

CHRIS'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode notes




EP 33 - Principle #1 - Live by the law of expenditure

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This is part 1 of our summer PRINCIPLES series. It can be listened to by itself, but for greater context refer back to the intro Episode #32.

Note that the principles in this series are what work for me. They allow me to thrive and live my values as best as I can. I'm not advocating the adoption of my specific set of principles. Rather I'm attempting to showcase the power of principles by providing more context on how they can be defined, codified, and embedded into the thoughts & actions of our lives.

Principle #1 - Live by the law of expenditure

Where does the principle come from?

- **Law of Expenditure: There is more to be gained & lived in expending our time & energy rather than in receiving the time & energy of others.**

- There's strong roots to this from Stoic philosophy, but this one evolved from my lifelong leaning towards building & creating things.
- This principle is about serving others using the skills, abilities & resources at our disposal.
- By framing it as a law, it's a reminder that the benefits of expenditure are always there to be realized if the right effort is given.

Why is it important?

- Our time in this world is limited. It can't be refunded, so how we use it defines our true intentions.
- Creating, building, serving are all expenditures that bring greater joy than receiving.
- This expenditure forces experimentation, utilization, combination, or coming to terms with ideas.
- Expenditure is risky: It exposes more of our true self, yet can be exhilarating.
- Output is where life is truly lived.
- It's a reminder to value the expenditure of others, which comes in so many forms. How much of the efforts of our world go underappreciated, yet hold tremendous value?
 - The crew who laid our town's sewer pipes decades ago
 - The design & manufacturing team who created the microprocessors that I'm using to help create this podcast
 - The unheralded novel that makes you question your perspective of the world
 - The cashier who takes the extra time to double-check your order
 - ... and countless other examples
- It's also a helpful mindset to recognize that it's likely impossible to see the full extent of the impact of our expenditure.
- Our efforts can ripple on for far longer than we realize, and in different ways than we intended. So it remains important to live in the expenditure itself, and rarely revel in the outcomes.

How does living it impact myself & others?

- It provides a sense of accountability: Has everything been given to the task? To others?
- Raises conscious of what energy is spent on
 - There will undoubtedly be false starts, mistakes, and the potential for regretted experiences.
 - But these shape us too. They help us shift course towards new frontiers of understanding & ability.
 - This extra effort provides inner strength & conviction.
- Recognizing that others falter as well, which can help weather criticism of others' efforts.
- Stay mindful not only of our own use of time, but honoring the sacrifice of the time & effort of others.

| *A book only comes alive when there's a writer and a reader.*

- In both business and personal matters, living this principle often builds stronger partnerships. Seeking out win-win solutions where the others involved walk away feeling like they got as good or better.
- Expending effort always comes with trade-offs: Time spent doing X can't be spent on Y.
- It's important we remain mindful of the family, community, and world we serve. To ignore them in a selfish or damaging expenditure is to ignore and/or hurt part of ourselves.
- To work, perform, create . . . *To live* means to share.

What does living this principle look like in action?

- Passive inputs like TV aren't inherently bad: All variety of inputs inform us with the wisdom, techniques, and frameworks to live through our expenditure more rewardingly.
- Recharging ourselves can take many forms across our minds, bodies, and souls.
- Exposure to art, entertainment, diverse ideas, and quiet relaxation must be embraced.
- But there should be intention in all things, since they all expend time at the same pace as anything else.
- Be mindful of using time wisely & living within each experience as much as you can.
- Expend time on things that bring you closer to the person you aspire to be, not things that pull you away.
- It increases awareness to avoid keeping score: Don't expect to receive in equal measure to what's been expended.
 - It took a long time for me to realize that this is okay - I love serving others and I thrive when the balance of that scale is lopsided!
- Regularly remind others that they have the support of my time, energy and resources. Even if they don't take me up on the offer, it can be comforting to know they're supported.

Episode 33 Quote:

I mentioned Stoic frameworks for this principle at the start. So I'll end today's episode with a quote from one of Seneca's letters regarding time:

Some of us use it sparingly and some prodigally; some can render a strict accounting of their expenditure of time and others have no balance left, which is the most disgraceful of all. Often an old man will have nothing but the calendar to prove that he has lived a long time.