Twitter Thread by Justin Mikolay ■



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A distillation of what @naval said on Clubhouse last night:

What you call chaos I call spontaneity.

A regimented life is like a heartbeat that's non-chaotic; it's a system that’s too ordered. It doesn't have any life to it. And real life has lots of ups and downs, some of them very extreme.

I over-plan, but planning is pretty useless. What tends to dominant life are a small number of Black Swan events in both directions, positive and negative.

Expose yourself to asymmetric upside and lots of good options: things that can become massively important for you.

And you want to avoid the asymmetric downside: anything that can end the game, whether it's through financial ruin, or reputational ruin, or physical ruin.

That requires a certain amount of chaos and spontaneity.

If nothing else, 2020 taught the power of optionality.

We think about planning as linear and controlled, but that's not how the world around us works anymore.

The world is dominated by nonlinearities, so understanding options value is far more important.

A strong bio might be like a strong story: the first sentence should make you curious.

After that, you want to fulfill that curiosity.

What we're essentially doing when we're not busy trying to make money or meet our most basic needs: we're just bidding for status.

Bidding for status is tricky because directly seeking status is a low status signal.

There’s an artform to bidding for status.

A lot of it is knowing what the group knows, what you know about the group, and what you know about yourself.

The highest status thing is to not care.

If you look at the highest status human beings in human history, they're beyond mortal needs and mortal cares.

Genuine apathy is a very strong credible signal that you have so won the game that you’ve stepped out of it altogether.

Apathy cannot be faked. You can't show any neediness whatsoever.

If you're in that position, then you truly do stand alone. You don't care what other people do or think, and you have to signal that in your every move.

Using your own name is a very audacious move.

It will annoy people. Who is this monkey to stand up over the other monkeys and say his name is worth something?

You’re overtly and publicly taking the risk of humiliation.

If you are not confident enough in your own abilities to publicly take the risk of humiliation, then you don't deserve the status that comes with being a leader.

Essentially, a leader is someone who makes a bid for status and succeeds.

If you bid for status and you fail, then you're thrown in the back of the pack. So you have to show that you're worthy.

There are many ways to show you're worthy, and they require giving to the group and the community in some overt, sacrificing, or intelligent way.

A leader, by definition, sticks his or her neck out.

Don't brand yourself. That's a nonsense concept.

You do something that’s worthwhile and then you’re willing to stick your neck out by putting your name on it.

If you’re great, people will remember you. If you're terrible, people will blame you.

You cannot look for validation from other people anytime you’re sticking your neck out.

If taking risks to become famous, or successful, or wealthy – if any of these things were socially applauded, then we'd all be there.

But all of these things require going against the grain and going against the crowd.

You're never going to have the crowd's approval while you're doing anything truly worthwhile.

The person in charge doesn't have to say much.

They can be quiet when they enter the room.

High status is a difficult place to be. It's like being the gladiator in the middle of the arena who has killed a bunch of other gladiators.

If you have higher status, then there's always going to be people bidding for status by trying to go to war with you.

When you have social status, don't pick fights with people.

Get very good at ignoring people who are trying to always create fights.

High status is a very precarious position.

High wealth is a much safer position.

We live in the age of incredible, infinite, permissionless leverage.

If you're an incredible thinker or speaker, or you have some great insight, you will build up a following more quickly and more efficiently on @joinClubhouse than on almost any medium that came before.

If you're memorizing something, you want to do it in multiple ways.

Likewise, if you're building media or messaging or a brand online, it's better to approach it multimodally.

Sometimes it's good to look at an absurd endpoint of something as a thought exercise, just to understand what the point means.

The absurd endpoint of leverage: omniscience is omnipotence.

If you know everything, then you are also all-powerful as a consequence.

If you knew exactly what particle to push, or what grain of sand to flick, in which direction, and you knew what the repercussions of that would be – all the way down the line – you wouldn't need to do anything.

You could just wave your hand.

That is impossible for any finite creature, so we don't have that level of omnipotence.

But at some absurd level, knowledge is power. And pure knowledge is the ultimate form of leverage, so all leverage tends

towards knowledge.

Success in anything is just a byproduct of learning, and learning is a byproduct of curiosity.

Ultimately, if you are curious about something, you will be successful at it, and the more curious you are about it, the more successful you will be at it.

Everyone is trying to figure out what everybody else wants to hear. That's not rare. That's common.

What's rare is saying things that are true that either other people haven't thought through fully before, or things that other people don't dare to say.

Forget the audience.

If you're speaking for the audience, the audience is worthless. If you're writing for followers, the followers are worthless.

Someone who is playing to the audience will eventually be boring to the audience.

Most people cannot speak extemporaneously on many topics and synthesize them on the fly.

Very few people can speak extemporaneously for long periods of time and stay interesting.

People that create movements can riff extemporaneously for long periods of time, and their audience, which is aligned with them, will forgive the foibles, understand the broader message, and then get really unified behind this person.

