

CHRIS'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode notes




EP 34 - Principle #2 - Train the mind, body, and soul

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This is part 2 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 #2 - Train the mind, body, and soul

Where does the principle come from?

- When brainstorming elements of life that were important, in order to distill them into principles, there ended up being a bunch surrounding personal improvement.

- I realized that they were all reflections on a common theme: Training & improvement
 - Keeping the mind sharp, equipped with an ever better array of knowledge, and improving discernment to handle challenging tasks.
 - Maintaining physical fitness lets us get more things done, allows us to provide for family & friends, and makes it easier for both mind & soul to focus better with fewer burdens.
 - Aspiring to a deeper spiritual connection to underpin actions with a higher purpose and help maintain humility.
- The resulting principle evolved from a desire to remain mindful of the importance of training. But it's wording also reflects the need to do so in balance.

Why is it important?

- Neglecting training can lead to many negative outcomes:
 - Makes us less prepared to take advantage of opportunities
 - We risk putting ourselves or loved ones at risk because we're not able to handle critical moments
 - Increases reliance on and susceptibility to the authority of others
 - Create broken internal soundtracks: *"I can't because . . ."*
- Maintaining balance between the mind, body, and soul is important. I like the analogy of the balance beam.
 - The further you move off the centerline, the greater effort that's required to regain balance
 - By stacking our efforts at one or two extremes, even small changes around you can drastically upset the balance of the system.
 - By aligning across the entire axis of experience (mind, body AND soul), we're stronger against a wider variety of potential impacts.

How does living it impact myself & others?

- Aspiring to maintain a well-balanced lifestyle helps me see value in a wider array of opinions.
- Following this principle reminds me to maintain a diversity of thought and action.
- I also find it has an impact in my writing. I reflect a wider span of human experience in my work because I attempt to experience a wider span of life.
- Makes us better able to show up for others in a manner most helpful to them. Some examples:
 - You could be the World's Strongest Person, but do you have the spiritual depths to help console someone coping with a tragedy?
 - The genius with a 150+ IQ who has spent a lifetime training the mind, but ignoring their physical fitness, may end up with physical ailments that shorten the quality and length of the time they live to realize their intellectual potential
 - And take the example of the hustle-culture social media types who brag about their insane workout regimens and all the books they read, who live for outward appearance rather than with internal conviction. And they often lack of strong moral, ethical, or spiritual structure to maintain balance & humility.

What does living the principle look like in action?

- There are often phases where overcorrections are needed.
 - This can be practical and due to circumstance: Intense training for a physical goal such as running a marathon, cramming to pass a licensing exam, or preparing for a wedding.
 - It can be due to neglect: Recognizing that it's been years since you've read a book, lifted a weight, or prayed/meditated to a higher power or ideal.
- Despite the intention of the principle, it's impossible to achieve a perfect balance.
 - Life's a journey that's forever uneven: Avoid keeping close score to ensure all three are perfectly equal in importance and effort spent.
 - Likewise, we shouldn't get down on ourselves for neglecting an aspect.
 - As we grow, there could be a need to redefine our goals in one of the areas. We're allowed to shift what we want to know, our perceptions of our bodies'

capabilities, and our spiritual beliefs.

- And recognize that others are allowed to do the same: Respect other's individuality & choices.
- There can also be a seasonality to it:
 - Colder and darker winter days provide more time for reading and intellectual pursuits
 - While long summer warmth tends to see us out and about, being more active with our bodies.
 - Religious high holidays and rites of passage can bring faith and family to the forefront

Episode 34 Quote:

Today's quote comes courtesy of Jose Ortega y Gasset, and reflects why paying close attention to our principles can help us get closer to the person we aspire to be:

| *“Tell me to what you pay attention and I will tell you who you are.”*