

## **Comparing Yourself to Others: A Reply**

*(I just happened to be bored with organizing my backups and decided to skim the latest threads in the Hikikomori subsection of anonib and this topic seemed particularly easy enough to respond to.)*

### Some Thoughts About Change:

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"Stop comparing yourself to others. Comparing other people's strengths to your weaknesses is unhealthy because that's essentially like trying to become good at something that you like but have never even tried or were never in a position to possess the moment you became aware of it. Everyone has some sort of strength, sure there are people out there who seem to be better at everything you do, but then there are those in a worse position than you are. Then there are those who have nothing, but are content with their lives; I don't think this is conformism but a general feeling of personally defined achieved wealth. In the end every person serves someone else."

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*...later in the post*

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**"The hiki formula:** Self-esteem = (personal success/social expectations)

The greater your personal success is, the less importance you give to whatever society wants to make of you, therefore the greater self-esteem you have. It doesn't matter how, if you can set daily goals that can make you feel better about yourself, you'll surely end up not caring about people have to say about you."

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*...here's where it gets really sketchy.*

### **One anonymous replier countered back with:**

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">>2300  
>The hiki formula:  
>Self-esteem=(personal success/social expectations)

Why does social expectations have to be a part of this at all? I thought you had figured this out by your first post, but I guess not.

YOU SHOULD NOT BASE YOUR SELF-WORTH ON HOW [YOU THINK] OTHERS PERCEIVE YOU.

Us hikis are very sensitive to how we are perceived by others, usually to the point where we have developed a paranoia about being constantly negatively judged by others. That's why hikis rarely venture outside, to avoid this [perceived!] judgment.

This is not to say we should ignore every criticism that comes our way. Everyone is affected by criticism, and the ones who aren't are considered antisocial (the criminal kind). I am saying, don't take every bit of criticism about you as necessarily true. And especially don't INVENT criticisms that other people have of you. ("The cashier didn't make smalltalk with me, he must think I'm weird!" "I fumbled a word when speaking, everyone must think I'm an idiot!" etc.) It takes a lot of effort to overcome this sort of

thinking once it's become ingrained. Therapy can help, which I recommend, and there are also books and websites dealing with this, although I don't know of any offhand.

Eventually you will realize that all the pat advice that 'normal' people have given us over the years is 100% true. Stuff like "just be yourself" and "stop caring what others think" that sounds lame and cliché, but is really just simple wisdom that helps everyone feel confident enough to be able to pursue their goals."

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*Sketchy because it adds several more layers to address.*

First off, I'm probably coming off self-important because I don't think a long reply is necessary. (whether you base it on my often accused tl;dr posts or your average youtube/twitter length posts)

Example: just be yourself.

This isn't 100% true and 99% of the time it's wrong.

It's not a 100% lie either and 99% of the time it works.

If that makes sense then I apologize for being Capt. Obvious but I'm guessing from the anon's statement, he never got this or he opts to deny himself this realization in order to keep the benefits he thinks he gets from maintaining this delusion.

It doesn't really matter: tons of "normal" people agree with him, tons of "normal" people disagree with him.

### **Huh?**

For those confused, the short answer is because "being yourself" is not an advise. It sounds like one but it isn't.

It is often intended as one but it isn't.

Here, maybe **the Wikipedia definition for conventional wisdom** might help:

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"Conventional wisdom is not necessarily true. Conventional wisdom is additionally often seen as an obstacle to introducing new theories, explanations, and so as an obstacle that must be overcome by such revisionism. This is to say, that despite new information to the contrary, conventional wisdom has a property analogous to inertia that opposes the introduction of contrary belief, sometimes to the point of absurd denial of the new information set by persons strongly holding an outdated (conventional wisdom) view. This inertia is due to conventional wisdom being made of ideas that are convenient, appealing and deeply assumed by the public, who hangs on to them even as they grow outdated. The unavoidable outcome is these ideas will eventually not match reality at all, so conventional wisdom will be violently shaken until it doesn't conflict reality so blatantly."

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"The concept of conventional wisdom also is applied or implied in political senses, often related closely with the phenomenon of talking points. It is used pejoratively to refer to the idea that statements which are repeated over and over become conventional wisdom regardless of whether or not they are true. "

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Why I didn't pull this definition from the outset is because an encyclopedia is trying to define as large a scope as the general word can imply.

The problematic result is that it needs to capture everything that might have something to do with the word and the flaws of minor examples like "just be yourself" gets exaggerated when it's linked to conventional wisdom.

Still... it is a slightly more credible definition than using my own words to explain it.

(\*sigh\* *If only the Barnum effect is a common enough word to play with...*)

I'd really prefer just adding Barnum in front of all these subjective statements and have this define those flaws.

Anyway, all this really means is that the value is in the devil and the devil is in the details.

Just being yourself doesn't work, is an outright lie, is not just a cliché but an ignorant answer often given by a person who didn't even spend any time observing (*or wanting to know*) whether you're being yourself made you more confident which happens to only sound like a common truth in the same way one can claim that variations on the word Chapter 1 is a prerequisite for a book to be a modern day best seller and that only a few books can get away with not containing any chapter numbers at all.

To make things clearer let's go back to the phrase - just be yourself!

You'd have to wonder why I'm even addressing this definition of conventional wisdom.

If I really feel the phrase isn't an advise then what's the point of even debunking much less focusing on this side issue? ...besides tooting my own horn, that is.

I'm not convincing anyone but the choir and I'm not really enlightening anyone by arguing that it's a lie.

A post like this doesn't seem like it serves a purpose except as a comforting re-affirmation that someone is agreeing with you (or if you disagree and are still reading, that some people like me are so pathetic that we'd rather insult and attempt to bring down a single anonymous person's path to self-esteem instead of doing something helpful ...like say suggesting a better alternative)

Like the Barnum effect though: **On it's own, it's nothing special**

It's like a magic trick that after it has been revealed makes you ooh and ahh but outside of trying to learn the mystery, it doesn't really change your life unless it made you want to be a magician.

Combine this with cold reading scammers, well intentioned people who don't realize they aren't doing anything supernatural and just the general world-wide implication of the effect in our modern day non-critical thinking society and it suddenly becomes a necessary subject that even *the mere spreading* of this word's existence to people who haven't known it becomes crucial and possibly helps give people clues on how people on average listen to each other especially to those of us who are bad at communicating our ideas to begin with.

In the case of the phrase "be yourself", I took the opposite stance of the anon and flat-out called him delusional because he's not speaking from a truly helpful stance and while this single person opinion of mine doesn't seem like something to be worked up about, the negative result of his words do stack and that's where it goes from unhelpful to just

socially destructive.

Like psychics, whether you believe in them or not, it's tolerable and chances are you'd like to hear these stuff about scammers so that you don't get fooled but you probably aren't really on an earth-wide quest to ban people from believing in fake hopes and dreams even when the psychic is a blatant fake to you.

Being yourself though is similar...except it is on one hand less destructive cash-wise but promotes an often overlooked social bullying effect.

It's the stuff that if you are fairly tolerable of people, seem like something you think about or laugh at in private or even go against by keeping it to yourself because it's not that big of a deal - especially if someone credited that to their personality growth.

Unfortunately it does create a social bullying effect.

Worse, it tricks people who believe in it to spread it in the assumption that even if the advise doesn't work, at the very least, they aren't hurting a person's self-esteem by affirming it.

Problem is... enough people are saying this without giving out the why and the how and 99% of how the advise works *is when you have those in.*

(This applies to all advises but some can produce more harmful effects than others when the consequences are ignored. In the case of just be yourself, it's not only harmful but subtle and only its minor danger seems apparent most of the time.)

Don't take my: "opinion by a person with low self-esteem" word for it. Try to spot the people you view as highly successful and look up their history of being "themselves".

You probably would get a more pro-"be yourself" answer from directly asking most people but that's the side effect of it being conventional wisdom.

Spot their actual training, "through the years" commentary and even general stories and you'll see the reason the advise often worked for them has nothing to do with actually being themselves.

It's only after they fill this initial advise with answers from doing something that "proves it" ...or being moved strongly enough by someone else's word --- and then using this as momentum to "*convince themselves*" of how everything they do matches up with their *true* self... that the advise *really* changes their issues.

Even to those who disagree; they often flip flop (often not just once but twice/three/four times...) and apply/mis-apply/stop applying/re-apply this advise because it's so open ended that you can credit it to any result and build and destroy the concept any way you want *any time you want to.*

(I originally wrote that it *legitimately changed their lives* but I wanted a phrase which separates difficult but often shallow problems like fitness where an open-ended advise can seem like a miracle pill if it helps you mentally over-achieve from that of an advise that needs to live and die by it's results because your hopes, dreams and problems haven't reached that point of being solved with Dreamworks' determination, a Pixar positive outlook and a red hot lady from Disney and neither is your environment compatible enough with your growth as a person that all you need to do is live like a Hayao Miyazaki protagonist and no matter the obstacles it won't regress your mind and turn you into a person that is not only held back, but ultimately holds himself back.)

If you want another similar example, there's tons in any sport like thanking God for

every major win.

Faith works but only when it works.

Big difference is that if you set aside the bad things religion has caused, that little specific act has very little negative impact on someone other than you.

Even from extreme fundamentalist groups, chances are there aren't THAT many lemmings banking on you succeeding in world class competition by pointing to the sky or thanking God via a human interview. (although that is not to say that the act can't inspire someone to succeed)

Being yourself though; not only do tons more people say that *for others to follow* but most of them don't back their concern up.

Furthermore, the results can seem more effective because it isn't dependent on results but feelings that don't require you to reach the top of the mountain to feel like it helped.

This anon for example was more concerned about affirming the accuracy of the advice instead of showing how he has successfully applied the advice to himself.

Sure, it doesn't really increase the guarantee that his words would be read by anybody and he has just as much percent convincing someone by talking like he did than by writing the specifics down but those are the very same seeds that made this into a problem.

This is why a part of the Wikipedia definition for conventional wisdom is: often seen as an obstacle to introducing new theories (and) explanations.

On his own, I'm just being a douchebag for insulting him especially since he didn't bring an army of youtubers repeating the same advice like it was a miracle making meme. (and since I took my time writing this, the topic is so old that it's a given it won't attract something like that)

Problem is, by virtue of how conventional wisdom is, it often becomes an obstacle not just because everyone repeats and drowns the truly helpful variations but because not everyone talks against it because everyone treats it like a minor issue.

*\*unless you're adding more concrete facts (which I'm not) then it's a toss-up: heads you get a paradigm shift, tails you get a "too long, you shouldn't have whined" badge*

...but...

### **helpful advises often come from specific topics**

Example:

If you're a pick-up artist, the pros and cons of being yourself probably becomes less douchebaggy to discuss among your group because it's about getting the woman and not necessarily about listening to what she tells you to do.

If you're a successful athlete, you could say you're being yourself after you added something that's not part of yourself after you practiced it tons of times *effectively* and then attribute it to your being yourself by virtue of your determination. *(Even though when it all breaks down, you still have to think outside of yourself to regain something like confidence when all athletes are supposed to be heads and above confident compared to low self-esteem hikikomoris stereotype-wise.)*

If you're an actor...

....an activist

...a manager

///the list (as well as the reasons) goes on and on.

This doesn't help against the general based social bullies though and any over-simplified lemming-breeding advise, left un-checked, produces an equally over-simplified lemming-breeding anti-advise that further makes the problem worse. Again, not a problem with this thread but when you add the people who approach threads this way all over the internet, the bullying mentality spreads up.

*(...so now if an army of "just be yourselves" delusionists weren't producing more lower self-esteemed people who listened to them but just couldn't make the advice work despite not seeing anything fundamentally wrong with the advise itself, you now also have a group of "just be yourselves doesn't work" denialists who additionally make life horrible for those in need of actual helpful advises based against the general less specific theme but receiving neither specifics nor true concern from either group.)*

**Worst part is: most people forming this group aren't even recruited.**

They recruit themselves by simply agreeing and even defending the concept *as is* (instead of focusing on the meat of the situation itself)

It often doesn't matter to them that the person they're agreeing with hasn't really been as successful or as confident as they are (or shown any proof that they have) nor does it matter what happens to the person they thought they helped.

*(but it does matter to them that they have their "say" and **shove** this advise whenever they feel like saying it in a topic)*

That's why I called it a lemming breeding advise.

It's not that the advise is right or wrong but there are certain single issues that when put on a pedestal, dumbs down people to the point that they act like lemmings on that particular issue and this is one of them.

**Warning:** Recipe May Reduce Self-Esteem When Taken at the Wrong Dosage

**Ingredients:**

1 pack of people who believe they are entitled and should help the "according to them" un-entitled by shoving their mindset but not giving their all when doing so

1 person who needs help but only meet the kind of people above

**Result:**

Humans who don't truly measure, adjust and determine whether they're really hurting, helping or not doing enough to produce the intended difference *while* still having the gall to think that they're doing something positive **thus creating apathy, disappointment, cynicism** and lowering the self-esteem of most people who fell victim to them.

To borrow a passage from the Bible:

**Mark 12:41-43 (King James Version)**

And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.

For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

As far as I know (from my life in a Catholic School), this passage was never associated with what I'm writing about and was always talking about generosity so this is just my own personal interpretation.

Just to serve as a disclaimer: I've never been a heavy participant of the church so I never really knew if this was a popular alternative interpretation.

It didn't make sense to me that Jesus would use the poor widow as an example for true generosity.

If you saw him as a God then you would wonder why he would use money and not prayers or specific physical actions to make his case for generosity. It just didn't match his MO and if you look at most of the other things written about him in the New Testament, I couldn't remember any other time where he would praise something that won't do a person good in this world...or the next.

Nor would he refer to such material acts as praiseworthy acts *by themselves*.  
(Beatitudes aside)

Even with physical related phenomenons like walking on water, turning water into wine or asking a person to sell their wealth... all these weren't praiseful actions merely to be praised.

Almost every lesson could be an analogy that if you follow a virtuous path and never let the hardships that will meet you stop you, there was always a pot of metaphorical gold at the end of that rocky rainbow.

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...or if it's an action he himself does, it's always to achieve a goal. Walking on water gets fishies into netties which helps recruit doubties. Water turning into wine helps make his mother happy plus recent research shows that wine in moderation has some health benefits so possible healthier and happier mom.

Even being crucified to the cross... one life to save all of humanity INSTANTLY G-U-A-R-A-N-T-E-E-D seems like the ultimate bargain especially if you factor in how many people would trade the rest of their lives to save humans and animals from a multiple-time health decaying machine like pollution and not even save anyone because people like me would continue polluting the earth with our seemingly minor day-to-day actions.

A widow who puts her two cents into something that won't benefit her though... that neither rewards her greatly since God's currency is prayers nor is that benefiting her in the material world because that little money may somehow be used for something more beneficial to everyone else than any treasury would where let's face it, more cash is much much more appreciated and the thought only counts when the action gap isn't this huge thus it eventually seemed *to me* like a lesson without a lesson. (I used to have no

problem with the story and it was even among the lessons that I kept even after I became an atheist.)

If she was already a devoted prayer-ist than Jesus being the son of God should have just talked about that instead.

If it's plain doing something to make yourself happy, then he could have saved her a lot of sore feet by simply saying that giving her all in cash won't do her as much good as giving her all in God and have her follow him while he poofs up some free bread for her.

If you see Jesus as a fictional person or just a human, it's still out of character for a guy who hates consumerizing temples to somehow now praise a consumer pleasing social construct like a treasury or even use a widow when he could have just done as most great storytellers have a tendency to do and compare a great man to an even greater (but maybe underrated) man and come off being more convincing by doing so.

*...so I eventually dropped and re-interpreted it as a tale where giving your all in a useless act has a crucial and overlooked lesson to tell.*

It's an interpretation that isn't really that deep and doesn't really need this much text to justify except due to the specific task being praised... everything changes.

Without the poor widow giving her all, then the tale might be no different from all the successful people and coaches who justify passion and how one should keep doing what they're doing or many quality fiction where the underdog pulls through just in the nick of time from not giving up and channelling the ["heart of the cards"](#).

With that element put in there though, it becomes more Ed Wood and to quote one IMDB reviewer, here's why it's still an underrated tale:

"I hear that ED WOOD took just \$6,000,000 on its initial cinematic release in the USA. I'm not surprised. The extraordinary thing is that the film was financed and released at all. Had it not been for the prestige that Tim Burton had already earned from his previous projects, ED WOOD would no doubt have foundered long before the cameras began to roll. The result could have been another 1941 – but it wasn't. What came out of Tim Burton's fascination with the 'Worst Director of All Time' was something very rich and strange – perhaps the most un-Hollywood Hollywood picture of the 90s.

I see two main themes in ED WOOD. The first is the dreadful fear that hovers over everyone who enters the creative arts – 'Am I any good?' 'Is my work any good?' 'How do I know if it's any good?' 'What if I think it's good, but everybody else thinks it's rubbish?' Artists use all kinds of strategies to deal with these fears – some become eccentric, others arrogant, others diffident. Without the right to fail, no artist is likely to take the sort of risk that sometimes, just sometimes, leads to great work. Tim Burton knew this.