Those kinds of leaders, for better or for worse, will emerge in Clubhouse and be the dominant personalities over time. They will have an individual cult of personality.

What makes something interesting is telling the truth.

Either a truth that people didn't already know or a truth they knew but couldn't articulate the right way, or it's a truth that they didn't know could articulate, but we're too afraid to say.

It's very difficult to speak truth in front of a large group of people.

You can teach them something new, but you eventually run out of new things, so then a lot of it becomes articulating old things in new ways.

We can collectively build knowledge.

But wisdom has to be rediscovered by people one at a time.

I can remind you of things you already know.

I can rearticulate something I've learned in a new way so it strikes at the core of yourself and reminds you, “Aha, yes, I should keep that in mind. Thank you for rearticulating that for me.”

Communicating truths is something you can get rewarded for

But these are truths that have to be learned individually.

I have a tweet I often refer back to: a fit body, a calm mind, and a house full of love; these things cannot be bought, they must be earned.

And there’s a fourth unfakeable signal that's more subtle: knowledge about how to deal with situations.

Let's call it judgment.

These four things:

Judgment
A healthy body
A calm mind
A loving household

You just have to work at them.

You can make it big without accountability.

You can make it big without specific knowledge.

But if you don't have leverage, you're never going to make real wealth.

Leverage is the most important component of the principles I've discussed.

If your overwhelming desire is to figure out how to make money and how that works, then you’ll make money.

If you’re overwhelming desire is to figure out why people are happy and how to be happy, you'll be happy.

But it's got to be your overwhelming thing.

The desire to make money is very hard to turn off.

It's not like you can turn it on at max and then you can turn it off at some preset number.

And that desire to make money will keep you relatively unhappy and keep you from enjoying your money.

Happiness doesn't mean you have a smile on your face all the time.

It just means that you learn to be content with your life.

Your day-to-day experience of life is highly positive and you're happy to continue it. I

It's not too dependent upon external circumstances.

There’s no number that’s going to turn off an unrelenting desire for money.

That’s a scorecard that just doesn’t stop.

I'm not speaking this as some holier-than-thou sage who has conquered this. I'm speaking this as a victim.

No matter how much money I make, it's never enough. It always occupies my mind.

All I can do is acknowledge, “This is the mental disease I have." And maybe eventually I'll realize the cost of the disease is too high and I'll drop it.

Until then, I'm resigned to living with it.

If your mind is out of whack, your life is out of whack.

It's all an internal game, it’s all single player, and making more money beyond an early point doesn't change anything in your mindset.

People underestimate how much misery schedules bring to your life.

I see a lot of successful, wealthy people who have busy calendars.

There's nothing that brings me as much joy and happiness as an empty calendar where you can just be spontaneous with your day.

One model that might be helpful to jolt people awake:

(I didn’t make this up; unfortunately, I don’t remember the original author)

We're all born “time billionaires,” and we just get poorer as we spend our time.

I'll bet Warren Buffett really wishes he could be a time billionaire, but the time billions are gone, and what's left are the money billions.

Ask any rich person you know how much money they would give up to be ten years younger. I think most of them would tell you all of it.

How you should spend your time:

-Say no to everything
-Delete emails without responding and without flinching

-Walking meetings only
-Keep meetings short
-Ask people to do it by email and text instead

There's a line, “The destination creates the menu.”

If you are completely convinced meetings are generally a plague, and you want to do as few of them as possible, and you hate them with a passion, then you will find ways to not do meetings.

I do whatever I feel like in the moment.

It can be a waste of time, according to somebody else's definition. But whatever I feel like in that moment is the right thing for me to do. And that's what I aspire to.

The past is a fiction.

Don't spend any time thinking about the past. It doesn't exist. It's not real. There's nothing there.

You can't go back.

The present is all that actually exists. That's where you live. That's where we exist.

That's what you’ve got to spend time on and time within.

At any moment where you're not present, you're squandering time.

How do you get into flow whether you're brushing your teeth, or walking the dog, or reading a book, or speaking on Clubhouse?

Do it in a way that you're completely engaged. You're fully aware. You're completely present.

That means your mind isn't running out of control.

You are a set of infinite forces launched from the Big Bang, intersecting at this precise moment.

Your inputs into that and your ability to control that are incredibly limited if they exist at all.

The best thing to do is function to the best of your capability.

A truly present person, almost like an enlightened Buddha-like being would be perfectly happy whether he or she was busting rocks and chain gang or playing video games, or sitting there and staring out into space.

You can't get rid of suffering until you get rid of joy. They’re just opposite sides of the same coin.

If you didn't define one event as joyous, then you would define another event as suffering. It's like every time you create a

friend, you create the basis for an enemy.

The life you have to live is ups and downs and lefts and rights. That’s what keeps it interesting.

Otherwise, as Jed McKenna says, enlightenment is a booby prize. It's nothing, forever.

That doesn't sound that compelling to me.

But if it's the truth, it’s the truth.

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