

Change the World for Fun & Profit

Howard Thurman wrote: “Don’t ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”

And yet, that is precisely the opposite of what most people do when they strive for social change. Contrary to Thurman’s advice, societies tend to tackle problems by either legislating solutions into existence via politics or by pleading with the rich and powerful to share their resources via philanthropy.

Doing things like starting a business or pursuing a career in the arts is usually regarded as selfish and greedy. And even when we do support the people who pursue these things, we’re still hesitant to think of them as revolutionaries and freedom-fighters in the same way that we’d think of politicians and philanthropist.

As materialistic and consumeristic as everyone says our country is becoming, we’re still by and large a nation that thinks a little bit less of those who do what they do for fun and profit. While we may not believe that money is evil, we certainly don’t regard the pursuit of it as being on the same plane as ventures that claim to be “not for profit.”

As odd as it may seem to someone who understands the economics of customer accountability, telling someone “I won’t make or lose any money from this transaction” is still a more effective way to build trust than saying “I care very deeply about my bottom line.”

As odd as it may seem to someone who understands public choice and the nature of incentives, telling someone “I’m running for office” or “I’m going to work for a think tank” is far more likely to make you sound like someone who’s interested in doing good than saying “I want to follow my dreams” or “I want to work for a cool start-up.”

This weekend I’ll be giving a talk at the Young Americans for Liberty Denver Spring Summit about “Changing the World for Fun and Profit.” In this talk, I’ll make a clarion call for young people to return to the wisdom of Thurman’s advice. I’ll dismantle common arguments about why profits are bad and I’ll show how our individual passions and priorities are more of a powerful force for liberty than what we’ve been previously taught.

The optimal path to creating a freer society lies in following your own self-interests. If you want to change the world, stop trying so hard to change the world and start paying attention to the things that fire you up. That’s the punchline with which I’ll begin tomorrow’s talk. If you’d like to see where I take it from there, come join me at The Summit Conference & Event Center at 2pm. You can find out more information about the summit

here

To learn more about how I'm changing the world through fun & profit in my everyday life, check out the work we're doing at [Praxis](#).

Also check out some of the links below to see some previous talks by my colleagues and I on how to adopt this strategy for changing the world:

[Criticize by Creating](#) – Derek Magill

[People Over Politics: How to Change the World](#) | Isaac Morehouse

[Education 2.0: How Philosophy, Not Tech, is Disrupting How We Learn](#) (TK Coleman)

[Entrepreneurship As A Theory of Social Change](#): T. K. Coleman