Edward D Wood Jnr believed himself to be a creative artist. Oh, how he believed. But he still failed to create anything worthwhile. And this leads to what I believe to be the second theme of the movie, and the reason why I think it failed commercially.

Look at all the things Ed did right. He believed in himself. He followed his dream. He worked hard. He was an entrepreneur – he did his best to make others believe in his dream and help him to turn it into reality. In short, he did all the things that the self-help books, the daytime TV shows, the junk ballads and the feel-good movies tell us will give you success. Just wish upon a star, work all the hours there are to turn your vision into reality and you will succeed. Ed did all of these things. And still he failed. He died short of his 60th birthday, living in a crime-riddled apartment building, drunk, broke, supporting himself and his loyal wife Kathy by writing formula pornography and making

sex instruction flicks on 8mm.

America doesn't want to hear this. Hollywood doesn't want to tell America this – that you can try and try and try and still get nothing but heartbreak. This is why ED WOOD is such an un-Hollywood film – and why it's one of the best Hollywood films of the 90s.”

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Whether you agree that the movie fits that mold or not (I don't), it highlights the case of why it's an underrated tale.

*\*I also don't have any other quotable example on hand and even if I disagree that the movie gave me this kind of impression, I still liked the general theme of his review.*

The biblical tale one ups the story because of a single differing factor though.

Most youtubers know the Ed Wood theme already (whether they realize it or not) from watching youtube a lot already.

Even a guy like me who doesn't monitor youtube at all, can get that realization from seeing something like this:

LEGO Pop-up Kinkaku-ji - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uYIA3NV0rFA>

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The difference with the tale though is that the widow didn't just give her all in a hobby or a socially perceived neutral/useless act.

The widow gave her all in something that even to this day would be a hard sell as being something *truly* useful.

First of all, her actions have little to no visual indication of progress. Artists can at least redeem themselves by improving until the world either accepts them or respects them.

Even people who get their 5 minutes of fame via youtube, American Idol, webcams, etc... they get them because they create a pinch of superior quality over every other examples in their category.

Even from Pulitzer Prize seeking journalists, it's not that good at selling anything. It's basically a story you could get at your local church. All you need is people donating.

Even if you wanted a poorer 3rd world version, it doesn't really tell an effective tale of giving your all *despite being poor* especially when most of those people will admit that they are not giving their all because of their hardships in life and most of them seems to me that they just do religious stuff as an insurance into the kingdom of God.

*\*Not to mention all the more horrifying and sensational and pitiful things that are happening around those people, had the "Son of God" not been the one who told this tale, it won't even make a blip in terms of inspiring generosity and the Scrooge themed stories would be more centric to religious generosity and what little journalistic appeal the act has pretty much flies away except as a survey for poverty or religion dedication...and even there, only if you sell the story as a group of poor people donating and not about "one" widow AFTER it has been revealed how little she gave. (IMO had it been one dollar or five dollar or anything non-insulting, you can still sensibly sell the story with little difficulty.)*

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...even those who lost nearly everything and completely devoted their life to God, they

don't give all their material wealth as much as they spend most of their time praying and preserving religious tradition.

Yes, even from a faith based perspective it doesn't match up to the happiness brought by believing in a God because it's not a *definitive* "rewarding" action in any mainstream religious doctrine to give your all to a treasury.

I brought all these comparisons up because I believe the day has come where we can interpret anything we do as useful and if not us, others will when we do the generic stuff of exposing it to the internet.

**The age has arrived** where MySpace, Facebook, Youtube can make one an internet celebrity for shallow reasons but also where a photo uploaded to the web and Twit'd can make even the simplest of photos spread quickly and shine much more brightly.

Nowadays, there are very few acts that couldn't be interpreted one way or another and it's much harder to provide an example of futile uselessness because you could find more instant people and instant advises that would tell you to "try harder" and "learn from this mistake" that every failure becomes either a lesson or an inspiration. Every evil can gain the right audience to be accepted. Every little action can provide a "purpose". Even the mundane can be talked about as important.

This doesn't mean that most people on the internet won't shit on you and use their anonymity to troll but in general, the probability of at least one person comforting your action is almost guaranteed if you move around from online groups to online groups and thus, for me, the tale of giving your all for something truly useless has passed by and the lessons that can be gained from it have been diluted.

Uselessness as in the widow's case where even if her photo was taken and Twit'd, it would only be inspirational because it serves as an analogue to Christ's tale and only because he pointed it out. (...and only because Christianity spread...and only because the Internet evolved this way...and only because someone influential happened to take her photo instead of something even more inspirational...blah blah blah deus ex machina)

...But! --- even with Christ's praise for her at the time, it won't change a damn thing and it won't get people who mimic the widow's actions today any additional praise because no one is really out there monitoring who is giving their all and who isn't. (Even Santa stopped at naughty or nice.)

Yes, it makes more sense to treat this as a "useful" lesson because it then tells people to help the poor and participate in charity...

But! --- (assuming I'm still being vague) --- **the** flaw with accepting that common sense interpretation IS that it ignores the details.

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*The "divinity" of Jesus is made a convenient cover for absurdity. Nowhere in the Gospels do we find a precept for Creeds, Confessions, Oaths, Doctrines, and whole carloads of other foolish trumpery that we find in Christianity. ~John Adams*

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Particularly worth noting is that even if this tale never existed, there would still be tons of tales highlighting Christ' support for helping someone AND being generous.

In fact in this tale, Christ SPECIFICALLY didn't ask his disciples to help said widow to praise the power of H-E-L-P but emphasized the ACT of giving one's all and how one should be wary of lowering the standards of what constitutes as "giving one's all".

That would seem like a minor detail if not for the fact that the widow's task stands the test of time as one of the few things that can still be perceived as unanimously useless in this day and age especially when everything can be rationalized as useful. (at least to me)

For Christ's sake, even kittens with grammar nazi inducing captions can be perceived as somewhat interesting nowadays and seeing as how we're becoming more and more a technocratic hive, it wouldn't seem far fetched to me that one day even being disgusted by someone picking their nose in public can be seen as "politically correct" evil because nose picking according to Wikipedia is a biological act caused by so on and so forth.

Maybe I'm overrating the times but no matter what scenario I choose whether it be in a sci-fi future or a post-apocalyptic world, the widow's task seems like it would always be in my top 10 most useless task *generally speaking*.

(or maybe I should just read more quality fiction)

...Even in Jesus' time, I would think it would rank low in usefulness and purpose compared to many of his other stories and other acts. I mean compared to stoned prostitutes, lepers, tax payers climbing trees and Samaritans being possibly kinder than Jews when they don't pay attention to their naughty and nice lists, it just looks like a bad "generosity" story even by Biblical standards because the task seems *really really* useless.

*\*Yeah, I get that it's not perceived as such a horrible tale but again, I think it specifically has to do with people glossing over the details. Even in the making Jesus look good detail, it doesn't hold up. Made Jesus look more like a guy who wants to make gossip instead of helping a poor widow and sets him up to be more of a pompous jerk than a guy focused on being this heroic missionary who tends to the sick and sinners of his time "especially" when he already emphasized the fact that the widow definitely has nothing because she gave "all her living".*

*(Of course it would probably be helpful if Christ's words actually matched up with my interpretation...)*

...but then again, he probably did me a favor of not making me sound like a religious bigot especially in this day and age where quoting anything from the Bible comes off like I'm spoonfeeding my religion on you.

*(Yes, from my experience, "religious bigot" is worse than ignorant bigot over the internet.)*

Yeah, this is one half of the reason why I added this tale. (The other reason simply because I don't have a better example)

I figured the modern day perspective of religion helps me temporarily get off the douchebaggery of going against "being yourself" and be able to emphasize the gist of why *perceived-as-helpful* acts contributes to low self-esteem if not contribute more than most rude acts because of their staying power and lack of effort needed to restrain yourself from doing it.

Then again, maybe I'm wrong. I'm no good at predicting people's behaviours but I felt like if I added this biblical passage, the douchebag complainers who don't really care or need to actually read this will just focus on why the bible is just a book of lies and that there is no God and that by referring to the bible to make my point, I just showed that my views are bullshit just like how the Bible is and the more fanatical ones can accuse me of blasphemy for changing Biblical interpretation without consulting a theologian first and how dare I insinuate that Jesus might not exist and is a poorly written character.

Anyways, the benefits to be had from giving one's all for something truly useless are:

...but first it's important to narrow down what I consider useless.

I started from my interpretation of what religious people would consider most useless:

Evil from the religion side because it seems futile if not suicidal to go against what a super powerful being considers bad not only because he/she can destroy you but have the power to reverse the course of your actions to fit with his/hers.

Then I made it more black and white to fit with what I consider useless.

First, I added the common perception that anything that doesn't add much to your life is useless either because it actually harmed you or the benefits were so little that you wasted your time.

Second, I reduced the uselessness of evil from doing something bad according to the doctrine you believe in to "evils that didn't get you anywhere" thus exempting evils that when done not only makes you feel vastly good but can afford you temporary luxuries (thus not being useless in a world without God) -- and only evils that gave little to no benefits or benefits in such a minute matter that the boost didn't really help you at all including self-perceived good "stock" advises that ended up becoming evil despite *some semblance of "superego rationalized"* effort being put in.

From there it was pretty much tying what I'm saying with that of what I thought the lesson is about:

Useless tasks given a large enough effort will always have the neutral result that it won't harm anybody or more importantly will counter harm it's own harmful effects that it evens itself out especially if it feels useless to the observer.

(For example, a world where Hitler becomes Hitler and nearly ruins the world (but fails) would promote more desire in people to reduce the chance of that situation happening again thus more people would study the "cause" of evil more. Thus in this case, the greater evil actually causes more people to want to learn more about big lies, carthaginian peace and Eichmanns or just simply show any future war supporter the real empirical horror of war. Yet an evil act held back from the same scope as World War can allow one society to be blind to the plight they're causing to another country or even make them lemmings who overvalue the good in what has been done (often under the political category: "necessary") and ignore or blameshift the part where they actually sound bad.)

Good tasks given insufficient concern and effort on the other hand not only fails to be useless when it fails but when repeated often enough actually harms people but also has the unfortunate side effect that it gets a free moral pass by society that it becomes something much closer to what corrupt politicians do to get voted "except" again, there's no mountain to climb so the harm is cultural douchebaggery and the mental effect on the victim is vastly under-defended within the same culture.

Like I said, it's a common lesson that's not worth this length but it's an action whose consequences by it's *more minor* brothers can only be emphasized by the uselessness of the act because we often times equate uselessness with harmlessness in the wrong manner.

Going back to telling some low self-esteem person that "being yourself" *as is* works and should be followed, we often (or at least I often) think that when the advise is useful to someone *then it balances itself out* under the idea that the help outweighs the hurting of

another person.

The reality though is that the hurt person rarely talks back because the act has a reputation of being minor and because there's pressure in making it sound like the victim is telling the adviser that they're evil where as most "backers" and "thankers" of the advise often respond favorably because either they already have experienced it and the reliability of taking the advise doesn't feel like do or die for them at that current time or they have this problem where the advise could've just as much worked for them if someone told them to "just do something" as opposed to "be yourself" and then they think that *that* "somehow" means everyone else's problems are equal to theirs.

Remember though that a low self-esteem victim can often try to accommodate people to their detriment so when they remain silent or when they try to "milk" more from an advise, it's often their way of trying to "un-admit" the reality that the person is giving them a useless advise or that they think the advise *can* work if the helper would just put more effort and concern but then they don't want to whine and be accused of trying to come off like a victim.

Remember that the more minor the act, the more *weaksauce* it is to be a victim **even** if they have higher self-esteem.

...Especially the perceived as good deeds and especially if the helper will also say that they're doing their all but they just don't know what more to do but the reality is that they just don't want to give up on their delusion and actually put time in helping someone in a much more major way. (This rarely happens though with "be yourselfers" especially when most of the bullying effect is on the internet but I think the "real life" hypothetical situation emphasizes more the mental struggle that's going through the mind of a person with low self-esteem.)

Just to highlight how difficult or subtle the harm of the act is:

Ask yourself how many people today "worry" about bullying as much as they give out advises for victims to "man it up" until they get past that stage in their life.

Especially the non-physical types: How many people "respect" low self-esteem people for wanting help against office bullying, going against tradition, going against dogma, choosing a "liberated" lifestyle... all that shit ***before the problem became less of a problem and thus more convenient to praise the rebel as a pioneer.***

...yet most of that shit is perceived as bad/evil ...or minor in comparison to all the other hardships you will have to encounter in life...yet it messes up even confident people.

Imagine if you add "perceived as good" to the category of those actions - then it becomes nearly impossible to counter if you've been *affected by that act in a negative manner* and then you have to bank on the idea that if you ended up living through it, maybe one day (when you actually are being given that advise in a specific subject) it would dawn on your low self-esteemed self to actually *reject* the person giving that advise and not the meat of advise itself *because there is such a social phenomenon as subtle human bullshitters that may not be trolling but simply want to give out a "PussyCat" answer.*

...but what if you never encountered that situation or worse, by the time you contemplated it, you've already shut down part of your wisdom that's receptive to that point of view?

Here's where the really really useless act rears its head again.

Most of us expect (or again, at least I do) that very little might happen. Sure, maybe

you'd never outlived being low in self esteem but other than that, it's just like receiving a failed phone call right?

Wrong.

The thing about lemming breeding advises is that there are three stages.

**1st invasion:** You absolutely believe in that advise under any circumstances except your own and when it finally can't apply to your current situation anymore you still continue to recommend it wholeheartedly. (Reality has a way of forcing lemmings to live in hypocrisy when their absolute reality fails to be anything but a fantasy)

**2nd invasion:** You live through it. Get mad. Become a denialist and hate the advise thinking that your hate somehow means you got over it and managed to get past that stage in your life.

**3rd Invasion:** You become neither but you're still damaged goods. You're more apathetic to addressing the issue. You get nervous when talking about the advise in detail. You could even be one of those who look at the holes of the detailed answers so you can bring them down but slap away the minor advises as being too worthless to address *even if they're often the really harmful ones.*

In a way the advise takes advantage of another conventional wisdom: the optimist/cynic/realist paradigm.

**1st invasion infects you by lumping into your optimism.**

Dodge that?

Then...

**2nd invasion infects you by clinging to your cynicism.**

Still ok?

Alright...

...and finally the 3rd Invasion hides beneath your experienced moderate views and only breaking out when you can do nothing about it before disappearing under the folds of your subconscious again.

**And the worst part is, all it takes is one to spread.**

One person says the phrase or the anti-phrase and if you as even question it, you're simply a jerk...unless you go the over-simplified anti-phrase route by which someone who agrees with you might stumble upon it and repeat it back and forth turning the whole thing into a poll instead of a discussion.

A poll which doesn't help a person with complicated reasons for having low self-esteem.

The flawed part also reduces the chance that the receiver feels bad if he fails at being himself (thanks to the specifics making it more evident if both situations are slightly different) and prevents the advise giver from unconsciously creating a social bully-breeding environment (by virtue that the lemmings become easier to ignore because there's actually a post that's more concrete and worth paying attention to especially if you're desperate for help: you just tend to block out the useless ones without needing to develop an internet thick skin which is good for people with low self-esteem)

At this point though, I'm still being Capt. Obvious.

In the internet, there's tons of "fire in the hole" subjects and everything is repeated quite often in different variations. Even my high horse preaching is less of a working suggestion and more of a rant on how the anonymity of the internet can multiply the worse aspects in people especially with helpful people who don't really want to help and thus come off like their advises are perfect solutions for the rest of mankind - which makes certain people feel worse despite what they say.

Still...

The number of lemmings still far outweigh the number of articles written against this specific subset of thinking.

I'm not intending this article to change anyone's mind though. I'm even betting this is one of the worst articles written on this subject since I didn't bother to compare it to anything else and I made zero research to begin with. Didn't even tell a story to prove my point.

The quality (from my standard of quality at least) doesn't really matter IMO. Like I said, a lot of these issues can be summed up by your own thoughts without even needing a sentence or paragraph from someone else. Then for an in-depth look, there are guys that have low success in life that are far far better at arguing this point of view than me.

Guys that people think "their being a hikikomori is something to be cured" aspire to.

Guys with jobs. Guys with money. Guys with girls. Guys who lost girls. Guys who can sell you the same deal the Queer Eye guys sell without needing to show you their pic or even knowing how your specific body would match up with certain clothes and what will transform you into this highly confident success artist...

...Guys who simply have gone outside and are perceived by certain Hikikomoris as successful or better *just* for doing so.

I'm not really patronizing those people (ok, just a little bit since they're the cliches in the Hikikomori online communities it seems) but I use those guys as examples because pretty much everyone likes to believe that higher hierarchy of successful people (than they are) are almost always more credible than their own selves in backing/debunking these opinions that it's more food for thought that even people perceived as the scum of the earth can chuck out an interesting and more valid take on this issue thus emphasizing the fact that this is an easy subject for anyone to respond to and there's nothing new here.

