

Freedom Through Sacrifice

There are two ways to be free: You can be free **from** something or you can be free **for** something.

The first way is about being liberated from constraints.

The second way is about having the ability to create a result that matters to you.

If you hate your boss, for instance, you can be free from your boss by quitting your job.

If you enjoy playing the piano, however, you can only be free to do so if you take the time to master the basics.

The first kind of freedom is only obtained by walking away from an unpleasant situation, but the second form can only be obtained by putting in the time and effort necessary to develop a difficult skill.

I had a friend back in college who played on the football team. Whenever we'd hang out, I would eat candy and fast food. He never joined me in my indulgences. As a scholarship athlete, he wasn't allowed to eat that kind of stuff. At the time, I considered myself to be more free than him because I was free to eat whatever I wanted. I possessed no dietary constraints. Whenever Saturdays would come around, however, my other friends and I would go to the games to watch him play. He was phenomenal. He was able to do all sorts of fun and amazing things on the football field precisely because he chose to honor the constraints that made it possible. Because he sacrificed his freedom from dietary restrictions, he was able to experience the freedom of mastery.

Here's what I learned from my friend: The freedom to avoid discomfort isn't always the same as the power to make something happen. And in order to experience the latter, sometimes you have to sacrifice the former.

As Michael Card wrote. "It's hard to imagine the freedom we find from the things we leave behind."

Sometimes the best way to transcend your constraints is by taking on some new ones.