

No Words:



I have recently experienced something, I've never heard of before.

I think it was Winston Churchill that once wrote "I'm writing a long letter, because I don't have time to write a short one". I would love to have the skills of a poet and ability to reduce this to a bare minimum without diminishing the impact, but unfortunately I don't, so I'll have to explain it longhand by explaining each layer until you see the full picture.

Hyper conscious:

We think we know what being conscious is: but you're probably thinking it's being awake (not asleep or unconscious) and thinking for yourself. That's sort of the standard dictionary definition, but 99% of being awake involves not only functioning and deciding what to physically do in realtime, but the actual reality of the moment seems to be masked by layers of background / parallel processing: worrying about your job, your deadlines, your kids, what to make for dinner, not forgetting to do x, y or z. When you think about it, most of your waking time is spent worrying or working on future events. You sort of amble through the day, not really noticing what is happening in the moment and devoting all your processing power to things to come or recently past.

Many people deal with this (in some form) by participating in activities that force "in the moment" attention to avoid all those life worries and pressures. So they engage in sport or a hobby, which demands 100% attention. But because it demands 100% of your processing, you can't really appreciate what's happening, you have to go with it, then it ends and you're back to thinking about other things.

Have you ever suddenly woken out of this state and found yourself 100% devoted to what is happening right now: where you are, what you're doing, the smell of the air, the breeze on your face, the physical feelings that run through your whole body? If you have you have experienced hyper consciousness. I don't think that's a real term, but I don't have any other term for it. The strange thing about it is it lasts less than a second, because the instant that you recognise it, you start thinking about it and processing it and you're back into a layer of thinking that obfuscates the consciousness.

That feeling is rare (if experienced at all) and should be savoured. You're aware of yourself, in the moment with 100% focus on the moment. If you recognise this, it's also a bit scary, as it means that the vast majority of your life is devoted to being asleep or thinking about something other than what you're doing right now.

That's only just the first layer of this onion.

Aspiration:

The world seems to have lost its collective mind and almost everything and I mean everything in the main stream media and social media is bombarding us with images and notions of how good someone else's life is and attempting to sell us some idealised picture of the perfect life. This portrayed perfect life is almost entirely materialistic, because if you buy the image, you'll probably want to buy the products that they're trying to sell you.

I'm heavily into psychology and have internalised concepts like Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which basically means, that once you have satisfied basic needs like oxygen, food and security, you take them for granted and start striving for the next layer in the hierarchy like money and status. It sickens me that the world of social media has played almost everyone and suckered so many people into devoting their lives to presenting themselves / pretending to have the perfect life. The truth is (and everyone knows it) that no-one on this planet has an easy life. It doesn't matter who you are, how much money you have, how intelligent you are, how beautiful you are, how big your yacht is; you struggle. Life is hard, full stop. You worry about the people around you. You struggle with the relationships with the people you love as well as the people you dislike. It's a constant struggle to keep things on an even keel and every single person on this planet (unless you have a mental disorder that makes you happy) is having the same struggle.

So why do we aspire to emulate these idealised people if we know their lives are as tortuous as ours. It's because we want our lives to have meaning and we've been brainwashed by people trying to sell us stuff, that if you have stuff, you must have status and therefore you must mean something. It's all a hoax. The people that we should really be looking up to, have all done something that's hard and significant and benefits the world, not just themselves. The people I'm talking about are scientists, doctors, engineers for example as I know there are many others. Their achievements are hard won and benefit mankind. These people don't tend to get the giant financial rewards and don't tend to be famous, because they have personal agency and get real genuine satisfaction from what they work on. All of these people work HARD but we are sold the dream that the perfect life is having riches and fame and not working hard. My message being, if you really want to be happy, work hard.

I'm not rich, but I'm lucky enough to have a very good friend who I work with who is. So as and when our lives overlap I get to taste the lifestyle that we are all sold as perfect. I've driven around Miami beach in a RollsRoyce and drunk champagne and eaten caviar at Michelin star restaurants. It is fun, but it's not a lifestyle I'd sell my soul to have. Truth be told, I'm working class and I'm not even feel that comfortable in that world. A nice world to visit, but I don't want to live in it.