Why I do write this though is, again, because of the rarity of these articles.

Like I said, articles with these subjects don't come close to matching the simplified banter that takes place between the lemmings and the anti-lemmings in quantity.

**It doesn't even matter if I think writing this is a waste of time.**

While the truly helpful details are still really delegated to specific concrete goals that rely on the advise working instead of just being agreed upon, I think there's a small percentage of low self-esteem people that would appreciate someone taking their time to write a general wall of text on this subject.

It doesn't matter if I never got over my low self-esteem. It doesn't matter if the article is crappy. It doesn't even matter if my personality comes off as bullshit. (after all, I am insulting another human being)

Why this is, I don't really know because I've never met such a person who I think might want to read this.

I wrote this partly as a guess that someone might want more articles like this and partly from a general experience with being given the advise of "just be yourself" several times by several different people. (mostly strangers from the internet)

It's not much of an experience though since there's no one big event or several little events that added up.

In fact, despite my low self-esteem, I never really felt majorly affected by the acts of these people and I've never really written or thought about this until I read the AnonIB topic. (That's why it looks like I'm focusing on this particular anon when really this is more about the stereotype of be yourselfers)

Worst case scenario, I was irritated for a few minutes but I can probably simulate that effect by randomly reading entire sets of youtube comments that many people get pissed off about and often conclude as stupid.

The thing with minor irritants though is that, depending on your mood, they can remind you of all the other minor irritants you have experienced in your life and bring it all together and that's what causes a minor situation to turn into a temporary burn-out.

In the case of being yourself, it's highly likely that many low self-esteem people end up finding or concluding the real answers for themselves.

Because the post reminded me of the feeling I have with other minor irritants though, it also brought forth the frustration I had of wanting to read something like this and not getting any general help. (although it's about different subjects and not really something I felt from being given the advise to be myself)

*...but due to never finding articles on those subjects, maybe because my low self-esteem kept me from registering on tons of forum/ mailing list/groups/etc. and I never or no longer had a real life person I could turn to or I simply grew shy of asking people via IM/social media/social networking and even IRC, I decided to go ahead and write this because it just brought that sensation that somewhere some unfortunate guy out there with low self-esteem might want to stumble on an article like this because his little bit of self-esteem was further lowered by these people and circumstances coupled with his further lower self-esteem kept him from really rejecting or making this advise apply to him that maybe if there are just a wee bit more articles written like this then he might eventually encounter these thoughts faster and while it may not really help him boost his perception of himself, it hopefully might restore a little bit of the self-esteem he's lost and hopefully that's enough to get him farther in this limited life of ours.*

### **Comparing yourself to others is the same thing!**

Another reason why I focused on conventional wisdom above is that it gets rid of alot of things that need to be pointed out with this other example of a convenient idea to over-simplify.

You could even say that without the example of "be yourself" it might be harder to explain the flaws of comparing yourself to others.

This is because comparing yourself to others is less lemming-breeding and because this is actually a more sound advise that many line of religious and philosophers have suggested as a way to a satisfied life.

...but it is for this very same reason that it is worse:

It's **much harder to explain this away as a lie** or something that doesn't work to people who couldn't make it work.

Worse in the aspect that it doesn't turn you into a social bully against low self-esteem people but it can turn you into a self-bully.

Self-bully in the sense that you might constantly say this to yourself in reaction to a negative event and instead of helping you to stop comparing yourself to others, it instead deforms you into apathy.

That's not really such a bad thing because lots of people are apathetic about their surroundings *and 99% of the time that's what produces mass stupidity even among people who are individually intelligent.*

On a more serious note, the advice (if it turns you into a self-bully) is bad simply because it doesn't really help you build confidence. (although I'm not saying it won't prevent you from becoming over-confident)

...and assuming he's not a troll, Quack's intention for saying this is to help Hikikomoris with low self-esteem and that's why it's important to point out some of the reasons why it might not help with your own self-esteem *because it doesn't really work the way our mind thinks it should...*

**"Comparing other people's strengths to your weaknesses is unhealthy because that's essentially like trying to become good at something that you like but have never even tried or were never in a position to possess the moment you became aware of it"**

Is this true? Yes. I've personally experienced this.

Is it wrong? Yes. Because you will always compare yourself to others even if you don't realize it.

**Note:** I wouldn't put too much weight on the text below or if you do, at least know that part of the reason why I wrote this topic was because I happened to be reading this when I spotted Quack's Anonib post and it serves as a more official phrase for why this advice is wrong so I revolved most of my statements around these concepts *since lots of low self-esteem people put a lot of stock in technical sounding words over mere opinions. ///*sarcasm

#### **Wikipedia:**

In social psychology, the fundamental attribution error (also known as correspondence bias or attribution effect) describes the tendency to over-value dispositional or personality-based explanations for the observed behaviors of others while under-valuing situational explanations for those behaviors. The fundamental attribution error is most visible when people explain the behavior of others. It does not explain interpretations of one's own behavior - where situational factors are often taken into consideration. This discrepancy is called the actor-observer bias.

#### **One of the causes according to the article:**

Lack of effortful adjustment: Sometimes, even though we are aware that the person's behavior is constrained by situational factors, we still commit the fundamental attribution error. This is because we do not take into account behavioral and situational information simultaneously to characterize the dispositions of the actor. Initially, we use the observed behavior to characterize the person by automaticity. We need to make

deliberate and conscious effort to adjust our inference by considering the situational constraints. Therefore, when situational information is not sufficiently taken into account for adjustment, the uncorrected dispositional inference creates the fundamental attribution error. It also explains that people commit to fundamental attribution error more when they have no motivation or energy.

**Excerpts** from the Malcom Gladwell article mentioned:

[http://www.gladwell.com/2000/2000\\_05\\_29\\_a\\_interview.htm](http://www.gladwell.com/2000/2000_05_29_a_interview.htm)

### **Apparently human beings don't need to know someone in order to believe they know someone**

Some years ago, an experimental psychologist at Harvard University, Nalini Ambady, together with Robert Rosenthal, set out to examine the nonverbal aspects of good teaching. As the basis of her research, she used videotapes of teaching fellows which had been made during a training program at Harvard. Her plan was to have outside observers look at the tapes with the sound off and rate the effectiveness of the teachers by their expressions and physical cues. Ambady wanted to have at least a minute of film to work with. When she looked at the tapes, though, there was really only about ten seconds when the teachers were shown apart from the students. "I didn't want students in the frame, because obviously it would bias the ratings," Ambady says. "So I went to my adviser, and I said, 'This isn't going to work.'"

But it did. The observers, presented with a ten-second silent video clip, had no difficulty rating the teachers on a fifteen-item checklist of personality traits. In fact, when Ambady cut the clips back to five seconds, the ratings were the same. They were even the same when she showed her raters just two seconds of videotape. That sounds unbelievable unless you actually watch Ambady's teacher clips, as I did, and realize that the eight seconds that distinguish the longest clips from the shortest are superfluous: anything beyond the first flash of insight is unnecessary. When we make a snap judgment, it is made in a snap. It's also, very clearly, a judgment: we get a feeling that we have no difficulty articulating.

Ambady's next step led to an even more remarkable conclusion. She compared those snap judgments of teacher effectiveness with evaluations made, after a full semester of classes, by students of the same teachers. The correlation between the two, she found, was astoundingly high. A person watching a two-second silent video clip of a teacher he has never met will reach conclusions about how good that teacher is that are very similar to those of a student who sits in the teacher's class for an entire semester.

Recently, a comparable experiment was conducted by Frank Bernieri, a psychologist at the University of Toledo. Bernieri, working with one of his graduate students, Neha Gada-Jain, selected two people to act as interviewers, and trained them for six weeks in the proper procedures and techniques of giving an effective job interview. The two then interviewed ninety-eight volunteers, of various ages and backgrounds. The interviews lasted between fifteen and twenty minutes, and afterward each interviewer filled out a six-page, five-part evaluation of the person he'd just talked to. Originally, the intention of the study was to find out whether applicants who had been coached in certain nonverbal behaviors designed to ingratiate themselves with their interviewers--like mimicking the interviewers' physical gestures or posture--would get better ratings than applicants who behaved normally. As it turns out, they didn't. But then another of Bernieri's students, an undergraduate named Tricia Prickett, decided that she wanted to use the interview videotapes and the evaluations that had been collected to test out the adage that "the handshake is everything."

"She took fifteen seconds of videotape showing the applicant as he or she knocks on the door, comes in, shakes the hand of the interviewer, sits down, and the interviewer

welcomes the person," Bernieri explained. Then, like Ambady, Prickett got a series of strangers to rate the applicants based on the handshake clip, using the same criteria that the interviewers had used. Once more, against all expectations, the ratings were very similar to those of the interviewers. "On nine out of the eleven traits the applicants were being judged on, the observers significantly predicted the outcome of the interview," Bernieri says. "The strength of the correlations was extraordinary."

This research takes Ambady's conclusions one step further. In the Toledo experiment, the interviewers were trained in the art of interviewing. They weren't dashing off a teacher evaluation on their way out the door. They were filling out a formal, detailed questionnaire, of the sort designed to give the most thorough and unbiased account of an interview. And still their ratings weren't all that different from those of people off the street who saw just the greeting.

Bernieri and Ambady believe that the power of first impressions suggests that human beings have a particular kind of prerational ability for making searching judgments about others. In Ambady's teacher experiments, when she asked her observers to perform a potentially distracting cognitive task--like memorizing a set of numbers--while watching the tapes, their judgments of teacher effectiveness were unchanged. But when she instructed her observers to think hard about their ratings before they made them, their accuracy suffered substantially.

### **Thinking only gets in the way**

"The brain structures that are involved here are very primitive," Ambady speculates. "All of these affective reactions are probably governed by the lower brain structures."

What we are picking up in that first instant would seem to be something quite basic about a person's character, because what we conclude after two seconds is pretty much the same as what we conclude after twenty minutes or, indeed, an entire semester.

"Maybe you can tell immediately whether someone is extroverted, or gauge the person's ability to communicate,"Bernieri says. "Maybe these clues or cues are immediately accessible and apparent." Bernieri and Ambady are talking about the existence of a powerful form of human intuition. In a way, that's comforting, because it suggests that we can meet a perfect stranger and immediately pick up on something important about him. It means that I shouldn't be concerned that I can't explain why I like Nolan Myers, because, if such judgments are made without thinking, then surely they defy explanation.

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But there's a troubling suggestion here as well.

The first impression becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: we hear what we expect to hear. The interview is hopelessly biased in favor of the nice.

### **End Excerpt**

You're always going to compare yourself to someone. That's what helps build your self-esteem over anything else.

Even when you're self-comparing, the self you are comparing with is always 2 different images of your own self.

This is why many better things have come from comparison. Comparing helps you think, comparing helps you mature, comparing helps you spot your mistakes, comparing helps you man up to your mistakes. Comparing helps you build self-esteem.

In almost every cases of low self-esteem, the environment is mostly to blame.

That's why if you compare yourself while in a progress-decaying environment you fail because you're comparing and being given items to compare that are incompatible with your own biological make-up and low self-esteem is your body's way of saying that many things around you suck or many things around you are making you suck worse.

This doesn't mean you should blame everyone around you. *Don't worry, you're going to be doing that alot when you've become apathetic anyway.*

In fact, only by going "most of the way comparing" can you stop blaming others.

Seems like the opposite is true but comparing helps you build hope. Comparing helps you get out of your mental couch.

Comparing helps you build clues on how to reject people that drain you and spot people that inspire you.

**...but only if you keep comparing yourself to others and run that extra mile.**

When you don't run that extra mile, your mind lingers on what you're often comparing yourself to and when those people and things suck the life out of you, that's when you enter the twilight zone of trying to blame someone else...and trying *not to be evil* and *not* blame *"that"* someone else.

That's when you develop low self-esteem as a defense mechanism to give you the sign that any current choice sucks: You've been caught in a web where you should leave or change ("real" change) *not* pick A or B or C because all have been infected with hope-leeching roads that strongly lead to a slow unfulfilling (unconscious) (mental) death. (*...until your physical body catches up or your suicidal mindset gets bad enough or you slip into an animalistic adaptation which will just end up causing society to accuse you of being a sociopath/a psychopath/insane/murderer/criminal/etc.*)

The modern problem is that we now mostly live in a luxurious *"isolation-friendly life"* (*aka social withdrawal for non-hikikomoris*)

Low self-esteem isn't the same low self-esteem that you would get when you're rejected by your tribe and have to survive elsewhere or take charge. There's just not enough discomfort to leave and there's also too many roadblocks to change.

You can no longer conquer cities or go on a quest to the unknown or even just plain leave without feeling morally wrong...except in videogames. (*and even there it's more akin to escapism than virtual reality. The more you induce yourself, the less you are developed by the situation into a better person but as a mere spectator loving commentor regardless whether there's something you need to act on rather than to "interact" with*)

This doesn't mean change is impossible but the peer pressure *and anti-biological reaction* of both attempting and failing to change your environment means that low self-esteem is no longer a mechanism to push you to a position to find your greatness and has been reduced to something to be beaten down, removed, ignored and *dulled*...

That's when satisfaction turns into a desirable goal instead of the desirable goal being something that should bring you the satisfaction to stop comparing yourself to others *because you no longer want to possess the "want" to do so & thus no longer "need" to think to compare yourself to others.*

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**Note:** I just made the whole idea up. I didn't really read anything that states this is what low self-esteem is originally for.

*One is often kept in the right road by a rut. ~Gustave Droz*

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Satisfaction is imperfectly fine. In fact if you can make it work via not comparing yourself to others or being yourself, congratulations *if that indefinitely satisfies you.*

...but satisfaction unfulfilled can lead to something worse than dissatisfaction.

Dissatisfaction if tasted enough especially "fast but clear enough" can make one review and modify an over-simplified philosophy they've decided to believe in.

Not getting to that phase... lowering your standards of satisfaction so that you can keep yourself from being dissatisfied often... those can lead to less short term discomfort but they can also lead you to bubbles of doubt that in the long run doesn't truly help you or if it does help you, at the price of losing and never pursuing your dreams and goals and turning you into someone who derails other people's hopes and dreams.

"Keeping other people from taking risks to achieve their goals even if you didn't even think about holding them back."

It's part of the way the world corrupts and it's one of the dark side of prolonged luxury. Not just in terms of greed and sloth but especially in our conscious "reality" of feeling pleasure. *(That is, it's not just in feeling all around "all the time" pleasure but just in the mindset that we no longer have to worry about certain discomforts. That we've somehow outgrown and are now entitled to the need of things that go beyond necessity. "That we've evolved and now have the right to devolve".)*

I'm going off on a tangent but that's because I feel the pitfalls of satisfaction are important enough to be mentioned. *(especially when most people have a tendency to think dictionarily rather than analytically when it comes to addressing human social development and forget that the mind is not a switch but is often a slider...a slider that can't suddenly turn antonym unless you're trying to focus on explaining away people rather than making yourself understand them to the best that you can at that time.)*

That's one of the big problems following Quack's line of thinking but I'm also exaggerating the scope of Quack's post so I won't add anything further to this.

*(I also don't have much of a right to say anything more. I don't see people analytically either. I don't have any knowledge of anthropology and I'm the farthest from being street smart. I just thought that in a world where people are so concerned about the black and white of dissatisfaction and satisfaction that the self-feeling of starting to be dissatisfied or not being satisfied by satisfaction and all those other "subtle nuances" that make us human...gets set aside and diluted in favor of more motivational advises turned bullet points which would be nice if it actually was the Futurama of Zen but all it does is make South Park seem like a deeper cartoon.)*

### **Doubt is good**

Doubt is good. It's one of those factors why comparing yourself helps you lead yourself somewhere better. It's the magical stuff that makes anyone accomplish extraordinary things and in doing that, it fulfills the necessary requirement for raising one's self-esteem.

Bubbles of doubt though are not only harmful but does lead to what Quack calls

"unhealthy" and all in all, it's the very same structure that develops one's current low self-esteem.

This also shows that despite the *"that's essentially like trying to become good at something that you like but have never even tried or were never in a position to possess the moment you became aware of it"* part of Quack's post makes sense for those of us who have experienced this...there's a bit of a straw man in there too.

The short and over-simplified retort to the above is simply to remove it. The statement is wrong because opportunity is a myth. We create our luck by setting up our positions. (*seeds, beach-head, fortress of solitude, ivory tower, invisible mode, white house, goal blueprinting, strategic quality training camp...hikikomori...*)

*The moment you become aware of it is the best time you should pursue it* because chances are your low self-esteem is already creating the story to de-motivate you from being passionate about said thing and if you don't start soon you're going to lose interest and you have no concrete result to recover your inspiration from once that sets in.

*...blah blah blah (you will then be disappointed)*

*...blah blah blah blah (you will eventually find ways to keep yourself from being dissatisfied instead of letting yourself be satisfied)*

It's not that simple though.

Yes, some of the words above are perfectly logical. Morally superior. The right stuff. What successful people avoid and do. What motivational blogs often write about.

