

# CHRIS'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode notes




## EP 36 - Principle #4 - Everyone has something to teach

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This is part 4 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 #4 - Everyone has something to teach

**Where does the principle come from?**

- Comes from a desire to remain humble: Mindful that everyone is a unique aspect of the universe expressing itself
  - The vastness of that universe is impossible to truly, fully witness
  - Our view is no less real or valuable than any other - we're all part of the same universality
- Everyone is the hero of their own story, playing roles in each other's stories
  - An interaction could have a tiny impact in your story, but could be a major turning point in mine.
- By saying that "everyone" has something to teach, it means everyone.
  - True lessons may come from what is not said as much as from what is.
  - We may learn what not to do from what is done.
  - The key is remaining open to the lessons in the first place.
  - Isolating oneself from a perceived other is poisonous to ourselves and on a larger scale to society.

## Why is it important?

- Most of us will live lives forgotten to time, demarcated by a few digits: Date of Birth & Date of Death.
  - Little else of us will survive beyond a few generations at most.
  - Consider how little of the most famous figures from history are truly understood. *This is okay. It's humbling.*
  - Our ability to record history improves, but our capacity to truly experience it has never changed.
  - What matters is that we truly live on within the hearts & minds of others, slowly fading away.
  - An important reminder that we carry the responsibility to carry forth the hard-earned lessons of others who have passed on - lest they fade too fast.
- This mindset & awareness help me to stay observant: Not ignoring people's unique wisdoms

- Be open and observant to the ideas of others: Both as inspiration and cautionary tale
- We must constantly remind ourselves that we are imperfect beings with grossly imperfect information.
  - We may learn a catchy turn of phrase from a fool
  - We may gain deeper understanding from an expert
  - Our faith may be inspired by witnessing hate
  - We may learn all three of these lessons from the same experience. All at once or at vastly different times.

## How does living it impact myself & others?

- By not writing anyone off, and engaging on a deeper level: People's hidden depths can reveal greater knowledge

*“People all want the same 5 things in their lives: to be loved, respected, heard, treated fairly, and the same thing for their family as we want for ours” - Daryl Davis*

- On the flip side, recognize that everyone around us is learning from us.
  - Often they aren't focused on what they're learning.
  - Most people aren't aware at all in each moment, ourselves included.
  - Yet we all still learn things regardless.
- An increased awareness of others' experiences & viewpoints can be a superpower.
  - Provides more guideposts for navigating our own trials & tribulations
  - Consider the power of support groups such as AA
- It is interesting, the offset that often exists between a lesson and when it is learned
  - Sometimes a lesson is understood at a subconscious level, becoming part of us before we're even aware.

- Other times we may focus all our attention on a lesson, struggling to understand it at our deepest level. Patterns of behavior from childhood, for example.

## What does living the principle look like in action?

- It's invigorating to synthesize all our learning. The layering of our unique knowledge & lived experiences.
  - Embrace your precious combination: Pay attention to the ways we can use our focus and action to add layers to wherever we find ourselves in this moment.
  - Delve deeper, aim higher, stretch our mind, body & soul wider.
  - All the while reminding ourselves that we'll only ever be one aspect of a vast, infinite universe expressing itself.
- **Post-mortems (better term: after action) - what takeaways are there from that conversation or interaction?**
- It's important to remember that principles are aspirations: Not something we're aligned with all the time.
- One element of action I'd like to be more aware of: Listening more & talking less.
  - It's difficult to hear clearly when there's an echo bouncing back at us.
  - These echo chambers exist for all our senses: Making it tough to listen, learn, and grow.
  - Therefore, we must seek out a variety of mentors, influences, sources of information, and experiences to keep perspective.
- Everyone is influenced by their environment - so it's important to remain mindful of the surrounding context for a person's thoughts and actions.
  - Or to put it another way: Everyplace and everything has something to teach too.
  - We can learn facts about a place from books, film, and Wikipedia: But there's a unique value in learning within the place itself.
  - For example, when news comes out of foreign cities where I've spent some time (Paris, Montreal, Munich come to mind) - I have deeper understanding of the places and cultures that have generated the news and/or are affected by it.

- There's a trap to not understanding that our opinions of most foreign events is stained significantly from this lack of understanding regarding context.
- Staying humble of our understanding gap is a critical part of deepening our empathy and ability to learn.
- We should also try and remain mindful of checking our ego during a conversation or interaction.
  - Understand that life can get in the way of representing our full selves to others
  - A lousy interaction could be the result of a unique situation / timing in the other persons' life.
    - Perhaps that checkout clerk isn't always rude or short, but it's a function of crisis.
    - Perhaps that other driver is normally amazing, but they just cut us off because they're racing their sick kid to hospital

### **Episode 36 Quote:**

Today's quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson sums up this episode perfectly:

***“Everybody I meet is my master in some point, and in that I learn of them.”***