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*Maria Papova observes life thru a multifaceted*

 *secular/human perspective (Reason-Reality) that reflects Divine Revelation pretty well*

Pythagoras: “...there are a few who have come *(to the Games)* to observe and to understand all that passes here. It is the same with life. Some are influenced by the love of wealth while others are blindly led on by the mad fever for power and domination, but the finest type of man gives himself up to discovering the meaning and purpose of life itself. He seeks to uncover the secrets of nature. This is the man I call a philosopher for although no man is completely wise in all respects, he can love wisdom as the key to nature’s secrets.”

1. Allow yourself the uncomfortable luxury of changing your mind.

Cultivate that capacity for “negative capability.” We live in a culture where one of the greatest social disgraces is not having an opinion, so we often form our “opinions” based on superficial impressions or the borrowed ideas of others, without investing the time and thought that cultivating true conviction necessitates. We then go around asserting these donned opinions and clinging to them as anchors to our own reality. It’s enormously disorienting to simply say, “I don’t know.” But it’s infinitely more rewarding to understand than to be right {in our sight} — even if that means changing your mind about a topic, an ideology, or, above all, yourself.

BC Mt 16:6 take heed and beware of the leaven... Lk 21:34 take heed to yourselves lest hearts be weighted down...”escapism” cares of this life, so That Day come upon you unawares. 36 Watch and pray...worthy to escape and stand before the Son of Man 1Cor 3:10 build; Rm 12:2

2. Do nothing for prestige or status or money or approval alone..

.“prestige is like a powerful magnet that warps even your beliefs about what you enjoy.

It causes you to work not on what you like, but what you’d like to like.” Those extrinsic motivators are fine and can feel life-affirming in the moment, but they ultimately don’t make it thrilling to get up in the morning and gratifying to go to sleep at night — and, in fact, they can often distract and detract from the things that do offer those deeper rewards. {News junkies?}

BC Do all for the glory/will of God [1Cor 10:31] not yourself (temporally-Phil 3:14-15);

1Jn 2:15 Do not love the world...vs love of the Father

16 lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...

17 world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever

3. Be generous with your time and your resources and with giving credit and,

especially, with your words. It’s so much easier to be a critic than a celebrator.

Remember there is a human being on the other end of every exchange and behind every cultural artifact being critiqued. To understand and be understood, are among life’s greatest gifts, and every interaction is an opportunity to exchange them.

BC: Acts 20:35 More blessed to give vs receive; Mt 10:8 freely rcv'd, freely give;

Lk 6:38 give-it will be given...same measure *Gal 6*

4. Build pockets of stillness into your life. Meditate *{implications for applications}*

Go for walks...nowhere in particular. There is a creative purpose to daydreaming, even to boredom. The best ideas come to us when we stop actively trying to coax the muse into manifesting and let the fragments of experience float around our unconscious mind in order to click into new combinations. Without this essential stage of unconscious processing, the entire flow of the creative process is broken. Most important, sleep. Besides being the greatest creative aphrodisiac, sleep also affects our every waking moment, dictates our social rhythm, and even mediates our negative moods. Be as religious and disciplined about your sleep as you are about your work. We tend to wear our ability to get by on little sleep as some sort of badge of honor that validates our work ethic. But what it really is is a profound failure of self-respect and of priorities. What could possibly be more important than your health and your sanity, from which all else springs? {Self-sacrificial love?}

BC Purpose of life is not survival til you die. Ps 46 Be still and know that He is God;

Ps 23 led beside still waters, He restores my soul…leads

5. Maya Angelou: When people tell/*show*) you who they are, believe them (*the first time*).

Just as important, however, when people try to tell you who you are, don’t believe them.

You are the only custodian of your own integrity, and the assumptions made by those that misunderstand who you are and what you stand for reveal a great deal about them and absolutely{*?}* nothing about you.{self-deception?}

BC 2Cor 10:12 measure by self=not wise;

Mt 16:16 Who do you say that I Am?

Pr 19:20 Listen to advice and accept instruction=wise

6. Presence is far more intricate and rewarding an art than productivity.

Ours is a culture that measures our worth as human beings by our efficiency, our earnings, our ability to perform this or that. The cult of productivity has its place, but worshiping at its altar daily robs us of the very capacity for joy and wonder that makes life worth living: “how we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.”