*...yadda yadda yadda*

**It's...not...t-h-a-t...s-i-m-p-l-e..."though"**

Call it an excuse. Call it whatever you want. Some of us low self-esteem people really experience this and it's not like we reject the advice but environment is 90%+ of what you can really do.

...or in the words of Quack: "position to possess the moment"

Sure you still have to pursue it but the over-simplified retort rarely if never gives you clues as to how to handle making steps forward when you're having to take multiple steps back.

...and that is a HUGE factor.

You have top athletes that could play the suckage off and still they break down if they aren't shown how to mentally take a step back.

These are guys that are already supposed to be the cream of the crop: The opposite of low self-esteem hikikomories... confident, skilled, outside, rich...*while doing what they love* and yet... they have broken down when they don't know how to do this.

To borrow a sentence from another anon in the thread:

*"Yeah, thought patterns are really hard to overcome."*

Thought patterns and bubbles of doubt are synonymous except thought patterns don't provide much of a clue except if you're talking to a neurologist or there's a specialist in the house and provide jargon excuses for our actions. (*Which I'm not saying are invalid*)

*but that we expect them to say something that will help us not critically think and just sort of eat it up and hope what they say gets us out of this rut)*

...then again I'm just trying to spin things to create a straw man phrase where you can separate the "good" doubt from the "bad" doubt. (and I'm too lazy to google an official sounding word)

I call them bubbles of doubt because anything mind-related seems open-ended enough to me.

Thought process for example: *Nice sounding* word... but are we really talking about how the brain develops? Is it really all in the head and has little to do with how we were raised? How our social settings causes our brain to work?

Is it really just a set pattern that we can no longer influence with our own self-perceived tale of our lives and must simply reject and man up to?

Is it even just thought process and not thought-kill that is hard to overcome?

Maybe for the hardcore buttheads...*\*cough\** I mean truly determined people who are determined in all situations and all scenarios because they've "set" their thought process to "success" or at least their self-esteem to "high".

...but I say that person above doesn't exist. Determination is not judged empirically. It's judged post-mortem of the criteria and then everyone tries to empirically document that event and then everyone lowers the standard of what is successful in that event... until someone legitimately surpasses it *and then everyone credits that person... and then everyone lowers the standard again... up to that previous event...until someone surpasses it again...*

...it is only **then** that the analyses, the generic strategies, the results get dubbed empirical thus effective thus true *except it's not*. It's really dubbed group-thinkable.

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*Where lots of people agree that it works and losers like us who can't make it work should just "evolve" or stfu and die so that conformic people won't have to hear our excuses anymore!*

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*(Emphasis on conforming lemmings since it's a toss-up for successful people; some who realize and truly became successful by overcoming these sort of conformist thinking while others simply consider doing their own thing rather than reacting to these people a necessary key to their success so they'd rather not develop the perfect answer to bring down these people because they'd rather develop the imperfect answer of achieving their goals) - still this does not mean there are only two types of successes but the truly successful people have more than cliches on their pockets so even though there's no guarantee they will share their secrets or disagree with the evolve or die statements, their words become less like dead-ends...still I've never been a success so I'm just ass-wiping.*

Biggest reason why I called this "bubbles of doubt" is because the word just simply popped in my mind and then I just filled in the blanks.

Unfortunately I know zero things about physics and zero things about neurology so I have no analogy to give except the fact that bubbles disappear quickly and doubts and ideas and comparisons work the same way except when another bubble appears, it could be the same substance of doubt that just popped in our head awhile ago except it might be at a different angle so we think it's different...and eventually it gets forgotten in favor of the bubbles we're now looking at. (*"Signals" would probably be a much clearer word*

*to describe this but I wanted to step away from the antenna reception type of analogy that is closely in-lined with words like thought process and bring it to a more romantic less self-blaming word similar to how creating ripples in the river of life with our actions may sound similar to the interpretation that everything we do towards something is akin to a vote for that something but the ripples become more like a part of a song where not everyone can always tailor tweak the lyrics even when we wrote part of the lyrics.*

*Voting and thought process, however, says it's all on us but accepting that it's all on us just causes us to be harmful towards ourselves instead of becoming wiser. Also I feel it's more realistic to life that, unlike signals, we often can pop or blow bubbles when we have the tools to and it's not like an invisible scientist explained phenomenon.)*

Again, I don't really have a technical sounding article to associate with this idea so I'll just paste this other piece of the Malcolm Gladwell article:

"In the late nineteen-twenties, in a famous study, the psychologist Theodore Newcomb analyzed extroversion among adolescent boys at a summer camp. He found that how talkative a boy was in one setting--say, lunch--was highly predictive of how talkative that boy would be in the same setting in the future. A boy who was curious at lunch on Monday was likely to be curious at lunch on Tuesday. But his behavior in one setting told you almost nothing about how he would behave in a different setting: from how someone behaved at lunch, you couldn't predict how he would behave during, say, afternoon playtime. In a more recent study, of conscientiousness among students at Carleton College, the researchers Walter Mischel, Neil Lutsky, and Philip K. Peake showed that how neat a student's assignments were or how punctual he was told you almost nothing about how often he attended class or how neat his room or his personal appearance was. How we behave at any one time, evidently, has less to do with some immutable inner compass than with the particulars of our situation.

This conclusion, obviously, is at odds with our intuition. Most of the time, we assume that people display the same character traits in different situations. We habitually underestimate the large role that context plays in people's behavior. In the Newcomb summer-camp experiment, for example, the results showing how little consistency there was from one setting to another in talkativeness, curiosity, and gregariousness were tabulated from observations made and recorded by camp counsellors on the spot. But when, at the end of the summer, those same counsellors were asked to give their final impressions of the kids, they remembered the children's behavior as being highly consistent.

"The basis of the illusion is that we are somehow confident that we are getting what is there, that we are able to read off a person's disposition," Richard Nisbett, a psychologist at the University of Michigan, says. "When you have an interview with someone and have an hour with them, you don't conceptualize that as taking a sample of a person's behavior, let alone a possibly biased sample, which is what it is. What you think is that you are seeing a hologram, a small and fuzzy image but still the whole person."

Now the above is obviously talking more about the social environment of a person but I think it just has much to do with the mental make-up of **THE** thought process.

In most situations, the things that stimulate our brain stimulate us in a constant flash.

In jobs and homeworks for example, no matter how difficult the task is, the bubbles we have is often constantly in sync.

Even if we don't know anything because we didn't study for the test... and this is where it relates to doubt --- we're popping bubbles that says we don't know the answer to this same stereotypical event so we get worried but our self-esteem does not malfunction.

*"We don't know" ...but we doubt little about what we think we don't know. We doubt little in the sense that during and right after the event we do still have the capability to compare ourself to others when we choose to.*

But when we have a new criteria in the bubble, it jars our mind (it jars our comparison) even if empirically it seems like the same stereotype. i.e. failing a test but because you are raised differently and given expectations of grandeur: suddenly dips your current self-esteem down the drain and might even cause you to want to kill yourself

This partly explains why there are tons of average people with jobs, degrees and careers that would look down on any oppressed underclass they can socially lambast and peer pressurify with guilt but as soon as they lost their jobs or their career is in jeopardy or even if their works of knowledge turns out to be wrong, they temporarily malfunction and panic/deny/get depressed and act like someone who has low self-esteem.

Sure, tons of this is related to the fear of the unknown, the fear of poverty, short sightedness, elitism, reputation lost, career over...all that other stuff but one would think that the excuses they used against us: the fact that we're parasite singles, lazy, pathetic, dumb and that they aren't...would somehow translate to reducing their panic and help them recover faster but *it rarely does. They always have to get used to it first. They have to "pick themselves up". They suddenly forget to "compare".*

*(...Yet somehow they can already tell that all it takes to live like a hikikomori (a scenario they've never been in) is to be parasitic, lazy, non-social...or any definition they simulate in their head or read in their free time or judge from a single individual's action.)*

I have really no right to guess like this because I have never actually experienced *their* situation but I'll go ahead anyway and say not even one bit of that enters their thought when they're wallowing in their misery.

Why?

Because of these bubbles of doubt where they don't really compare themselves to anyone except the ones that are in front of them or the ones that pop in their head.

This would be a capt. obvious statement if not for the fact that they (and we) often think we were the ones who "directed" our comparison to a certain person.

When a love struck man thinks of the girl he loves, he thinks it's because he loves her and wants to think of her but...it's just a pop and he clings to that pop to quiet down every other pop until a stronger pop or his grasps in that memory weakens enough to jar his mind away from that thought but it wasn't his conscious decision to control what pops out. It was only his decision to prefer to hold on to looking at smaller less actionable bubbles and protect *maybe even synonymize said bubbles from getting blown up by magnifying their/it's size* for as long as he can so that it becomes part of his "thought pattern" or his "identity".

When an athlete gets in the zone, he thinks he puts himself in the right mindset and it's his competitive "determination-max self" that unlocks his full potential but really it's just a pop. Often involving muscle memory... the single pop of a ball swishing through the basket...or the "pop" from that feeling of properly mimicking the motion he did to get the basket to go in but... *it's always a pop.*

It's *never* a line that determines what you think. In fact any bubble can store multiple combinations of events and actions that can allow you to multitask and multithink as long as they're not separate bubbles (even if the bubbles are similar) otherwise it will cause you to lose focus anyway when enough separate bubbles form to battle for your focus.

In a way, it's why every sports-related determination (at the basic level) is always about a series of training to get yourself into a set of in-sync pops come game time to reduce the bubbles of doubts when the pop in your head does not match with what is actually needed during that point in the game. (It's also why confidence can be more important than determination most of the time in "sports preparation" because determination must assume your focus is in the right place to apply your determination but confidence kills that doubt. Confidence basically tells a player to ignore every other bubbles and simply have the bubble that says "I want to succeed in this sport" or "I want to excel at this role because my team needs me to" regardless of whether the person has a more pressing matter that needs dealing with or a more impactful life situation that their in-born talents can better help society with.)

More notably when a poor loser compares himself to a rich human walking by his emotions aren't always of being pathetic and striving to work harder. His low self-esteem can just as randomly turn to anger, jealousy, lust, etc. and even his actions aren't based on a "plot". That's why despite some crimes being called disorganized crimes, many organized crimes are rarely premeditated and often just involves a criminal running more simulated pops in their head to quiet down and focus what they will do to a single target. And yes, that may seem like planning but if you take account the criminal's thoughts *before* his plan, often they're more *disorganized* than the average disorganized criminal. Often he merely produces more consistent bubbles of thought that quiets his raw emotions enough to execute a more complicated plan.

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***Take care to get what you like, or you will be forced to like what you get.***

~George Bernard Shaw

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How this idea affects Quack's post relates to his comment about: *"Everyone has some sort of strength, sure there are people out there who seem to be better at everything you do, but then there are those in a worse position than you are."* and *"Then there are those who have nothing, but are content with their lives"* and *"personally defined achieved wealth"*.

It's not that these sentences require an invented word to debunk. In fact, most people would just sum this away as "idea spicers".

Stuff to make a philosophy that can stand by itself sound like it's worth an article.

The problem lies when I try to "respect" his advise for hikikomoris to stop comparing themselves to others.

Yes, I could just as point out how Quack's usage of *"sure there are people out there who seem to be better at everything you do"* and then adding *"but then there are those in a worse position than you are"* immediately right after shows his bias and his obvious intent to create an emotional blow-up doll for lower self esteemed people to attach themselves to.

I could say the fact that he even uttered the cliché of *"Then there are those who have nothing, but are content with their lives"* proved to me that he never really tried to see the point of view of those people and merely interacted with them in the same way a well-lived guy can visit a poor country as a sort of missionary vacation but then conclude his opinion based on the idea *that he can leave that hell hole and return to his better off place who's poverty spots are still more luxurious than the environment he's just been.*

That opinion seems more like it should make a jerk be more bigotted against the locals but it can affect sincere, kind and helpful people too. (*especially because sincere, kind and helpful people often under-estimate the fact that the locals can also be the jerks*)

Going back to the widow's tale, it's the same as if a rich man gave a lot more than another rich man *but not his "all"*. You'd think that would matter (*and in the "short" long term concept of providing something to a treasury it would*) but the further long term...the *culture developing* long term effect of his actions would produce such guilt rather than effort realizing inducing phrases such as *"then there are those who have nothing, but are content with their lives."* - phrases which even though they are positive haven't really revolutionized the world of H-E-L-P and have even opened up a culture where manipulators can take advantage of the "desire to help the poor" culture that were partly built/partly continued/partly pushed by those rich men who emphasized that the problem was merely because "the helpers of the needy" merely did not have cash to help and that it can't be anything else. Or if it's anything else, it's not their problem. Giving away resources feels good/feels effortful already so that helps a ton -> So unless that helper was a blatant scammer, *there aren't going to be problems for the poor caused by their help.*

**...but this is the thing:** if I'm only interested in arguing against Quack's post, that should be the direction I should be going. Not only does that help me shorten this post alot but most importantly: *I don't have to rant anymore!!! It shortens my need to think about this reply further and I can be done with this post faster!*

***I don't have to keep thinking about a post that no one would read anyway because of it's length and it's useless un-researched opinionated quality.***

The reality though is I have to respect Quack's post because if I don't, I'd end up saying something like this:

I've been in this situation. And you're doing exactly the sort of thing I posted above, inventing criticisms of how others look at you. The truth is, people are mostly self-absorbed. They are probably thinking, "This guy keeps turning down our invites. Maybe HE doesn't like US!" Eventually they stop inviting you, and everyone thinks it's because you hate them, and vice versa.

So go out and try to make the best of it even if it makes you uncomfortable.

...and sure, if I look at that post point by point, I agree with everything that has been said.

*but does it help these posters?*

Good advice, the only problem I see is that everyone is raised in different environments and people tend to answer to criticism in different ways. You sort of have to analyze your thoughts in order to see how you react to it and then modify/avoid the behavior, some people don't do this.

As with being "yourself", it's kind of hard to be yourself when you have believed all these years that you are a piece of shit. You sort of have to go through some way to raise your self-esteem that will allow you to see the positive side of you. So far I haven't been able to do so and I'll probably need CBT or something like that.

My problem is that I know just fine what my problems are and what I should do to fix them, but I just don't seem to have the courage to do it.

I know I can be attractive, funny, smart and likable and I also know other people aren't better than I am (everyone has problems). Yet, I am in my twenties, don't really have any good friends and it seems like I'm 'too late' to ever get them. And even when opportunity arrives (like, I've been invited to a movie night a few times lately), I often feel people are just inviting me because it would be rude to single me out and NOT give

me an invitation. I'd rather not go and maintain a (very) distant relation with this people, then go there and have everyone think: 'why is he here?'

### **Yes, it can!**

but IMO it would only help them if they get lucky and their situation "really" just needs *to be gotten over with and done*.

I'm not saying understanding what I meant by bubbles of doubt is the key because if I had the solution, I really don't need to write this long.

...but just as *inventing criticism* has some validity, bubbles of doubt (I hope) is the same.

I would even go as far as say they're talking about the same thing...*with one crucial difference*.

Most of the time when people resort to these *vague-ish* phrases it's because they don't have the solution themselves.

They *want* to have the solution *badly* **but they don't have it**. **I don't have it!**

Instead you hope you provide a clue. You hope your experiences would direct people to find their clues.

For some of the better marketers, you even nudge people to the direction of *believing* in your clues.

### **Direction is the key**

The crucial difference and my crucial disagreement with the phrase "inventing criticism" is the way it directs people.

Now, I'm not going to go in-depth with how I think *inventing criticism* would direct one's mindset because people can do that on their own.

What I intended from the phrase bubbles of doubt is to lead readers to look at their doubts as if they're looking at a revolving movie where half of the moving scenes moves inside of their head and half moves outside *while in an "ever changing motion picture"*

I'm not sure if the above complicates my intention or not since I originally didn't intend to describe a picture but I just can't find the right sentence to describe something that is both influenced by yourself as it is influenced by everything outside of yourself *while not all together doing so*.

When you invent criticisms, you focus too much within.

That is a nice clue and all but *within* also makes people *seemingly* overthink. (like the poster who talks about identity... purpose... even Quack's post about comparing yourself to others)

I say seemingly because I think if people really overthought, they would have solved their problems eventually.

The reason we don't is because we're overthinking about the wrong aspects of our problem.

It's not that there's a "miracle pill" *right* aspect but it's like trying to come up with a

single layered solution to a multi-layered problem which most serious problems are especially the minor ones.

It's very similar to... training hard but not smart or... paralyzing one's self with our own analyses.

It's all about... pedagogy - and knowing and developing that pedagogy to act upon the problem.

It's about being able to rebound a wave of problem *but not necessarily solving it* but accepting it for what it is and narrowing it to what it is by widening what it isn't *so that you can see more definitively what your problem is all about*.

