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Sunnylands Panorama Douglas E. Welch

For the weekend...

from Douglas E. Welch

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Join Our Community using Discord.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have been running a Discord community for friends and family.

Today, I am opening up our Discord for subscribers. Click the link below to join today!

Join Our Community Discord Now!

Being affected by the world but only affecting our small portion of it

 Listen to this essay



These last two years and more seem like a never-ending progression of one crisis after another. It can make even the most optimistic person start to question their thought processes and perhaps even their sanity. The world seems turned upside down and there seems little we can do to turn it upright again.

One major issue is that we are affected by news from the entire world but can only affect our small portion of it. This mismatch between cause and effect can leave us all feeling a bit weary and lost. We read news stories and watch videos of horrible occurrences but sit helpless and hopeless as we watch.

Empathy at a Distance

While having access to the news of the world at a moment's notice is an amazing thing, it also exposes us to news that we have no control over and no effect on. A murder across the country emotionally affects us but leaves us without any action we can take to solve it or prevent it in the future. We are forced to act as simple bystanders. I know for me this leads to great frustration, depression, and hopelessness about the future. I think it is a basic human condition to be empathetic, but news at a distance leaves us without a direction for this empathy. The link between cause and effect is broken and that leaves us adrift.

Turn it off!

In some cases, the only self-preservative action you can take is to turn it off. For me, it feels equally bad to simply ignore the problems in the world, but I only have so much energy to give, so much empathy to feel, so much despair to experience before I become non-functional. I have to manage my news intake very carefully or I quickly become overwhelmed with it all.

I stopped watching and listening to news many years ago. I felt myself becoming anxious and depressed so I limited my new intake to mainly written social media, including news updates and links. Reading about news is less intimate than watching it happen and listening to the interminable talking heads of headline news. It allowed me to put some distance between the news and my feelings.

In this way, I was able to control the amount and the type of news I allowed into my life. I was still aware of what was happening, but I was no longer going "down the rabbit hole" of 24-hour television news. I could dip in and out -- or even turn the spigot off -- of the daily news cycle. This one change has helped me dramatically stave off a lot of life anxiety.

Be A Good Example

That said, even if we can't affect the world as a whole, we can affect our tiny portion of it. We can't stop crime in other states, but we can work to prevent it locally. We can't solve the world's problems, but we can work to ensure those problems don't reappear in our backyard.

One way in which I try to affect this is what I called the Good Example Method. While I can't control what others are doing, I can control what I do, and attempt to be a good example to others. Sometimes this is the only action we can take. It is my hope by being a good example, I can help others near me follow that same example. Sometimes all that people need to know is they are not alone in their thinking and their actions. When they see a good example their own better nature is supported and enhanced.

Find like-minded people

This is a major reason why I post and share online via my blog, newsletter, and Social Media. It isn't due to any sort of moral superiority, but rather to support a commonality of thought amongst large groups of people above and beyond the noisy, smaller groups that seek to promote their own agendas. If I can convince even one person to share their thoughts, their dreams, their desires with the world then I have had an impact on my own small part of it.

On those days that you find yourself bemoaning your lack of impact upon global events, look to your local area and see what you might affect there. It will not be easy, certainly, but I think you will find that you can have a great and deep effect on your small world and that will help you to gain more optimism about the future of the world. I know that for me this has certainly helped. Seeing small changes gives you hope that larger changes are possible, even if they take much longer to accomplish.

So, go out there today and be the best example that you can be, and know that that is enough. The world will continue spinning regardless of what we do, **but we can help to make it spin a little more calmly for the benefit of all.**

4 Interesting Links

Here are 4 Interesting links for your weekend reading and watching



Becorns are little people I make out of acorns and sticks. Then I photograph them in nature with real animals. In this video, I share my process for taking photos with some Eastern Bluebirds. Learn more and buy prints and stationery at: www.davidmbird.com.



18 Free Online Museum Tours To Enjoy Without Leaving Your Couch

from The Collector

As the history of museums is entering its digital age, more and more art institutions are choosing to expand their online services.

Most large museums today offer online access to their collections. Other online resources such as videos, podcasts, games, etc, are also quite common. Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, virtual tours of museums have become a popular substitute for physically visiting museum exhibitions. As a result, free online museum tours are becoming more and more available to the international audience.

Read

Literature Clock

My girlfriend likes to read, so when she wanted a new clock for the living room, I came up with a clock that shows the time in the form of quotes from books. And that thing attracted international attention

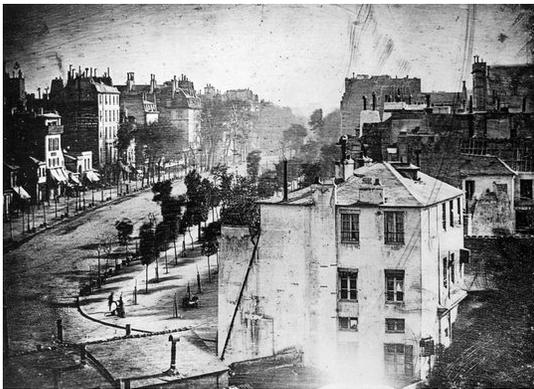
I look at my watch. **Two thirty-six.** All I've got left today is take in the laundry and fix dinner.

- The Elephant Vanishes, Haruki Murakami

Check it out!

STREET VIEWS by Kim Beil

from Cabinet



City streets seemed eerily empty in the early years of photography. During minutes-long exposures, carriage traffic and even ambling pedestrians blurred into nonexistence. The only subjects that remained were those that stood still: buildings, trees, the road itself. In one famous image, a bootblack and his customer appear to be the lone survivors on a Parisian boulevard. When shorter exposure times were finally possible in the late 1850s, a British photographer marveled: "Views in distant and picturesque cities will not seem plague-stricken, by the deserted aspect of their streets and squares, but will appear alive with the busy throng of their motley populations."

Read

Read This Before Our

Next Meeting: How We Can Get More Done

by Al Pittampalli

Traditional meetings are a weapon of mass interruption. Long live the Modern Meeting!

The average American office worker spends eleven hours in meetings every week. Yet all that time sitting around a conference table hasn't made us more productive. If anything, meetings have made work worse.

Traditional meetings reduce efficiency, kill urgency, and breed compromise and complacency. Worst of all, our dysfunctional meeting culture changes how we focus, what we focus on, and what decisions we make.

But there is a solution, a way to have fewer, shorter, more purposeful meetings. It's called the Modern Meeting Standard. By following its eight simple but radical principles you may never have to attend a useless meeting again.

Read This Before Our Next Meeting is the call to action you (and your boss) need.

Amazon

AL PITTAMPALLI



HOW WE CAN
GET MORE DONE



Road Closed, Douglas E. Welch

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