

Understanding the Fire

You know when you have the fire in the belly. You don't always know when you don't.

When there's a flame burning, it's easy to pour yourself into things with abandon. As you get better and better at whatever you do, nerves diminish and it becomes more relaxed. At some point, you begin to wonder if you're just a master now or if the relaxation means the fire is gone.

I'm a big believer in going where your energy leads. Pursue activities that add to your feeling of aliveness, and leave you more energized than you went in. But it's not always easy to tell when that's not the case. It can sneak up on you. And sometimes the energy return doesn't come until after a long slog through the desert. How to know when you're not getting energy from something vs. when it's just part of the grind?

I don't know.

But I do know that guilt, fear, shame, and self-deception don't help the discovery process. They crop up hard and fast, but they muddy the waters. They make *everything* feel low energy. If you can free yourself from a need to be excited about any particular thing and follow your fire as you stoke it, you'll eventually find it's path. If you feel like a bad person unless a certain thing inspires you, you'll never be inspired about anything.

Keeping it real ain't easy.