*...and you don't have to go all the way. You'll estimate it's enough when you feel like that edge of the problem is wide enough and now you can go and focus on another side or another edge of the same problem. Hell, most of the time, I have a problem that I haven't been working on for so long, forgotten then returned and ended up just resolving a side of it by simply deleting or skimming parts of the problem but that isn't a reliable way of solving it especially the truly multi-layered ones but many of those got resolved not because I had become more intelligent but simply because the doubts I had were no longer the same. Hell, many people have experienced their big problems go away because a bigger problem ate it up and it didn't just become less important but it literally got resolved because the environment have morphed along with your current thought process.*

Still...

You might accuse me of just rephrasing the common productivity advise of working small but *it's not "that" either*.

Rationally it sounds like it but I tried it and it just doesn't sit well with me so I'm not going to advise that.

It's more about you building yourself without realizing it; *or... knowing what the blueprint is but intending and doing so but not doing so blindly like "just" doing it or doing it to get past it like a situation that needs to be cured.*

It's not that those won't work but... alot of times when people talk about inventing criticism, comparing yourself, identity...it's even beyond not knowing the solution, they might even not know the problem.

Even if they do, it's like shooting it in all directions and hoping you fish a solution.

*...and once you do, you get over it...but as in poker, just because one is a fish doesn't mean they're a shark even if they can have short spurts that look the same. (and hindsight advises based on hindsight experiences can often be that; mostly overly storytold spurts that took way more to do in reality but glory painted so that it seems the spurt and not the journey that causes the solution to manifest.)*

But that kind of thing doesn't address the problem either.

It's like a great boxer doing bad fundamentals and then getting away with it.

It's like a great athlete doing un-optimized high intensity training and being able to make up for it and win big.

It's like a guy saying *stop inventing criticism* because that's how he thinks he got over his problem but ends up not really stopping himself from inventing any criticism but

merely allowed himself to get out of his rut.

All those things do happen and most of the time they're how people get past anything but they don't provide solutions. They provide guns so you would actually play russian roulette.

That's why within is bad. Without is bad either. *Both* inside and outside is bad either.

You're just switching guns. Maybe even switching the type of bullet...switching your anxiety level...switching your drunkenness when playing the game about your life... but... *if someone tried to build around it, they have to de-crapify your code in order to make it work and that's assuming they have the time and knowledge to already do so or that your solution is indeed the Holy Grail of solutions for that problem. Or hell, that your generic solution would survive being over-simplified by thousands of people so that people working on it won't feel like they're spreading a conventional wisdom to-be.*

Bubbles of doubt won't make it less like russian roulette and it's not scientifically built to be effective and based around someone who has an idea of why you have low self-esteem but I'm hoping it will make you at least say "me first" when you are the one who spinned the cylinder.

*(btw I'm not saying a well developed system can cure you but it will at least make you play No Limit Hold'em Poker instead)*

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***"The hiki formula: Self-esteem=(personal success/social expectations)"***

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Back to *personally defined wealth* and this formula.

I won't be listing steps on how to minimize your bubbles of doubt but try this changes and see if you get better or equal results compared to Quack's formula:

Self-esteem = (personal doubts/social expectations)

Self-esteem = (personal failures/social expectations)

Self-esteem = (personal success/invented criticisms)

Wealth isn't built on success (although sudden success or inherited success can help establish it instantly)

It's more about... *consistent accumulation.*

If you consistently accumulate something, your bubbles of doubt become fewer. When it becomes fewer, your problem seems smaller or it seems like you're off tackling another big problem instead.

When you accumulate enough doubt/success/failures/invented criticisms related to your problem, your self-esteem starts to morph. (because your problem also morphs)

Whether it morphs positively or horribly, I can not tell but it can push you back to the way doubt and satisfaction was supposed to be - and that's push you to take risks, play the game and change or run away somewhere else.

Being that I never came back from the dead from successfully committing suicide, there's no reason for you to believe me but I'd like to make the guess that even people who commit suicide, before they actually do it, gain a boost in self-esteem near equal to that of a top pro and that is what allows them to pull the trigger.

It's not a confidence boosting type of self-esteem but a calming one but *it is* self-esteem. You could even say the confidence type guards against oppression and the calming type guards against depression. (which is something most suicidals would have to beat before they pull down their life lever)

This is not to praise suicidals but to emphasize how one creates wealth by consistent accumulating something regardless whether an act is perceived as a success or not.

In the case of suicide, *or maybe just the seppuku-like ones where there's no accident or attention whoring or jackassery*, the same internal and external factors that create a suicide wanting person is often something they beat and no longer possess *at the minute* before they kill themselves. (my guess)

It's basically that they have too much bubbles of doubts everywhere else (or in parts they value most in life) and it's not death that becomes appealing but lack of living and experiencing and constantly facing those doubts but not being able to calculate and execute a solution that is compatible with their identity and the lack of living instead ends up quelling their bubbles and singling it out to a single doubt: could they do it? could they remove themselves? *Could that be THE solution?* (not kill...but disappear although they also admit that they have to kill themselves -> this too is part of their bubbles of doubt but it gets less and less the more they accumulate suicidal intentions)

Similarly if I have to guess how an already successful person can be more satisfied/successful both from comparing himself and not comparing himself, I'll try to do that by using Kobe Bryant as an example.

*(Take note that by being successful in a popular well payed sports does already effect one's bubbles of doubt but Kobe has had many personal highly publicized dramas in the NBA compared to most of his fellow players)*

Now I'm not a fan of Kobe and I don't monitor him at all and even the things I'm referring to, I'm not saying that I have read something in-depth but one thing that's unique about this guy is that he can encounter one of the most distracting thing that can affect a guy in sports and that's the rape scandal and he comes away from that looking more durable and determined in the regular season and yet he managed to seem like he played with less passion against Boston in the Finals. (at least to me)

...yet next season's Finals, he played more aggressively. (although it might be because he was against a different team)

Now I don't really have a set of videos to compare (and it's not like I'm talking about him playing a better game and the context of the two situations are vastly different) but if I have to guess, I would say in the rape scandal he seemed impressively durable because the trial was actually a distraction for him and instead of comparing himself to others *(or his expected self which in this case counts as "other" because of that one of a kind stature of becoming a superstar improving to a championship)* - he stopped comparing himself to that image and just went out there under the mindset of a basketball player *that doesn't drag his team down and is still playing up to par.*

Now this mindset isn't anything new. Coaches say it all the time and it's ignorant to think an elite pro-level superstar doesn't know this.

I guess what I'm trying to say though is that it isn't that he just mentally or physically stayed consistent but he changed his comparison to that of an aging veteran player who just needs to keep himself in shape while still being ready to play throughout an entire season where as before he was this player who came to play but *didn't have* a constant doubt that something outside of him and his game would affect how he plays during the

game so he ended up playing night in and night out in a less passionate "more critiquing" manner.

Assuming my guess is correct, what basically happened to his self-esteem was that it didn't rise but it didn't fall in the way one would normally expect it to decline. With regards to this topic though, the more important distinction is how there's no "one kind" of "comparing yourself to others" even from a single person.

Now training partners obviously have a huge part in that but I think this is an example where you're comparing yourself to others or yourself didn't hold you back but when you have other external problems, the other serious problem (basketball) gets silenced even though you have to still be comparing your performance to stay at that consistent superstar level.

One could simply say this is just proof that success builds self-esteem (and that lowered expectations help) and that's true but then Kobe should have looked the part of his previous self before the trial but he actually looked more focused playing the game during the trial. (It helped that you could see his increased signs of fatigue during that period but he actually looked more paced than any period before that. Even compared to earlier in the season.)

You could even say that this is a case where it was effective for him because other problems allowed him to compare himself to others and that silenced him from *thinking* to compare himself to others *in the game of basketball "as a superstar"* and that helped him pace himself better.

...Yet at the same time, in a much more pressured environment, Kobe was showing more doubts and frustrations during the Boston Finals series even though you'd think the trial would be more stressful.

Of course the Finals that year could be much more important than everything else for him and he was being smothered defensively but what I found interesting was that he disappeared in that series compared to that trial Kobe.

That's not really news in the basketball world because great defenses can severely lower his efficiency even before the trial and it's not liked he reached the Finals during that scandal period but if you look at it from the perspective of a hungry superstar just one series away from the ring, he seemed to have given up faster than all his other peers under less stressful pressure. (which becomes apparent in the later games of the series although in no way did he stopped playing like a superstar)

Now different situations do provide different emotions but when I looked at Kobe during that period, he didn't come off to me like a superstar that was disappointed and beaten which most superstars in the Finals have that look when they're being blown away especially when you're supposed to be the next GOAT.

If I were guessing his body language (and no, I know zero things about efficient body language reading), it looked to me to be the face of someone that was pacing himself - just like the Kobe during the trial.

Except he wasn't comparing himself to an aging veteran but he was comparing his and his team's rotation to Boston's. Now the duh part is that all NBA players pretty much do this by rewatching tapes but that's the reaction I got from him during the game. I felt when the game was over he still was disappointed and all that but he just came off to me like a guy who was ready to hit the gym and add parts of his game to counter against that kind of defense and sure enough against Orlando, he was a bit more accurate shooting against a defense that only seemed to be lesser marginally than Boston's and in this season, he truly went away from a more foul-drawing driver or 3pt

shooting facilitator into a tough *clutch* situation shooter. (Where as last season, he wasn't as good at the clutch as he was merely a more consistent tough defense "hand over your face" shooter.)

Now he could always do that and the obvious flaw with using Kobe Bryant is that I'm telling you how I interpret his game without telling you what the general basketball fanbase' interpretation of these are because I simply don't know. I'm a dumb basketball fan. I don't have stats. I don't have video collections. I simply use my gut instinct and my flawed memory.

Worse, when talking about a guy like Kobe who's elite, he obviously can do so many things that when you talk about isolating a single basketball skill he possess, it's not even the same as saying an average NBA player has poor "this" and "that". It's more like how he got contained and not how he is "poor" in that aspect.

Still to me Kobe has become a plus and minus star player. That is he improves his game less on improving his skills but on maximizing his skills to match up with his opposition and his current physicality.

Nothing new there though because all great players adjust their game to compensate for their reduced athleticism as they get older. I just feel Kobe takes it to another level in that every season it literally feels like the guy went Create a Basketball player on himself.

It's like he would minus 10 on his passing decision and add 10 to his shooting and then remove -20 to his drive but add +10 to his defense and add +10 to his footwork.

Again, all elite athletes do that in that they're constantly trying to add another aspect to their game and optimize their style to the best result and there are those who modify their game by reducing their tendencies but with Kobe it feels like he doesn't just reduce his instincts and opts to do something more than another thing. He literally comes into seasons playing like he became a poorer person at this aspect that he was actually doing better at in the previous season but another aspect of his jumps up from when he was performing poorly (relative to his status) in the previous season.

How this relates to comparing one's self is in the fact that I think that kind of mindset is what prevented Kobe from being more competitive against Boston in that series but what caused Kobe to be his best clutch self this season and a more aggressive slightly poorer shot decision maker during the Orlando Magic's Finals.

I'm not saying LA would have won but that I think it isn't unjustified for me to say that Kobe didn't put it all in the line in that Boston series.

...but he also didn't leave that series like any other superstar who lost in the Finals.

Assuming you buy the idea that he was applying the same kind of mindset he did during the rape scandal trial, what changed during that span of the Boston playoff series was that he switched his comparison of others from that of a superstar who's going to be better than the opposition and he became more of a player who said, "look. I'm not getting this done so I'm just going to do what I've already be doing" and if that didn't work instead I'll let the other guys play through it and use this time to actually study live (while his emotions were high) what he wasn't getting done or seeing against this team.

How this is similar to the rape trial Kobe is that when under stress, he sort of morphed his comparison of himself to others *while still comparing himself to the same general people*. One could simply say he used the disadvantage that was handed to him and changed it to an advantage but the more related issue deals with how his doubts morphed his mindset *during* that period.

Instead of being disappointed and wanting to get better during the off-season, he looked like he knew or he strongly felt what he needed to change before the final blow-out game was over and that's something most high basketball IQ players possess but he was able to translate it to something that's akin to a gameplan on how he would "transform" himself next season rather than just a star who gave it his all, lost, went back to the drawing board and just become his better self next season.

## **Why Kobe?**

Personally, I feel the suicidal example is much more controversial to state but I think the ignorant guesses I made on a well known successful superstar who has reached levels not even I can reach in my dreams would probably be the more problematic so I titled it this way.

I wanted to set two contrasting examples of how bubbles of doubt *affect* decisions and I wanted one to represent a group whose reputation is more of a loser and one whose reputation is considered highly successful beyond someone who is just able to go out of their house.

I'd even consider both examples bad and unorthodox in that with Kobe, you'd have to be a follower of basketball and I'm also risking the chance of being flat-out wrong in my assessment and with suicidals, it's even more off because not only don't I have a name but I'm basing my guesses on my own contemplation and experience and not even from comments by suicidal support groups or fellow suicidals. Not to mention I never got far enough that a blade penetrated my skin to be hospitalized nor did I swam very far out into the sea. In fact, I was basically paralyzed at the edge of the water. Just submerged in that part where if I pulled back I would be back at the shore. (Well it wasn't a beach but technically...)

Still, this is what my fingers wrote and since I'm also inventing the words bubbles of doubt, what the heck.

With the suicidal case, I wanted to show how one's bubbles of doubt can stop low self esteem people from comparing themselves to others and actually achieve something *except that something is seen as negative by most of society but is on par with the effort needed for a great achievement assuming the easier and painless methods weren't applied.*

How this happens is because instead of looking at it from the point of view of changing your life which let's face it, most people don't find much success in unless they merely have a minor issue holding them back or simply have a more prepared mind. I try to see it from a mindset of what held me back or what's giving my tongue the sour taste and keeping me from buying what Quack's saying.

Basically what I'm trying to say is that if you have an issue that seems like really really major *to you*, you might hear the advise of not comparing yourself to others and want to adapt it but failing to do so because you were never taught well to consider the experiences of how those who had great problems *actually adapted* to that advise.

(No, I'm not talking about myself. More like the great inventors, artists and philosophers of the past. Besides, in a way, Gautama popularized this first so it's flawed to exclude him even though his thoughts might seem emo and minor to most people nowadays.)

Bubbles of doubt isn't my way of saying this will teach you but I think if you look at the suicidal example, it isn't that knowing your doubts helps a suicidal compared to any other thing he can know about himself but if your desire morphs into something that quiets down your inner turmoil, if you have something that's the opposite of a goal: that

is instead of choosing it, it chooses you... it will morph your self-esteem without you even realizing it.

In the case of suicide, a lot of people think suicide is a rushed or overtly repressed act that eventually blew up (or at least that's the negative stereotype) but some of the legit serious issues suicidals have are based on events constantly running through their head because the environment constantly made them experience situations that brought this sensation of suffering.

*...constantly made them experience "bubbles of doubts".*

It doesn't even matter how minor a problem can seem to others, it's suicide inducing because it's a series of insecurities that in order to quiet down, in order to lessen... the suicidal ends up adapting it to an aspect called "life".

I wrote it this way because "life" can be many things to different people but once you became suicidal due to a perceived-as-serious issue, life becomes this concept that seems to not just bring pain you can't handle...lack of life becomes this quieting down of doubts. Lack of life becomes this lessening of bubbles. This lessening of activity that makes insecurities less depressing.

In a way lack of life has become the Tao of the true suicidal's existence.

...and from that unconscious adaptation to exist out of a helpless actionable state comes... self-separation.

*Self-separation in the sense that suicide is not a goal but doubts who got too many and formed a large bubble that you gain self-esteem from only comparing the self of yours who will pop that bubble due to no longer having an identity without it.*

That is, suicide is not the goal but when you have problems and you just become overwhelmed, you... "generate" and draw all those situations into that bubble that has become your identity. That is, instead of consistently feeling sorry for yourself and feeling helpless and feeling overwhelmed... it all gets consumed into that one act of "soon I won't be living anymore so I just (need) to wait a little while longer."

*Once that happens, the suicidal is finally able to "live" his life.*

This doesn't mean suicide is the only option during those times but again it's how you look at those doubts. For example, a basketball prospect who has doubts in his games can end up playing much poorer under a coach that's not receptive to his needs or he can play better...or he can elevate beyond his capability...but there's no specific criteria. He could be a guy who became better defensively or he could have been the guy who covered all his weaknesses that his strengths become magnified.

...and either outcome could be equal to playing greater rather than just better than your average.

Suicide is like that except in a different environment and that's why different suicidals have different capacities but the point here is to simply show that even when you're not a slave to your environment, whatever it is you do to change or adapt so that you can survive is highly dependent on what roads you are given and what you think are open to you currently.

And yes, it sounds oxymoronic but the desire to commit suicide is based around an adaptation to survive and not the opposite.

...and it's not a flawed one either.

For people who have chosen to commit suicide to act on these issues, every event before their death makes them move where if they never had the desire to commit suicide, it would have made them less desiring to survive. (*unless they found a different map to their life other than suicide*)

It's no different from a guy moving himself closer to death by wasting his years slaving at a job he didn't like instead of enjoying life and then using the money he saved up to make him more successful or more satisfied with himself.

The guy knows his discomfort but he opts to do that not because he wants to do so or he can't be talented elsewhere but because that seemed like the answer to his doubts and that's what caused him to move towards that direction.

