

The Trouble with Abundance

Humans aren't evolved to have or handle abundance. Our nature has a very hard time dealing with abundance. Our abilities, desires, motivations, tools, and everything about us were forged in an evolutionary history of extreme scarcity. What we are evolved for is the journey of survival in the face of scarcity, not the destination of contentment in the face of abundance.

One of the problems I face is that I make alright money and I have very young children. In an evolutionary sense, our children are born into extreme abundance and are highly disconnected from the journey of survival (which is what they are primarily built for). As a parent, we have a balancing act of having my children adapt to the new normal of abundance while trying to retain the journey of survival.

I don't have the answers for this problem. I have some theories I will be trying out. Like at the age of 6 we plan on providing our kids only educational materials, basic food, basic clothes and such ... everything else they want they have to work for. Another one is what I discussed in the other thread; I will tell my children not to plan on receiving any inheritance since I plan to blow it all on cocaine and hookers before death (whether or not that is true).

I think free stuff to competent people is one of the biggest ways to create purposelessness, dependency, depression, disconnectedness, and suicide. The first thing people say they would do if they won the lottery is usually quit their jobs. There are less reasons to compromise with family and community if you don't need them for survival. Unearned wealth disconnects us from society and kills purpose.

I think people often inadvertently create human zoos ... places where all of what we strive for is provided without understanding that we weren't built to attain the destination, we were built for the journey. What makes us feel alive and wonderful isn't vacation, but working towards our values and connecting with our loved ones. Unfortunately, with kids, we have to work to reconnect them to their journey due to the wealth of our society, the dependency of our culture, and incompetency and fragility we attribute to youth. One strategy I have is to make them work for their stuff and not let them anticipate a windfall when I die.

Anyway, a friend said "you're just denying them information that is relevant to future planning." In response to my belief in telling my kids they will inherit nothing (whether or not it is true). Here is a better answer than I provided: Yes, I am. That isn't a bug, that is a feature. Every dollar a person receives for free slightly diminishes the value of their labor and the value of their relationships. An unexpected windfall at the age of 40 does far less damage since, hopefully, the person already created their life and values. Maybe an

unexpected half-million could even help them at that point.

I don't know, maybe I should just give any leftover money to people I hate and let it destroy their lives.