Achievement:

I work hard. I like working (because it's rewarding). I like learning and I never stop doing both. I hate wasting time on non-productive activities. I don't watch mind-numbing daytime type TV. I watch educational programs. I read and listen to radio 4 and I get frustrated if I'm forced to spend time on anything which doesn't create something or teach me something. You know me as an artist, but my day job is designing software solutions in the genre of working class manufacturing and people management with the aim of providing dignity and satisfaction to people in the workplace. I'm good at my job. It's meaningful, it (hopefully) benefits the world and it provides me with personal agency and tremendous job satisfaction. There is no greater high than when you get respect and praise for doing a meaningful job from people you respect.

Health:

It's a bit obvious to say, that we feel good when we are healthy. However, we don't only worry about our own health, we also worry about the health and wellbeing of the people we love. More worries!

Nature:

We all know that spending time in nature is good for you. I'm lucky enough to live in the middle of a nature reserve, completely isolated from people and we are surrounded by trees and wildlife. So I can confirm, it is good for you.

Money:

It's an unfortunate reality that we all have to worry about money to some extent. So many of us struggle to find enough to even survive. It's the lack of it and the very struggle that generates a lust for it, which plays into the hands of the people perpetrating the ideal life image to sell you

stuff. Surly, having more money, must deliver that ideal life? Dream on! Yes having enough to not worry is crossing the barrier to relaxing about it, but only if you don't get suckered into the aspiration that they're selling you, The basic needs in life can be paid for by earning a normal common working class living.

Personally, I'm not a wealthy man, but I'll admit, I'm fortunate enough to have a good job and thanks to the fairies, I've managed to cross that threshold into not having to worry too much about money.

Given all of the above, it probably not that surprising, that we live almost 100% of our waking lives under layers of subconscious activities worrying about something other than what is happening right now.

Get to the Point

That's all the onion layers described, so now I can get to the point:

I experienced a moment where everything came together. I had been working intensely on a design project for work for some time and had to go to Miami (where our office is) to deliver my work to the team. I'd been there a few days and got myself into perfectly timed enjoyable little habit of heading off down to Starbucks at 6:45am, getting myself a 4 shot venti latte and managing to step onto the beach at exactly 7:00am. The exact time, the sun shows itself over the horizon.

The previous day, I'd been treated to and very expensive meal in a top class restaurant. We'd been drinking expensive champagne and I'd been driven about in a brand new Rolls Royce. It was a real treat and I think the catalyst for this moment I'm about to describe, but perhaps not for the reason you probably jumping too. Far from being wowed by this idealistic life style, it suddenly struck me that I was actually experiencing the absolute materialistic top that anyone on this planet can experience. Top car, top restaurant, top champagne, top location. I was with my good friend and thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience, because I was with my friend. It was just a posh car and posh food. I realised then and there that my friendship was the reason for the pleasure and I sort of transcended the whole human race and realised, that I already have every material thing I want in the world.

Also on the previous day I had the satisfaction of successfully delivering the results of my project and could relax in the knowledge that everyone was happy with my work. I work with people who all work hard and have high standards, so there's no hiding place, you have to be on your game. So my pride, job satisfaction and ability to relax where all as high as it could get.

At 7:00am I stepped on to the sand. I sipped my latte and the sun poked its head over the horizon. I was completely alone in nature enjoying a beautiful sun rise and became aware, that all my family and the people I love are all well and happy, I have no money worries and I'm riding high of the accomplishments of the previous day as well as thinking about my transcendence to a level above anybody on this planet, when I was suddenly hyper conscious. Absolutely every piece of this puzzle locked into place at the same instant and I was living in that moment aware of every single positive all at once.

It lasted less than a second, because the very realisation of it killed it as quickly as it formed, but I'll never forget it and can only hope to come close to it again one day.

My whole build up in the description makes it sound like it was very dramatic and should be accompanied by a thunder bolt or the voice of god, but the opposite is true. It was very un-dramatic, very calm and just a moment of clarity on a beautiful morning before I returned to daily life.

I felt compelled to attempt to translate that instant into a piece of my art. The fairy is riding the wind of life in nature, living in that moment with a hint of the spirit of ecstasy for influence.

I generally advise against an artist providing any narrative or explanation to their work. I think it robs the audience of their invisible panda and the joy of discovering the meaning for themselves. So I'm sorry if I've done that. I don't plan to do it again but the impact of the moment was so profound that I feel compelled to share it with you.

Whats the fairies name?

As you can tell from this insanely long waffly explanation, I'm not great with words, which is why I work in visual domains. I've searched and googled and tried to find some phrase or explanation of anything similar, but had no joy. No term or title seemed to do it justice so I can only conclude that the best title is "No Words".