In a way, it's not totally wrong. If he never answered his doubts that way, he probably wouldn't have accumulated enough savings to increase his options. This doesn't keep him from risking his life due to all that stress or even increase his chances of missing out most of his life for when it finally came for him to step back, he was too engulved in his abyss to even get out and milk the few wonderful things he could have done before he perished.

Comparing yourselves to others and wanting to commit suicide is in the same boat.

Sometimes there's a mental and environmental checkpoint in life that requires one to eliminate their life. Similarly there's a checkpoint that says stop comparing yourselves to others and you'll be satisfied.

And if you're talented and stick to those paths, you will succeed in doing something related to those paths.

If you veer away from them eventually or aren't talented in that path, you won't succeed in something related to that path *that will satisfy you*.

That's why I emphasize studying one's bubbles of doubt rather than merely agreeing or disagreeing with Quack's post because *an answer (from you or by anyone else) is not enough!*

When you don't look at your doubts and then just receive words or even look at them as just reactions, then you risk letting your "out of control" doubts "control" your identity.

In the case of comparing yourself to others, if you under-value your inner doubts and merely tried to make the words help satisfy you, you could highly risk being dissatisfied or even worse, end up in a case of inefficient denial.

That is, unlike bliss from ignorance, you're constantly trying to rationale with your inner thoughts about why you keep or start continuing to compare yourself to others but when that fails, you self-complain and become a hypocrite proponent and say that you apply that to your life but in actuality you're constantly battling and telling yourself you're satisfied rather than being truly satisfied.

This is my guess for why some people with serious problems can beat their self-preservation system. Sure, they can direct it at something else but then they never really looked at their doubts so their doubts morph their bubbles and helps them manage it and so when life finally becomes clearer to them, it also comes at a time when clarity says they can finally truly execute their plan and off themselves *regardless* whether their environment has changed to the point that they now have more options in life.

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Samuel Goldwyn once said: "**Don't pay attention to the critics. Don't even ignore them.**" ~Quoted in *Being Digital* by Nicolas Negroponte, 1995 from "The New Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain" pg. 6

In the case of the Kobe guess example, I didn't just want an example of a success case whose doubts might have failed him/her.

...whose failure to stop comparing themselves to others hurt them or vice versa.

I didn't want to just present the case of chokers because I wanted to show an aspect that I have a hard time trying to state.

I wanted to show that studying your bubbles of doubt is actually not a road to an answer, a solution or a clue to a better or higher self-esteem.

I wanted to show that even as a hack concept, I don't intend this to be a hack solution to having a satisfied outlook in life.

...but I couldn't find the right words.

When it comes to philosophy voo doo of the simplified manner, every phrase screams to not just be an advise or a golden rule but a key for contemplation and meditation. (*because there's nothing there so it screams for you to **look at it much harder** so that you can interpret your own abstract interpretation of it and dubbed it "working"*)

With bubbles of doubt though, I wanted to go away from that. I wanted to emphasize a concept that really asks you to analyze yourself not because there's a solution at the end but it can impact your decisions and the only way I can show that is to guess about a guy who's universally considered highly successful. A guy who if he makes choices, he's at the top of his dream that it's not about mistakes in his game anymore as much as it's different paths *where one path may lead him to x number of championships and another to x number -1 championships, etc.*

With Kobe, on one hand the two situations are not really extreme challenges for him and on the other hand, it's one of the most challenging things a basketball player must endure.

What I mean by this is that a trial and a championship run is hell to achieve but at the same time, the guy is already a former champion that regardless of the outcome in the Boston game, LA had rejuvenated their contender status.

Meanwhile in the trial, Kobe could ruin his career but in terms of an athlete playing through his game, it's less hampering than a major injury or a long time lay-off.

In a way what this situation presents is that, despite what certain internet posters would like to convey, successful people are neither infallible nor immune to more minor problems so for us, low self-esteem people, just remember... some people might try to take advantage of the stereotype of a low self-esteem person and use this as an excuse to make successful people seem better at dealing with every problem but you just have to look under your nose and realize these same people often have a tendency to turn against these successful people too.

Those successful people may seem better than us and it's true but don't forget that they have problems they can better handle and they have problems that they can't and it has nothing to do with how major or minor the problem as much as how it affects them personally.

Sure unless your a techie, there's no way for you to check and follow a person around the internet but just in terms of the stereotype of how people who make posts like this talk, they have a tendency (hell almost all people do) ...have the tendency to *play* with the concept of what successful people do and how impressive they are but when they stop talking or advising low self-esteem people, they also have a tendency of looking down at people who are more successful than them. Some because certain people are in the opposite team of their favorite bandwagon while in other situations simply because they're too stupid to view or review their bias and they don't really have an end goal. Even their retorts don't have one. It's like a bunch of knee-jerk reactions until somewhere something is said so that they have other things to add.

How this relates to Kobe and how this relates to low self-esteem is that there are certain things people do that are neither mistakes nor right choices *but are **hard** choices*.

...yet it's very easy for others to say that there are right solutions.

Sure, they might or might not take an absolutist stance but the end problem is that: *Right choices don't answer whether the choice is right.*

The basic gist is that it's complex but the phrase "it's complex" is just a convenient answer to say so that you would no longer have to think about it or if you continue, think to yourself and ask only those who you trust/only those who won't mock you.

Quack's post despite the length is very similar to that.

*but how do I go against his post while emphasizing the fact that his suggestion doesn't answer whether the choice is right for a low self-esteem hikikomori to follow?*

*More importantly, how do I convert the situation to something that does answer when the choice of comparing one's self to others is right and when to stop?*

At this point, it's why I'm poor at communicating with other people. I'm no good at answering these statements in simple form because the simple statement doesn't dawn on me until someone else says it.

**With the 2nd question:** *I'd like to think that I answered it to some extent by emphasizing why one must just as look at their bubbles of doubt when deciding whether they want to compare themselves to others or not.*

But I'm still saying it like it's another solution or another thing to consider.

It doesn't approach the multiple layers in life. It doesn't entice one to truly try to contemplate the issue that one's doubt would be dealing with.

This is where I hope the contrasting examples might sort of clear some of that vagueness.

The suicidal example already clears the myth that this is not about success *but what now?*

It's one thing for a low self-esteem person to say, yes, now I know I shouldn't just look at this advise as a way to succeed but I should focus on accumulating my personally defined wealth without always or only looking at my successes.

*but...*

How would I, a low self-esteem person, handle an *actual* situation where this idea of

comparing one's self to others rears it's head?

It's easy to agree now that "yes, yes this is correct" and no "I must not let my want to compare myself to others get in the way of my not needing to compare myself to others IN THIS PARTICULAR situation" but how do you deal with your doubt? How do you apply the situation where the satisfaction, the goal, the benefit isn't clear?

How do you stop yourselves from becoming just an "ohm...stop comparing myself to others...ohm" mantra kind of guy and be someone who's become enlightened enough to no longer need to understand how to make the phrase work in every part of their life because they now realize how they can really apply the advise **to** (and not along with) their lives?

Hopefully this is where the Kobe example might help.

In my opinion when Kobe didn't step up in that Boston Finals, he no longer deserves to be compared to Jordan.

He, himself, probably has his own satisfied answer to this after being in the league for so long but as basketball fans, a lot of people like to compare and the NBA wants people to compare him to Jordan too.

But the bottomline is that as a casual ignorant fan of the sport, his performance in that series disappointed me and I'm probably not the only one and he probably has heard of those comments too.

I was already set in mind that this guy wasn't going to be the next Jordan waaay back then but still...whenever a superstar played like that in the Finals when he has the hype of being a potential greatest of all time, it just disappoints me. I've seen guys with poorer chances like Iverson and Kidd play with more passion than he did. Hell, I've seen him play with more passion in previous Finals before.

Not that it was not disappointing to see him chuck shots and shoot his team to a loss in the past but the way he played especially in the end felt like a disgrace to elite basketball competition as far as I was concerned.

Now this hate isn't well deserved but it's a case example of the high expectations these celebrity athletes are given. Some of them can't even deal with the pressure even when they were doing fine a few levels before reaching the top just because it's another level to what seems like the peak of the mountain already.

But the point is, no matter how experienced the athletes are, they are affected by this. Even Kobe when he struggled against the Celtics had constant looks that scream "Motherfucker! Why does this team have to be so much better when I've come this close!!!" (*and I'm not saying that's what I think he thought, it just looked like that to me*)

It looked like he was angry at mother nature for having made a more competitive East team when he finally got through the talented West teams and it looked on paper that Boston and LA were near equals but as the series went on, it was obvious that Boston was far better and Kobe doesn't need to just "turn it on", he like many underdog Finals team superstar, either go Jordan or go home. (Jordan was a guy who even when Chicago suddenly had stretches that made them play more like a poorer rather than better team, stepped up, went broke, made the GOAT play and have many holding their heads thinking "Jordan WTF? Let the other team win already. You can't possibly be better than how you were playing! You can't possibly lift this team to this win anymore!!!" ...and end up winning the series although Magic and Bird and the Russell Celtics are just as famous for these kinds of ice in their vein heroics.)

...and obviously the competition has a great deal to do with this but it's also influenced by the expectations society puts on these stars and these stars even if they don't want to let the media affect them, they are just exposed enough that they may be more mentally tough than low-esteem people but once they get to that level, they are also more invaded by these expectations set upon them...and they just can't help but compare themselves to others and that's why, outside of the scope of the specifics, these kinds of things are comparable to the make up of low self-esteem people and our dissatisfaction.

.Just like Kobe or any other successful higher self-esteemed, more satisfied person... we often find ourselves in situations where it's not what we do wrong as much as what the general situation does to us that "worsens" our self-esteem and this is primarily the "it" factor for why something as normal as comparing one's self to others can even be discussed as a key to satisfaction by merely stopping it.

It actually doesn't hurt his rep because of the way the NBA markets it's stars nowadays and I'm one of the useless fans anyway. I don't use my passion for basketball to get better at the court, I'm obese, I don't donate thinking "the NBA cares". Hell, I was not one of Kobe's fans even before then.

...but just like many situations that brewed our low self-esteem, it's not just the path of success that we think about when the hard situation is actually in front of us. It's not just a question of satisfaction or thinking "hey, I know of a method that when I apply it will make me be satisfied despite this bad situation so I'll activate it now."

Everything you said over the internet or over to your friends... everything you might have written to inspire somebody...even everything you've written or thought you added to yourself to become an improved better being... they can disappear including the advise of "don't compare yourself to others". That's when you go back to being confused and clawing back to whatever you can grab. Thought process...identity...rereading and reviewing your principles and hoping you bounce back...

...but then when you do that: You're just trying to make the advise work. You're trying to rationalize that it's you and it's not something flawed with something you didn't do or couldn't control.

Not necessarily meaning most people who bought into an advise just has that advise as their single all purpose miracle pill. Hell, some would even like to believe that there's no general guide that can help someone and it's all about just "spraying the bullets" and go determined commando on anything in life and screw those who need a more developed help.

The thing is though... those are just the thoughts of those who aren't in the hot seat. They aren't their thoughts when they have no room to think and all they can do is worry.

....but IMO that's what many low self-esteem people often mean by saying they tried and it just didn't work for them or didn't know how to or their set thought process was too much to overcome...and they end up falling back exhausted and sinking further back into their dissatisfied abyss.

I'm not saying these people should stop thinking or learning of ways to make themselves succeed but for certain people, they/we shouldn't base our mindset around the outcome.

...and that's something posts like Quack often don't emphasize or even mention enough. Nor do replies to them commonly address this. (especially the ones who just agree with the advise)

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**It goes back to what the anon said about:**

*"Why does social expectations have to be a part of this at all? I thought you had figured this out by your first post, but I guess not."*

*YOU SHOULD NOT BASE YOUR SELF-WORTH ON HOW [YOU THINK] OTHERS PERCEIVE YOU.*

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That's wrong and it's invalid and many low self-esteem people eventually learn that posts like that are full of shit...

but I think many low self-esteem people are also drawn to this post because it seems like "the key". It seems like "yeah... I shouldn't let people bother me. There! Now I feel better. There! Now I can make it work."

...and again like the previous examples, for some people this is enough. Some people have doubts and goals where all they need is just an excuse to create a bubble-like environment similar to hikikomori "except" they aren't stuck to their room or houses.

...and yes, this is a success especially if you think hikikomori is something that needs to be cured.

...but for many low self-esteem people, they return to their low self-esteem self or risk becoming synonymous with [quiet clients](#) that again it's all about battling doubts and the issues aren't even touched. (Much less solved especially when there's pressure for these people to often have the "perfect" solution already before talking about their issues because of the pressure set upon by those who molded them or due to the type of people currently in their environment)

Kobe's decisions for example, had he not won a ring the next year or ever again, his choice play in the Boston Finals would have been wrong but because he won it anyway, his wrong choice of not competing as hard was erased. As a low self-esteem person, we have to realize that we do have similar decisions to make in our life and that's including accepting and berating the advises that sound right but are not necessarily right or wrong for us.

That's how complicated outcomes and advises towards outcomes are and yes, it's again Capt. Obvious but alot of people who advise low self-esteem people like to simplify success and that's why it's very crucial to separate solutions and success from great advises that will bring the solution in ...and I'm still struggling to tackle with saying this despite this many words already.

*\*bleargh... (sorry can't think of any other vomitting sound...)*

Some guys are great at "not listening to others" and "being yourself" but for those who aren't, and most people have low self-esteem because they have been poor at this, it's identity destroying because it's like your friends telling you to become dumber. (but as low self-esteem people, we obviously didn't mean to think that way of our friends, it's just that we can't find another way to put it) *...telling us to not analyze the situation.*

...yet deep down, even if you try to at least apply their advise with all your effort and your intelligence... what does this do? Does it satisfy you or does it satisfy your friends? There's nothing wrong with what they said but why does it feel off?

...etc. etc...blah, blah blah...worry, worry, worry...

And that's where most low self-esteem people fall off the wagon again.

It's not even just a fall but now you worry that your friends will say "see this is what you get for not listening to our advise" and you feel even worse.

That's why solutions are no solutions unless they really are solutions.

If Quack's post helps solve your problem, no problem.

...but what if the ending is not the problem but the epilogue?

Some sound advises can sound like they help especially to someone desperate.

...but what happens when it fails eventually?

What happens if you can no longer pretend? What happens if you're put in a bad spot? What happens when your decision is countered and even though you end up having high self-esteem, it just fell down farther into the deepest miasma of your core?

When it all breaks down, it's like an athlete getting a career ending injury. Once that happens, all solutions are out.

But some athletes do get back. Kobe's situation isn't comparable to an injury but he got back to the mountain and Boston got old. He got back because of factors he didn't control but at the same time, he did sort of control by continuing to try and manipulate his destiny.

*...but he's a star with a sports related problem that is different from our social/mental/environmental problem...unless you accept that the rape trial Kobe and the Kobe who performed poorly during the Boston Finals made the same way of comparing himself to others.*

If you accept that then you may realize...

### **Having factors is more important than having a solution!**

Now if I was an athlete or a scientist, I could probably make a more solid example but since not only am I not but I don't know or have a clue with the *real* nitty gritty analytics that come into achieving a person's peak performance, all I can say is that it's far different from the basics.

Not that the basics are bad but if you actually get down with a legit analytical sports trainer (which I haven't), you'll see there are factors that can develop mind-sets that overcome laziness, *just* doing it determination and mental road blocks just because a great trainer can answer your doubts.

A great trainer doesn't just give you a solution to become better, a great trainer has a system of factors that allows you not only to become better but to become better curious at the science behind your work. Most importantly they can go beyond inspiring you to become a better prepared analyzer of your situation, *they actually teach you lego.*

Even with casual hobbyists who are talented and actually know where to look, it's a whole different ball game.

I never talked in-depth with one of these guys but everything seems like "analysis, analysis, analysis" and if you have a why, they often have an answer that makes you think it's not about fitness or being slim alone, it's not about words in the dictionary anymore.

...and I hope that's the difference "wondering about your bubbles of doubt" would add.

Again, it's doesn't come close to a truly well-built system... but I hope it at least promotes some kind of idea like that.

Sure, you're probably accusing me of just making a long route to saying one should look and know their doubts but I think we all in a way do that already.

We might not have notebooks or spreadsheets of our doubts but we have an idea of what's nagging us. Self-esteem dips though when we have bubbles of doubts and we end up having zig zagged thoughts, zig zagged doubts and our mind suddenly feels like a rock concert shouting "Where's the solution? Where's the solution?" and we get socially crippled until we manage to get out of our rut.

And sure, you might still say, so what? That just means you need a solution to pick yourself up. That just means you need to stop comparing yourself to others so that you can rise up faster and be more satisfied and have higher self-esteem to do something.

But that's when you're not in a Kobe-like situation. Not in the sense of magnitude but in the sense that here you are applying an advise or just beating your low self-esteem and suddenly you're put in a puzzle situation. An anxiety inducing puzzle situation where there's no clear right choice to make and there's no clear right path to take.

