

How I'm Detoxing from Darkness

I've been dwelling a lot on the darkness in the world lately. If you study history, study people, and study yourself, it's hard to go very long at all without realizing the extent of human violence, lust, greed, laziness, and destructiveness.

Things have gotten very bad, are very bad (in much of the world), and will get bad in life. Knowing that can be a wonderfully clarifying and motivating thing (as it usually is for me) that makes it easier to live more meaningfully and appreciate the happy things in life.

But occasionally the darkness can threaten to drown you in despair or bleakness.

At times like these, it's very good to enjoy things that are naive, bright, and beautiful. Just seeing that naive things exist in some stable form gives you hope that even some fragile goodness has a place in the world.

That's how I'm detoxing from some of the darkness I've absorbed.

1. Feel-good movies

I watched both romantic comedy *About Time* and the romantic comedy *(500) Days of Summer* this week. The former is definitely better than the latter, but both have sweet and inspiring moments as well as plenty of good laughs. This genre of film is completely naive and hopeful and fantastic, but it has provided a nice counter-balance to all of the history of warfare I've been hearing about and even re-watching in *Band of Brothers*.

2. Exuberant music

There are a few kinds of music that fall into this category – the more potentially embarrassing, the better:

- *80s pop-rock* – it's pretty hard to dwell on the darkness when “You Make My Dreams Come True” is playing. 80s music is cheesy and over the top and wonderful.
- *Disney songs* – Few songs are catchier, more memorable, more nostalgia-packed, and more clever
- *Modern pop* – Taylor Swift, Carly Rae Jepsen are my go-to's for detoxing from darkness

3. Imagination

Engage in most (if not all) opportunities to play along with the imagination or playfulness of others, especially the young. Playing Space Dinosaur Alien Hunters (trademark pending) with a 4-year old on Sunday was one of the highlights of a month also filled with reminders

(or the real thing) of much more depressing types of human behavior.