’m crazy for fasting all day, not eating breakfast or lunch, or for not enjoying my life because I’m not snacking or buying dumb shit.

But when you think about it—I'm *actually* living and eating like an absolute **fucking king**.

Embrace the Physical and Tactile Nature of Life

When I walk around the streets, I enjoy the feeling of the concrete, the grass, the dirt, the gravel, and all the surfaces around me. I love to pick the flowers, sometimes put them around my ears or in my bag. Pick up leaves, look at them, photograph them, smell things, touch things.

This is a way to unlock new neural pathways.

To cultivate novelty in the mundane.

In this brave new digital world, where everything's becoming digitized, just *experiencing real life* in the open world—with your physical touch, your sounds, your smells, all your senses—you become *more connected* to the present moment and exist outside the passage of time.

Why I'm Becoming More Interested in Metaphysics

Despite my love for the physical, I've been more interested in metaphysics lately.

Like time—it's not necessarily a tangible thing, but it's something we experience in a way. We have clocks. Alarm clocks. I'm looking at the clock at City Hall Tower. The sun rises and sets at certain times... but ultimately, when I'm moving my physical body, observing the fleeting moments, photographing—

I feel like I exist outside the passage of time.

We have a past and a future, but these things aren't of your concern when you're simply embracing the now.

Pick the Flowers and the Leaves

So back to the physical again—and my interest in horticulture, where I tend gardens throughout my day—I have this keen fascination with the flowers and leaves and all the natural things around me.

There's something about the patterns you find in nature—and even in human beings and our biology—that's just so *profound* and *surreal*.

So real, it's not real.

For instance, when you hold a leaf and look at a leaf, I feel like you can see the entire universe in the palm of your hand.

We All Have the Light?

Something changes when you recognize the divine manifestation of God within a human being.

Have you ever looked into someone's eyes and experienced a deep sense of remembrance—almost like anamnesis—where you remember God? Where you remember what *love* is?

Not falling in love or obsession—but *genuinely remembering* what eternal, pure, divine love is?

I've experienced something like this recently. And ever since, I can't unsee the divine nature of human beings.

It's like I can genuinely see a light within somebody when I see their eyes.

Sometimes it's dim. Sometimes it's bright. It's not about eye color. It's something metaphysical. Something intangible.

And maybe God *is* our conscience. Our intuition. The gut feeling. Look at the physical pattern of your gut and brain—how similar they look.

What if God is in our gut?

Becoming vs. Being

In the modern world, we're all trying to *become* something. But what if you just *be*?

Like a bird. A spider. The ocean.

Human beings are the only ones that don't seem to just *be*.

We're always in a state of *becoming*. Striving. Improving. Hustling. Posting. Gaining. Chasing.

But when you let go of all that striving—and instead *volunteer your full authenticity*—you stop trying.

Not because you've lost ambition.

But because you've remembered who you are.

Only Do What You Want To

The path to being?

Only do things that you want to do.

Whatever it is that your intuition tells you—follow that.

Despite what society says. Despite what your mom or your neighbor or your pastor says.

Just follow your heart.

Your Inner Child Leads You to the Kingdom

By following my inner child, I found paradise on earth.

I remember being a little boy, exploring in the woods, building teepees with sticks, throwing rocks, climbing trees, swinging from vines.

Now, at 29, I'm putting down stones in a stream by my workplace, walking through the forest, surrounded by nature.

This isn't childish. This is childlike joy.

Childishness is immaturity.

But childlike curiosity?

That's the path to the Kingdom of God.

What Is Love?

Love is selfless and unattached.

Love is like the fountain at Logan Square—always flowing.

Children play in the water, under the sun, enjoying the fruits of the fountain.

Love doesn't ask for permission. It expects nothing in return.

Love is divine.

When you realize that God loves you, then you have the permission to love *all* people.

And when you love all people, love pours out of you, effortlessly.

Maybe you give a stranger a hug. Maybe one of your photographs. Maybe a conversation on a bench. A compliment. A wave.

Love is what occurs when you recognize the inner light within you—and you simply let it shine.

Treat Your Life Like a Living Work of Art

What is your *mythos*?

As an artist, I seek to live my life like a living work of art.

I am the main character.

I'm here to create, to dance, to sing, to explore, to grow stronger, to conquer, to exert my will to power.

Some days I'm Jesus.
Some days I'm Achilles.
Sometimes I'm Apollo.
Other times Dionysus.

So...

What do you desire? What is your guiding star?

In order to find your true desire, maybe we should start thinking about how to carry out our life like a myth. A legend. A *living* work of art.

Because once you start living that way, you give birth to a shining star...

And maybe that shining star that you give birth to from within, is what you desired after all.