Keyword being "you".

That is, you could be in a situation where you might tell someone they should do this or that and it will definitely help but now it's **you** that's in the hotseat. It's your choices which will determine the consequences of how you live your life from here on out.

When you're in that kind of situation, there's no rationalizing solutions. You are who you truly built yourself around.

High/low self-esteem it doesn't matter. Lack of ability and abundance of ability doesn't matter. You're in the "boss" fight of the **real life** videogame called life and there's no save point to go back and grind to.

When you're in that point, that's when you truly know whether you not only believe but realize why you're following some of these advises. That's when no matter how many "strong" words you made to back your belief in any advise's effectiveness, **this is it.** Once that decision's done, there's no sure right solution to pick up right after. There's only a new set of decisions.

That's when you're in the same kind of situation Kobe was when he was on the bench watching his hard work for that season come so close but going up in the air with only an inkling of what you could possibly do to make up for this and what will you do to react to your dissuaders especially those who you can't really convince and will just have to live past by.

That's when you have to live or die by the advises you previously took in to build your life around. That's when all knowledge of the facts can't change the outcome of reality. That's why sometimes opinions like this need to be written because maybe the facts aren't set yet. Maybe there's really no universal solution even though Quack's post sound like one for satisfaction.

...or maybe it's simply because time doesn't stop and maybe there's an event in your low self-esteem life that can only be helped if you read this (flawed or not) as unlikely as it is to happen.

Or maybe agreeing with this will make that situation worse instead.

The devil is not perfect. The devil only lives within the details.

For example the basis of the thread below is poor because it was done when a Japanese veteran fighter who used to be good lost to a really good fighter in his prime and it generalizes too much on one nationality but...well here's the quote first:

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### [Why UFC and Americans are successful?](#)

Here is my attempt to put an end to these discussions. In my opinion, this is something that can be easily explained from a logical point of view without all the national pride or bias.

A lot of posts are being made about how pride stars are being exposed. Now i will not take side, it is pretty evident that right now, majority of the ufc fighters are doing better. However, a lot of the stars we got from pride HAVE been fighting for a lot longer (as evident by florian saying how he used to watch and admire gomi, or how other people admired w.silva and felt it was an honor to fight him.) the list goes on and on.. Now... these fighters started a lot earlier than the new breed of wonderful ufc specimens. Many of them have close to 40 matches under their belt..... and of course, we all know, fighters dont age well (by counting how many bouts they've been in, not age)

W.Silva, i love him, as well as many other fans. was he a dominant figure in mma, in pride? was he dominant? hell yeah... but look at him now. we got him PRETTY damn late.... can he be a champion now? VERY VERY doubtful. is he still fun to watch ? sure, but i dont expect him to win anymore when he fights these days. and that's merely my observation from watching his fights, and the way his body moves.

What about crocop? what about tito? i mean hell, you think bas rutten can get a belt now? i'm sure he knows a lot more than many of the fighters.

**HERE IS AN IMPORTANT OBSERVATION:** have you noticed that the ufc fighters have gotten real good in the past 3-4 years? i mean before that when ufc was still young and pride was still around... i didn't really notice many significant fighters from the ufc. (were there a lot more in pride? maybe, maybe not, but it sure was a lot more exciting that's for sure)

with that being said. it is only recently did we see a significant improvement in majority of the ufc fighters on a grander scale.. and the reason being? well, it's because the sport has matured.... now there's more media coverage, more fans, hell, even espn is covering espn now.... it's the only thing kids talk about these days, there's more sponsors... more money to be made.... therefore, BETTER training camps, and camps can afford to seek out better resources... for example, olympic wrestlers to help with wrestling, world class boxers to train in boxing... bjj black belts to help with bjj.... powerlifters to help with power, strength and conditioning coach to help with cardio.... hell, gsp even have his personal nutritionist and chef.

This is something the old timers never experienced. when they were in their prime, all they had was a dirty gym, a few friends with mits and pads, and a lot of blood, sweat, and tear.

Now, let's talk about america and the world, and why american fighters are performing better and better.... especially compared to the japanese:

**HERE IS MY TAKE:**

U.S. is a very athlete nurturing country. other countries? not so much. why do you think there's baseball fields, soccer fields, football fields, track fields, basketball fields every 2-3 blocks in the u.s suburbs? why do american dads play catch with their kids..... there's a lot of outlets here for kids to excel in.... hell, a kid can make money and become a star by doing skateboarding, rollerblading, snowboarding, swimming.... anything you want it achievable here. and there's a place to go to get the trainings required.

basketball is a common enough sports int he world.... and as we know, majority of the elite basketball stars are of african american descend. i'm sure there are plenty of potential talents in africa.... even europe? there's good players there, and if majority of americans can trace their lineage to europe... why isn't NBA 50% america, and 50% from europe?

it's because america nurtures its athletes (not just athletes really, in anything) and therefor, there's always more americans LOOKING and TRAINING to go pro in boxing, swimming, fencing, tennis, or whatever you can think of.

i mean. sure, you can be a skateboarder and make millions in the u.s., so why dont all the ethiopian kids start doing that? well it's because eventhough that dream has been made a reality by someone in the states... where they are.... that dream seem very distant and without reach.

and because of that nurturing tendency in america.... that's why we have the best of everything here... in terms of mma training, work ethics and dedication, strength/conditioning training.... if you look back to the old ufc days. compare that to pride.... i didn't notice any superiority in ufc's figthers back then? it's only when mma started becoming a success in america, fans started watching mma, espn started covering the fights, mroe sponsorship, etc etc....it's only when ufc has become a significant part of american's life did we notice the science, the training being applied into mma, the great camps.... the numerous resources they seek out (olympic wrestlers for training wrestling, world class boxers for boxing, black belts in bjj, trips to thailand to learn muay thai.)

And as the sports evolvd, more attentions are put on the sports and its fighters, better trainings will be there, more money will be involved. and the more a fighter will dedicate their life to the art.

and that is what's happening here in the u.s.

in other countries, they often dont have that luxury... for example. take england for example.... mma has just recently made a mark in england... before then? it was practically non-existence. so where do people find the dedication to risk their career on something that most in their have never even heard of.

but, as popularity of mma begins to catch on, you can bet there will be more dedicated fighters coming from england, better training camps... etc etc.

same for japan.... but japan is a little different.. the culture in asia is more passive, conservative, and traditional (maybe japan is not the best example since they started pride, but say china, korea.... unlike america, where fighting, bloodshed, flashy things are glorified and have become inate to our generation through music, movies, high school competitions.... if you were an american and you tell people you're gonna be a boxer or a mma fighter, or whatever sports star when you grow up.... nobody would be that shocked.

one can look at it another way. if 1 out of 100 kids want to become a mma fighter in the u.s. that statistic is probably 1 out of 1000. of the 10 kids in the united states that want

to pursuit a career in mma, maybe 5-6 of those parents would encourage them and help them along the way (as we've seen on youtube videos all the time)

in japan, the chance of that happening is probably significantly less...

and that's what's great about america.... because we have already reached such a pinnacle power and many of us can live in land with many options and luxury... the acceptance of seeking for anything besides school/work and the regular 9-5 is significantly higher than the rest of the countries. especially because most of the professional leagues started in america. and we see sports figures as people who have reached the apex in terms of success.

that's why america excels in so many areas.

not because of race, not because of organizations..... the rants about ufc/pride, and japanese/u.s. fighters are just ridiculous.... as if you're only looking at the surface and not trying to understand the underlying reasons behind the changes happening in the mma world.

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Plus his rebuttal to a valid reply against his sticking up for just one country:

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certainly brazilian fighters and camps are very good as well. perhaps the title was a bit leading.... my point is... because of the culture i think pride fighting was looked upon in japan as more of an entertainment than a actually competition. certainly the fighters are fighting for real of course... but the environment surrounding them seem to be more keen on entertainment and some fighters seem to be in it for the rock star treatment than actually in it to compete to be the most hardcore guy on the planet. hence the lack of motivation, drive to become the best....dont get me wrong, i'm sure many worked hard too, but i also think some may have been glorified simply because they have MORE natural talent than others.... however, with better camp, more motivation, drive, and a better reason for fighting, i think a lot of the japanese fighters would do a lot better.

and i think the environment part also play into why they may not have take it as seriously as some of the people from america or brazil (brazil is different, they've been bare knuckle fighting for a long long time, and there's not even any famous organization over there, not much of that rock star treatment... people are in it simply to make some money to support their family... they work damnnn hard at it. and the people that we DO hear about, have been through countless trials)

the guys in america, they succeed through good training, the science of fighting, good resources, they're like the competitive guys at a good collegian team. with solid training, motivation, they live and train for this stuff.

people in brazil? other than their bjj. they didn't really have the backing of much sponsors and attention nor any resources .... they succeed through hard work.... like a tough guy with talents fighting his way out of the slums and ghetto and growing as he goes... i mean look at wanderlei silva.. have you seen his old footage?

in japan, i'm sure there are many fighters in it for the competition alone, but the vibe i get from a lot of them, especially judging from their conditioning, it just seems like they train for one fight at a time, on the goal of winning the fight and becoming a star almost. also, it might be largely due to how pride is structured, and how everything is presented over there....

i really dont know... but the part about american nurturing its athlete, that part is

without a doubt very apparent. i dont care how much you want to argue about other things i've said, but that part is the absolute truth.

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I don't follow the sport enough nor have trained in top MMA camps to know the exact "right and wrong" with this poster's guesses but most of them are somewhat valid.

Example:

Japanese fighters who train in Japan fight more in their weight class rather than cut weight

Some have even commented on how fighters they train look more lackluster when they train in Japan.

Example this: <http://www.8weeksout.com/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=5&t=366>

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I just watched Sakurai's fight in the GP streaming online and it was a great example of what happens when you DON'T TRAIN! He kept telling me he was coming over to train for this final round in the tournament but he never did. When he trains in Japan he is lazy and barely does anything, such a waste. All the talent in the world won't do you any good if you don't train and aren't in shape to use it. It was his tournament to lose and he certainly found a way to lose it, I love Sakurai but sometime that guy is a total dumbass.

---

Most notably though for those who don't follow MMA is that America *shouldn't* have been the best breeding ground for MMA improvement.

Not only did most Americans start out more ignorant of the sport but even now, American politics can be idiotic in that they still create points scored more in line with boxing (the 10 pt. must system), they still don't know how much more dangerous pure boxing is than implemented in MMA and they like to claim MMA is cockfighting/ streetfighting while boxing is a sport. Even beyond that, Brazilians not only had a head start against Americans in terms of the fighting style and Japan has the head start in the culture but many of the top athletic Americans don't train or want to train in MMA because the money isn't there compared to their primary sports and Pride actually generated more excitement than the UFC earlier on once Royce stopped participating.

The reason why MMA particularly flourished though was how the Western MMA scene answered it's doubts.

*...How they started to stop comparing themselves to the better MMA camps then and how they started comparing themselves **to** the better MMA camps.*

Now this may seem like I'm stretching but from what little I know, it doesn't seem far off...

The obvious criteria is still there. It was easier to make money off of your art in America than it was in Brazil and nowadays in Japan, if you're a top fighter, the prestige and stable income is still in America not to mention you could probably get a higher paycheck if you came to the UFC and returned to your Japanese org rather than building your name by staying in that Japanese org.

However the money only made MMA camps progress faster IMO.

The thing that really started the ball rolling was when Pat Miletich started a camp called Miletich Fighting Systems.

The camp is no longer as elite as it used to be and I'm not sure he was the first to do it

but he was the first to really establish it as his fighters become better faster than already popular US camps in that time like Team Quest and the Lion's Den.

Now as far as MMA camps go, American camps weren't lagging behind but it didn't really set itself apart even with the weight cutting factor. (Although it did influence some fights like Wanderlei Silva vs. Tito Ortiz. Two popular fighters one whose career would drop as soon as his methods of weight cutting became more popular while the other would make a career in Japan as a LHW fighter but now stays at MW.)

What Miletich did though was that he popularized the idea that MMA was a sport and that MFS **is** an "MMA" camp.

This sounds obvious just like how it would sound obvious to many posters who think a low self-esteem person just needs to "pick up their life" and "do something" but Miletich wasn't looking at just the outcome. Miletich formed a group based around "factors".

Instead of treating MMA back then like a Hybrid Martial Art that trains martial artists who if they choose to, would represent them in an MMA organization. Miletich and his group of guys treated it like they wanted their students to excel at MMA. They wanted to train their students in "MMA the sport" and not "MMA - the martial art that encompasses everything".

This seems like a shallow distinction until you realize in each sports there are rules. If you are better at those rules, they cancel out "the symbol" of those sports.

Going back to basketball, it doesn't matter how elite of a defender Pippen was if he primarily excelled at playing defense in Jordan's times rather than LeBron's times. He just wouldn't be as good. Would he have adapted? Maybe but it would have dropped some players down from elite to average.

For MMA this was more crucial. Despite the advantages American fighters have in their wrestling, pre-MFS they did not "milk" it.

They did some of the right stuff. Even excelled at it. But they didn't "milk" it.

For example, a guy like Dan Henderson was an absolute monster as far as skill set went. Even today he might be better than Anderson Silva if he fully utilizes his skill set - a guy considered one of the P4P best MMA fighters today.

But he doesn't win as much. Why? Because he tends to play the other guy's game. He's a wrestler who would try to strike or a fighter who would not wrestle defensively enough and keep himself from being submitted.

Back then it was even worse for the general MMA scene. Every guy fought that way.

Even guys who trained with the elites like Frank Shamrock training with Maurice Smith back when they were still in the title hunt... the idea was to out-improve the other camps with just training facilities and quality of MMA fighters.

Miletich didn't want to just train with equal and better quality MMA fighters than him. He wanted to set up a "MMA" camp.

Again, seemed like another subtle distinction but...Miletich compared his camp to others and did it the right way - by not comparing his camp to others.

Now I don't know what exactly led Pat or his fellow trainers to set this up but what changed drastically for the American MMA scene was that these guys weren't suddenly being better than their opponents, they were "adding dimensions" to their fighting

methods.

Instead of just quality of training or quality of facility, Miletich grabbed guys (or was it just one guy?) who wasn't good or participating in MMA *but was great at his specific combat sport*.

How this changed the landscape of American MMA was that suddenly you had guys who weren't just trying to be great at every aspect of hand to hand Martial Arts as allowed by MMA organizations to do but you have a guy who cross-trains. You have a guy who has both pure no-gi high level brazilian jiu-jitsu, high level wrestling, high level pure boxing and instead of training these as a combined art, the "MMA gameplan" was born where the goal was to improve a fighter in all these levels separate...before you added them during an official fight. (...or something like that)

This would seem like a minor change but suddenly you had a wrestler who could outstrike a striker because he didn't just try to strike with a guy quality for quality, he threw strikes at the guy not only to set up his strengths be it wrestling or some other art but he threw strikes that *kept* the other guy from striking in a way that would keep them from getting to their strengths.

This was how Pat managed to elevate his camp beyond what the other current camps were doing because where he had the lower quality MMA fighters, he had great jiu-jitsu guys and great wrestlers and great strikers to improve his fighter in each single art and then great gameplanners who molded all this separate factors into a single fight factor instead of a gray area random "who is the better martial artists/wrestler/boxer" between our two fighters mentality.

Now the other combat culture oriented countries had adapted to this also but they failed to respect that evolution.

The other countries due to their head start had guys like Sakuraba who made Royce's defensive BJJ looked like a joke despite the guy being a hero and a monster in America during his stint.

Not only that, Japan had the money and prestige so American and Brazilian fighters flocked there and even trained in some of the Japanese gyms so the top fighters of that time and the current elite training partners in MMA were mostly training these types of fighters.

It's not like these countries were islands either. They often seek to improve themselves. They compared themselves to the opposition and they also had a knack of not comparing themselves to others in more cultural aspects and retained their cultural identity and for a long time it brought them success and satisfaction especially the top Japanese fighters who seem weaker physically than their opponents but they had the heart of the warrior and just made a name for themselves. Even in the UFC, guys like Caol Uno were not seen as that far behind compared to his competition.

The success and satisfaction ended though when not only did Japan seem less interested in MMA but the top MMA org in Pride (which was a Japanese org) fell and got bought by the UFC.

Even here America didn't really show their dominance and even today the top fighters are mostly from different nationalities.

How this current perspective of American camps being more developed than other countries came to be when the factors haunted the other countries especially Japan.

The individual areas still improved where MMA is flourishing but American MMA camps

started using the revenues they amassed to hire the "elites" of each sports to train with them.

These guys weren't just great, they were the top of the food chain in their individual sport.

They basically took the formula that MFS popularized and upgraded every areas possible.

Suddenly, instead of a great BJJ instructor, it had to be a black belt. Instead of a striker, it HAS to be a great boxer/a great kickboxer and a top MT specialist all as separate trainers. Even in wrestling, instead of great wrestlers it has to be olympic level wrestlers.

Still the thing that broke the camel's back was another factor unrelated to MMA. The culture.

What looked like a working culture for the other countries where they improved and just retain their cultural identity, suddenly backfired.

