

Showing Up for Oneself

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I've done it twice before, but the old adage still rings clear in my mind "third time's a charm". I tried it at 21, fled the Big Apple with zero intention to return again. Thinking I'd attempt the post-college nomadic life, living abroad with high hopes that I'd fall into either a passionate relationship or a passionate career abroad. Setting down roots in another country and perfecting a language that was foreign to my own always had its allure. In no less than a year of this pursuit I found myself washed up on shore, questioning what I was to do with my life at 22, while simultaneously kicking myself in the arse for not having inquired about such things sooner. "Sooner" being before I fell victim to the all too common middle-class-American-high-school-graduate decision of complacently pursuing a Liberal Arts degree in effort to just "get it over with", so the ponzi scheme goes.

At 22, post-graduation and post-attempting to start a life abroad, I renegotiated my life's terms, deciding on a bit of a re-do, to write a new story. I put on my "big girl pants" and ventured to wash my slat clean by returning to NY for a Post-Baccalaureate in Anthropology . This pursuit eventually took me out of New York a second time, for an accomplished seven years. But not only does history repeat itself, but as those that have spent time existing in New York (because the word "living" sounds too easeful for such a place) they might understand that it's an intoxicating city, sinking its venom deep into one's veins, causing fanatical glorification and fetishization. Ironic, as it simultaneously is often those same fantasies that wreak havoc on the nervous system leaving some hungry for an alternative and visions of escape. But as the wheel keeps on spinning, it's a hard one to get off.

So now, for the third time, I leave the heart of the east coast to return to the side where the pacific lays.

Listening:

There is an intrinsic momentum to each of our lives, with various ways to explore it. While there are the binary existences of either working with or against momentum, what is far more common is when there doesn't seem to be any real great resistance nor any prominent clear opening. Yet when we make a choice to see what is available by leaning into what appears to be open, there becomes an upsurge of momentum that sucks us back into a current- a current that has been available and waiting for us all along. This is the current of opportunity and opening, but most importantly of unknowns. The leaning into this momentum often goes unrealized as it can feel uncharted, and therefore unexplored due to fear, or if previously charted with failed attempts, never

re-explore again.

What becomes most important in this writing is the speculation of failure and fear. The word failure has been marred as something diametrically opposed to success. However, as Jack Canfield- author of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books writes- there are no accomplished individuals that evaded this abashed word of failure. The difference, as always, is perception. While some might perceive a failure as a 20 ft brick wall never to be ascended again, others see no wall, no rocky waves, no mountains- they just view it as happening. Moreover, if there is a 20ft brick wall, becoming a rock climber suddenly becomes their next priority, if there are rocky waves, finding the best surf teacher lands at the top of their to do list, and if there is a large mountain... you get the point. And it is those "happenings"- slip ups/ challenges, or opportunities- that become apart of their story, apart of their rich succulent tapestry that make up who they are- a story that they have always read as someone who preserves at all odds.

For a third time I leave NYC because I believe in this current. I believe that when the body is crying out for us to stop dead in our tracks, whether that is due to failed health, heart break, or a jumble of activity that simply stops making sense anymore (*David Burns pun inserted here*), it's important to take time for our precious selves and ask the big question- how are we showing up and how would we like our future to unfold. I believe that if we don't like the way our future looks in just one year, it's a red flag to course-correct. Often at this point the excuses generally come knocking at the front door- "It's only one more year", "I'm too old", "I don't have the money, the time", "But what about my family, my dog" or "I don't have any of the skillsets or experiences to actualize what I want to be doing". If any of these excuses arise, know two things 1) they are not true obstacles- you just want them to be 2) from the very moment you can even acknowledge they are excuses, you have made the first vital step to take more responsibility for your actions, which will inevitably bring you closer to riding that wave of momentum that is simply waiting patiently for us to jump on board.

Dr. Joe Dispenza discusses how we humans- via the activity and development of the prefrontal cortex- can physically change every cell in our bodies to become the person we want to become. This can be done, he explains, by simply staying present each and every moment in effort to make ourselves readily available to make those "course corrections" whenever we notice old non-serving habituations show up that keep us in rot narratives. This is the narrative of lack- effectively propelling that omnipresent rich abundant current farther away. What's important to be aware of is the tendency to overly invest in what is often spoken about as "the way of the universe" or some external "mystical force" as playing the dominant role in our lives fate. While not dismissing the mystical, it can at times be this very mentality that prevents one from taking, or having, true agency in their lives.

In contrast, by acknowledging that everything we say, do, or think has a very real effect in our immediate existences, we can begin to take responsibility for what both compels

and repeats. So by showing up for ourselves and becoming more acutely aware of when our mindsets generate dissonance in our body, we can each feel and stay present to when that arises, in order to re-navigate toward harmonizing with our environments. This harmonization takes a lot of skillful work of staying clear and holding 100% responsibility. No blaming other people, external circumstances, or outside scenarios. It's a hard pill to swallow, I know. But try it for a bit and see what gets invited. What's there to lose, but perhaps an old way of operating that hasn't served for some time.

We can do a juice cleanse for seven days, or make commitments to go to the gym and yoga everyday, and while these are all very good, they focus on exterior conditions. Making the body look fit, making the skin look healthy, clearing the body of toxins to have more clarity in our thoughts. However, if we don't do that same type of cleanse or discipline with our thought patterns that we prioritize for our physical body, each of those can all be for naught, as we'll find to be continuously operating from the same paradigm- ourselves. There is the zen Koen "wherever you go there you are"- but what if you left yourself behind for once and leaned into the unknown.

And now, I'm off to California for the third time, this time Southern Cali, a place I've never lived and know very little people. I simply heard the "no's" loud and clear from the place that I was. Where NYC was a big "yes" a year and a half ago, and I can't even begin to express the healing I underwent since the return (but that's for another post), now the momentum which brought me back has shifted course. Within two months of seeing the signs of "no" I rapidly started to tie up loose ends to make yet another departure. And now, I'm on a plane leaning into what feels like a luminous yes.

Works Cited

- Canfield, Jack, and Janet Switzer. *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*. William Morrow, 2015.
- Dispenza, Joe. *Becoming Supernatural: How Common People Are Doing the Uncommon*. Hay House, 2017.