

# CHRIS'LL DEAL WITH IT

episode notes




## EP 42 - Principle #10 - Live minimized and organized

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This is part 10 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 #10 - Live minimized and organized

**Where does the principle come from?**

- This principle came about from the desire to live with the intention that acquiring stuff is a by product of living, not an end goal.
  - Stuff are things that we interact with, tools we can use.
  - I'm not saying objects can't be important: They can be imbued with deep meaning, be vital tools for living.
  - But stuff can also be used as a status symbol. It can distract us, get in our way.
- This principle combines two things, but they are related: The less stuff we have in our way, the easier it is to be organized.
- Organization itself is important because it allows us to be more effective.
  - And it's vital to me personally as it helps with anxiety and staying clear on my goals.
- Of all my principles, this is likely the most aspirational. I'm still far from my idealized goal of minimizing the stuff in my life. And I believe there's still plenty of room to improve my organization.

## Why is it important?

- Consider the purpose of the stuff we surround ourselves with: The more stuff we control, the more it controls us
- There's an expression: *A place for everything & everything in its place.*
  - Living this way allows the mind greater focus.
  - One's surroundings can be a mirror reflecting the order within oneself.
- Everything we own comes with more than the initial cost of acquisition. Consider the other costs each object in our lives may come with:
  - Housing & protecting it
  - It's maintenance and upkeep
  - The energy it uses
  - Moving or transporting it
  - It's eventual disposal

- and the environmental impact of producing and using it

## How does living it impact myself & others?

- The easier it is to maintain organized surroundings, the easier it is to focus more of our energy on creating, whether that be work, art, family, community, memories, or our own inner peace.
  - We have the capacity to create spaces that inspire, invite, relax, protect, and bring together.
  - Likewise, our spaces can frustrate, injure, cramp, or make more anxious.
- There is enough for everybody as long as collectively we can agree on what is enough.
  - Less stuff = less waste of stuff, lowering our environmental impact.
- Consider how little we truly need to be secure, feel valued, happy.
  - We ought to leave what we can to allow others to achieve this state, upon which they can thrive.
  - It takes time & experience to figure out what matters. As we evolve, so does our environment & that which we're borrowing from the universe.
- Consider the nomadic life: There are fewer communities like this nowadays, but countless millions of early humans got by without shopping centers, cars, and the internet.
  - I'm not saying modernity is bad: Just that the trappings of our modern life don't make us more or less Human in and of themselves.
  - We must put our developments, knowledge & resources to work for bettering our communities & the planet. Hoarding or wasting them does so little.

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

- Taking the time to keep life minimized and organized has a direct impact on my ability to feel on top of things. In control.
  - Disorder in my surroundings leads to disorder in my mind.

- Everyone has a different calculus around this. Others may be totally comfortable with piles of stuff lying about.
- Still, having kids, I'm trying to adjust to the massive amount of disarray and chaos that comes with them.
  - I know this has to be embraced to a certain extent - but it does have an impact on my mental clarity and anxiety.
- Over the years I've learned tricks that work well for me:
  - Keeping specific, dedicated places for certain important objects.
  - Taking a little time every day to clean up little messes, organize a pile of papers, or put away some toys on the floor.
  - And a Friday afternoon weekly routine where I go through goals, objectives, clean up my to-do lists, and plan the week ahead.

## Episode 42 Quote:

In honor of this being Episode 42 - the infamous answer to the Ultimate Question ([youtube link](#)) - Here's a fun quote from one of my favorite authors, Douglas Adams', from his iconic book *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*:

*One of the things Ford Prefect had always found hardest to understand about humans was their habit of continually stating and repeating the very very obvious.*