Not enough but enough so that some of the less jingoistic and opportunistic combat experts in each country started moving to America.

Again this was normal since the money was in America and MMA was blooming there instead of Japan but the cultural factors sped up the situation.

Suddenly there were people moving to America to train their fighters because in America, cross-training and leaving one's camp was more open and accepted than in other countries where it was more disgraceful to leave.

Suddenly where the other countries still had top one of a kind fighters and teachers, America (not necessarily Americans) were making up for this because the cross-training was helping strategies and tactics spread and allow fighters to train where they want including against better fighters who aren't their teammates.

A possibility magnified in America because when MFS entered the scene, everyone sort of respected the impact of cross-training to the point that it became the factor that changed not only the outcome but the outlook of how one camp should compare themselves to another.

The irony of this is that the guy who truly cemented this idea in the modern MMA scene is not an American but a Canadian named GSP.

I don't know how he did it but even early in his career he would literally train with the highest quality training partners he could get - In a way returning to the older aspect of recruiting the best partner except combining it with the MFS formula that it goes beyond the criteria of MMA.

The result was a guy who had no elite wrestling background improving to the point that he out-wrestles elite MMA wrestlers and that's how the modern American > Japan got cemented.

It wasn't about whether an outlook was right or wrong. It wasn't about what can bring short or long term success alone. It wasn't even about determination and initial talent alone.

It was the factors coming together to change the outcome that was previously set.

It was about fans seeing a weaker looking fighter with no punching power outstrike and fundamentally out-technique a more dangerous striker which suddenly opened their eyes

and made them act like it was just a foregone event but really it isn't the petri dish and what mindset you gain that solves your problems, it's how you change the elements within that petri dish to the point that the intended solution will adjust and work for your mindset.

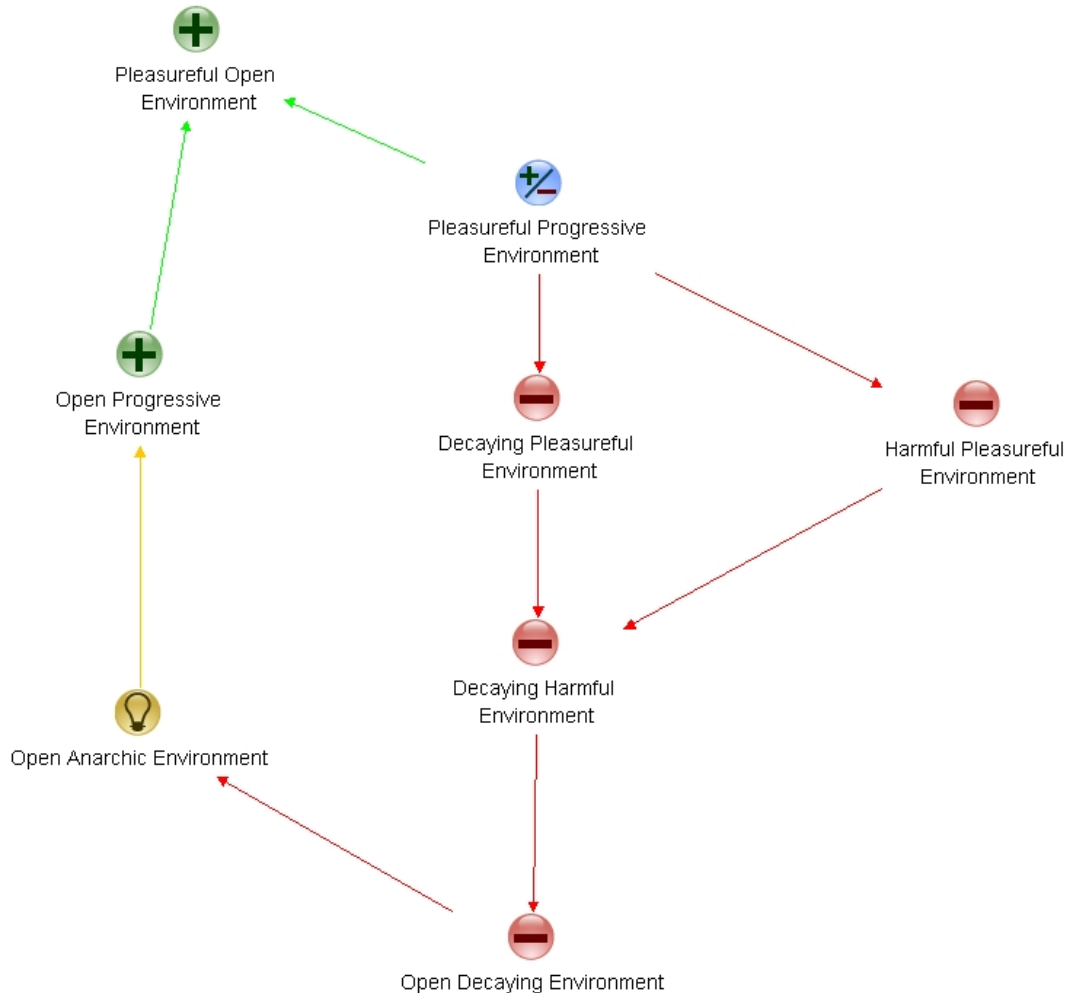
...and I'm not saying there's a current camp or a current top system for low self-esteem especially when the measuring stick seems to be rooted in sports related/business related mental toughness where even though it is just as if not more important to be able to handle situations without breaking down, still has the benefit of the person being able to have an off and on season training or able to afford stages of dealing with things where as the reality is for many low self-esteem people, they often have problems that don't work that way.

Yes they can reduce that by visiting an expert but they can just as adapt to that by being a suicidal, apathetic, aloof, hikikomori or even "a walking into office" type of zombie but currently they can just mostly get support/agreement/inspiration and not "development" nor "self-actualization" training.

...not even from their own kind.

So I think even though "studying factors" aren't that scientific or elite and even sounds obvious, I think it has to end here before it can begin elsewhere so I apologize to those who feel they wasted their time from reading this or to those who just got more confused and are still stuck with their low self-esteem but I simply felt I needed to go against Quack's post even though I don't possess the solution to our problem.

**Here:**



**Direct link:** <http://www.flickr.com/photos/44570011@N04/4097800256/>

This is originally part of a draft post titled: Environmental Categories (Blog Now has a Flickr Account Tied to It) ((tag: chewables, update, FAQ, project, progress))

...and this is what I have written already before I even started with this post:

To be honest, I don't really know if the image would interest Hikikomoris or even if it's anything useful in a chewables manner but being able to categorize the world in as simplest a model as possible while containing it's complexity has always been a side obsession of mine.

I know it's very unoriginal and alot of people have probably already improved upon the shallowed flaw of this perspective but the theme itself is something I don't really know how to search for so I never really saw any of the improved models.

Personally I'm still unsure of uploading this.

The story behind this originated in a casual conversation while I was a NEET.

*"Anong klase ng kalayaan?"* were the words that I vaguely recall.

I didn't know how to answer the question. To this day I wasn't even sure how casual the conversation was.

It annoyed me though that even after all those times:

*the running away...*

*the failed suicide attempts...*

Even the simple fact that the question came due to me saying freedom was what I valued most.

"I" *still* couldn't answer a simple question that loosely translates as "What kind of freedom?"

"I" *still* didn't know!!!

...Well I'm sure no one wants me to go to a different rant about my desire for freedom at this point and besides, there's not much else to add after that except the fact that I never played a tabletop roleplaying game before so when I played Baldur's Gate for the 1st time, the character creation awed me enough to focus on the alignment system and I based it on that.

As I said above, I was previously iffy with uploading this at all because it was something that I feel embarrassed about.

This was something that not only showcased my lack of knowledge with the general world but my idiocy in how to cope with it.

In fact, I uploaded this to Flickr because it never helped me but I felt some sentimental connection to it that I just couldn't delete it away without making a back-up.

Anyways, I'm sharing it now here in the hopes that maybe if the above post doesn't at least contribute to your life, maybe this one would be more beneficial and hopefully make up for the length of this post.

Like I said, I based this on the D&D alignment system and this was one of those things I wanted to do to prove to myself that I wasn't blaming my environment alone and merely crediting the reality of it to those who said I was.

I set it up this way because I wanted to find an over-simplified roadmap that everyone can do to "get a clue" on how to improve their environment.

But!

I didn't want it to be chained to the flawed perspective of "it's all in what you do" and at the same time I didn't want the model to be relieved of that responsibility.

Progress was the simplified glue I chose to hold this in because I was never satisfied with the way evolution focuses merely on survival and at the same time, I didn't want it to possess some society-centric view of honor, virtue, success, morality, enlightenment...any kind of positive ladder to define a romanticized being.

In a way I wanted an over-simplified model that doesn't revolve around my mental state

so I could criticize my environment but I also wanted me to know that my environment would critique me and that I have to change or leave or be stuck.

It was easier to use progress for that purpose because unlike other virtues, progress isn't stuck to my welfare.

With progress, I can include the idea that some bad environments can build me better than some luxurious ones and still criticize those bad environments that I consider as holding me back without lumping them together.

**Open Decaying Environment** is the lowest because on one hand I think freedom is necessary and not just the good that comes with it but the bad.

This makes this bad environment on one hand still progress-intrusive but on the other hand allows for the birth of a new thinking and in this state, I like to think it's a time for me to work randomly and even shallow acts can be revolutionary because you never know whether you'll sink back to a **Decaying Harmful Environment** and you have to rebuild your dreams or find yourself in an environment open enough to allow for your ideas to exist.

Note that I lead the arrow up from this environment to **Open Anarchic Environment** because I think instead of what many people fear Anarchy leads to, I believe it's the opposite in that Anarchy is the improved state after destruction and not the period before that which was an Open Decaying Environment.

In theory this doesn't hold up but I'm basing it on the fact that human society started with nothing and they were able to create a flawed governing society to the point that we reached this age and I think people fear Anarchy because they fear lack of governance rather than Anarchy itself because unlike governments, you have to review the flaws of your society more so than if you were inside that bubble.

That means something society-centric like justice, laws, corruption, education, jobs...staple flawed things in life that we sort of worship as roads that only need to be upgraded, they're thrown to the wolves and we as society can no longer just defend or argue these co-existing things. We have to once again factor in the true validity of those systems because now we must survive. We're back to a supply and demand style of reviewing where even the good tried and true general concept like education breaks down if we as society have been breeding and allowing our leaders to dis-educate us. (Progress-wise. I think barring mass amnesia we all have our own experience of why the structure of school is necessary but the want to raise that level and the want to not just be satisfied and stop at getting us or our children to an alphabetical or numerical grade, I think stuff like that requires a paradigm shift of massive proportion.)

That environment is not perfect and ESPECIALLY not luxurious but I think it's that environment that allowed our modern peak government systems to develop into the best system it could. Some might say what allowed for our governments today to be far better for survival and progress is due to the fear and the knowledge of the sufferings in the past. (Especially when you look at it as a series of historical events each building one ladder to another rather than being planted by a seed which grew.)

I agree with that but I think the dangers in the past also pushed us to improve our systems because back then we as people were more desperate for a system and without that reviewing model, we have since lost our ability to filter out something like modern corruption because we no longer have that desperation. We no longer desire the open ability to progress as much as we desire stability in our lives and the few progress that are introduced to us, we neither push for a benefit nor go against it most of the time because we live in a **Harmful Pleasurable Environment** where it takes greater numbers and greater effort just to attract our senses towards fully supporting a really

important issue. (So much so that grassroot efforts are seen as revolutionary and special even though the idea that people can band together and create something special is an oft repeated old idea that it's almost a common event made special only by the rarity of the events due to us not really progressing high enough to truly maintain constant critical mass that lasts past generations beyond our lives. Even our fairy tales and science while improving rapidly at the intelligent level hasn't improved to the point that it accomodates dumb people who want to learn unless they know of an expert personally.)

Now this may seem like some bad over-simplification of political and social theory but I only use those examples because I can't think of a specific individual situation that can apply to all people or even apply to all Hikikomories.

Personally, from my own experience, I feel like I was raised in a **Pleasureful Progressive Environment** not because I had a good childhood but I lived in a stable and luxurious enough life.

My biological parents weren't rich but I still could have asked for a console or something else.

More importantly, my life was sort of set. I was no genius but after prep school, I had good elementary grades. I was at the bottom of the honor list but I was considered intelligent for some reason and I didn't have to worry about not being able to afford the tuition in a top elementary school. (nor college have I actually pursued my studies, international schools aside.)

I felt that the environment was anti to my progress and I still do believe it is today but it's why I thought I kind of succeeded in making this model for myself (until I realize this model wasn't doing anything for me) and that even if it held me back, because I was an idiot even way back then, I needed to learn so many things about the world that even though I think I would have been better off in a different environment, I had learned so little that I could have learned so much from staying in that environment and grabbing those opportunities handed to me.

...and I also had those options. I could have taken advantage rather than go against being spoiled in my younger days and I could have used that to become a parasite single for knowledge until I graduated and moved out. (Back then there was no internet service but I wasted my requests on Star Wars novels and other teen/children's books and toys/console games instead of asking them for books that could have pushed me away from rote memorization and just getting good grades into someone who might be more receptive to learning compared to who I am today.)

I don't know if I could have reached a state of **Pleasureful Open Environment** but back then when I wasn't allowed to go out much less walk home alone, the "adult" words I was given was that when I became an adult I would finally be allowed to go out so I should have had cocooned myself if I wasn't going to succeed in changing or leaving this environment. (Instead, I was so sure that I could kill myself.)

Anyways, I chose a different path. I quit school but before that I wanted to commit suicide and prior to that, had attempted a lame ass running away sequence where I basically got past the school gate guard without the assigned parent who was supposed to bring me home but I would subsequently return back inside to the school and even did a lame "touch idol Mary's foot" and do a sign of the cross before I waited to be found. (This was as a teenager and not a kid so it's even more pathetic especially since I basically walked outside, succeeded, got anxious and walked back without even running away.)

I dubbed that period a crossroad between **Decaying Pleasureful Environment** and

Harmful Pleasureful Environment.

I was rebelling then but not knowing what I was rebelling for. I rationalized then that I couldn't focus with my studying at home but really I was more bothered by how stale my life has become.

Year in, year out I would argue with my biological parents and a few days it would pass even though the issue of freedom and hearing my classmates take vacations or summer sports ate at me and year in and year out it would blow away...and I would yet again succumb to the pleasures of life. (By pleasure I mean in between the hollowness of interacting with some friends, watching the love of my life from afar or being given another new game or new book.)

I even felt I wasn't progressing anymore.

I started going away from my school studies and (secretly) and lamely studied the reactions I got from my classmates instead. (in between planning for suicide secretly and one time, nearly publicly, by bragging I can slit my wrists lightly with a box cutter in front of my classmates)

Life went even further pathetic. I recall I would hit my erection on a girls arm because the arm chair was low and I didn't know what was so strange about it. Even subjects I was studying, I didn't try to rote memorize them anymore and realize when it came for me to answer a question using my own words in answering it, I couldn't do it and I failed the test. (It was Chinese class and you were given pre-scripted answers to simple questions like who is Huang Di?)

Socially, mentally, physically my world was breaking down. I lived in bliss but I realize my rebellion wasn't helping me go against this bliss.

I realized I didn't know how to look good running much less run for even a mile. I realize I don't know anything about what I've been studying and when it came for me to just rote memorize on my own (I recently left my tutor) I couldn't do it. I realize I couldn't interact well with my fellow classmates.

I realize I was a fool and it didn't bother me until I realize I was even a coward in that I can't successfully kill myself.

Socially, mentally, physically I had nothing. I bought into the hype that I was intelligent but I couldn't do it. I thought I was at least an introvert but again, even against introverted subjects I was basically making my version of small talk rather than using it to absorb some of the knowledge my far more intelligent friends possessed. Even in hobbies, I wasn't good nor as passionate as someone with a hobby.

I kind of then became a Hikikomori in that I settled for living my life sleeping (I didn't had my own room then and I didn't know what a Hikikomori was) and only waking up to eat.

It was a short period because a relative of mine would offer me the chance to live with them and it wasn't war per se but I felt I was decaying then. That I was just waiting to die.

Anyways when I moved out, I realize I was more social anxious than I thought.

There were no bullies in my school so I never realize this but I realize I had the mindset where even stepping foot on a public court or dribbling a ball felt like a privilege rather than something I could always have done if I just did it.

So that experience and many more cemented to me that there is a kind of Open Decaying Environment where even if you don't improve, just going up and talking to someone else or risking doing something controversial can set you up for progress but at the same time, it's no Holy Grail. It was just different environments.

It was just a unique feeling in that I thought I knew what I would feel or do in a certain situation but when I was actually there, I was always missing some obvious event that made any simulated events I thought of seem miscalculated.

Anyways, shit happened and I returned to living with my biological parents and now I'm more of a hikikomori in that I choose to stay in this house instead of being stuck in this house but that's some of the experiences that helped me assume forming this model was going to help me better prepare myself in dealing with my environment.