

Potential is Not Enough

“You have potential” is not a compliment. It’s a challenge.

“To whom much is given, much is required.”

The more potential you have, the greater the demands you need to place on yourself. It’s not enough to feel flattered by your theoretical ability to do creative work. Potential is there to be actualized.

People will tell you’re that you’re brilliant, charming, and inspiring all day long just because you have big ideas, big conversations, and big plans. Don’t be seduced by the soothing words of these people. Good intentions aside, praise is not only cheap, but it’s dangerous if you mistake it for actual accomplishment. Countless dreams have been slayed by the dragons of flattery that sit atop the treasure of people’s potential.

Don’t settle for the easy “likes” and instant love that comes with talking about all the cool things you’re going to do some day in the distant future. Take life by the reigns now. Stir up the gift. Fan the flame. Become the person you know you can become. Value the clarity of your conscience over the cheers of a crowd.

Don’t let your potential stand over you as an indictment against your work ethic and commitment. Instead of leaving behind a legacy of flamboyantly announced intentions and unfinished projects, leave the world with an example of someone who had the courage to transform their potential energy into kinetic energy.

Yes, you have potential. But please don’t let that be most compelling part of your story.