

The Best Road

The following story is based on a joke I once heard:

A man, who was crossing the desert, got caught in a sand storm and lost his horse. Exhausted from battling the storm and after crossing a great distance on foot, the thirst started affecting him and he realized he had to find a water source soon.

Beyond the next hill he suddenly discovered a man standing by a tie stand.

- "Hello there" said the tie salesman "you're welcome to check out my merchandise. I have all sorts of ties and of a great quality. I'm sure one of them will work for you".
- "No thanks" replied the man "I just want some water to drink. Could you spare some for me?"
- "Sorry" replied the salesman "I just finished drinking all the water I brought with me. But maybe you'd like to buy a tie? I have excellent merchandise"
- "I don't need a tie right now. Would you just tell me which way to the nearest population or a place where I can find water?" replied the man impatiently
- "Why are you in such a hurry? Take your time, go over my merchandise; I'll give you a good price"
- "You greedy salesman!" yelled at him the man "you should be ashamed of yourself for taking advantage of my misfortunate situation! All you care about is selling me your ties! I don't need a tie in the middle of the dessert! Stop wasting my time and tell me where the nearest population is"
- "I see you're very angry with me" said the salesman "but if you insist so adamantly I can tell you that 3km from here due west is a restaurant and you can surely find water there. Also, to show you I'm not a bad person, I'll give you any tie you want as a gift."
- "Go to hell – you and your ties!" Called out to him the man and started making his way due west.

Two hours later, the man returns to the salesman and his tie stand utterly exhausted.

- “What happened” asks him the salesman in a worried tone “you couldn’t find the place?”
- “I found it” replies the man “except they wouldn’t let me in without a tie”

Many times in life we are so focused on the destination or the goal we are aspiring to, that we overlook events, experiences and opportunities we happen upon along the way that are in and of themselves an important part of the journey we need to make on our way to the goal.

The point here is not “to stop and smell the roses” or “when the universe hands you lemons – you make lemonade”. The point here is that we should be aware of anything that is happening to us in this moment. Being open to all the possibilities, even when they don’t seem relevant to that which we are searching for at the moment. Life serves up a variety of experiences, opportunities and challenges at a timing that can be very confusing, mainly due to the multitude of details and the fact that we can’t see the big picture, except, sometimes, in retrospect. Opportunities we passed up for seeming insignificant may later turn out to be a big miss.

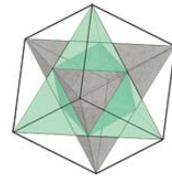
The way to recognize an opportunity worthy of our attention amidst all the events and information we are bombarded with in every day life is by connecting to our true self, our knowing self, what some refer to as intuition. In many cases we make decisions based on clues or signs that “help” us make a decision one way or the other. The sign can be a person saying the “right” words, or certain circumstances that bring us to the brink of a decision.

A common mistake is looking for the signs. Instead, what we should do is
To remember to be aware as much as possible of the “here and now” so that we
don’t miss them.

To remember the destination we are aiming for but focus on every step along the
way there.

To remember that the road is more than just a nuisance separating you from your
goal.

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