Avg life: 2[yrs of boredom, 6mo watching commercials, 67 days heartbreak, and 14 minutes of pure joy](https://www.brainpickings.org/2016/01/26/sum-temujin-doran-david-eagleman/). Life of sensation=greed; Wishing zombies

BC Presence vs Purpose; Focused and receptive rational response vs Feeling Why were we made? [faithfulness & fruitfulness glorifies God & us -Jn 15] Eph 5:16 Redeeming the time

Lk 10:39 Mary sat at Jesus' feet & heard His word 40 Martha was distracted with much serving 41...worried and troubled about many things.

42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part,

7. “ Expect anything worthwhile to take a long time.”

...so fundamental yet so impatiently overlooked in our culture of immediacy.

The myth of the overnight success is just that — a myth — as well as a reminder that our present definition of success needs serious returning. The flower doesn’t go from bud to blossom in one spritely burst and yet, as a culture, we’re disinterested in the tedium of the blossoming. But that’s where all the real magic unfolds in the making of one’s character and destiny. {Perseverance and Endurance}

BC: Rm 5:3 glory in tribulations,

knowing that tribulation produces perseverance..4 character..hope; Gal 5:22 fruit of HS; endurance

8. Seek out what magnifies your spirit.

Who are the people, ideas, and books that magnify your spirit? Find them, hold on to them, and visit them often. Use them not only as a remedy once spiritual malaise has already infected your vitality but as a vaccine administered while you are healthy to protect your radiance.

*2Cor 3:14 blinded...reading OT 15 veil on heart 16 (removed in Christ) turn to Lord 18 unveiled face, beholding glory of the Lord, being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

BC Phil 4 meditate on: true, noble, just, pure, lovely, good report, virtue praiseworthy - meditate on these things. Do, and God w/ u *Josh 1:8*

9. Don’t be afraid to be an idealist.

The commercial enterprise is conditioning us to believe that the road to success is paved with catering to existing demands — give the people cat GIFs...(that's) what the people want.

E.B. White...role of the writer is “to lift people up, not lower them down” —

Supply creates its own demand. Only by consistently supplying it can we hope to increase the demand for the substantive over the superficial — in our individual lives and in the collective dream called culture. {Field of Dreams}

BC Do all for edification 2Cor 12:19 “I'd rather fail in a cause that succeeds than succeed in a cause that fails” -Woodrow Wilson

10. Don’t just resist cynicism *{lack of faith/hope in other's self-serving motives/desires}*—

fight it actively. Fight it in yourself, for this ungainly beast lays dormant in each of us, and counter it in those you love and engage with, by modeling its opposite. Unlike critical thinking, that pillar of reason and necessary counterpart to hope, it is inherently uncreative, unconstructive, and spiritually corrosive. Life, like the universe itself, tolerates no stasis — in the absence of growth, decay usurps the order. Like all forms of destruction, cynicism is infinitely easier and lazier than construction. There is nothing more difficult yet more gratifying in our society than living with sincerity and acting from a place of largehearted, constructive, rational faith in the human spirit {vs God} , continually bending toward growth and betterment. This remains the most potent antidote to cynicism. Today, especially, it is an act of courage and resistance. {fallen creatures just become better satan-servers [proud rebels in the dark] without God's light/will and grace/power}

BC Phil 1:9 your love may abound still more and more in epi-knowledge and all discernment. Heb 4:12 Word-divide soul/spirit-is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

5:14 mature...reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

11. Question your maps and models of the universe, both inner and outer,

and continually test them against the raw input of reality.

Our maps are still maps, approximating the landscape of truth from the territories of the knowable {Revelation anyone?}— incomplete representational models that always leave more to map, more to fathom, because the selfsame forces that made the universe also made the figuring instrument with which we try to comprehend it.

BC Equip with everything to do His will working pleasing in His sight -Heb 13:21;

Spirit at work to will and do His good pleasure Phil 2:13

12. How, in this blink of existence bookended by nothingness,

do we attain completeness of being? There are infinitely many kinds of beautiful lives.

So much of the beauty, so much of what propels our pursuit of truth, stems from the invisible connections — between ideas, between disciplines...between faint figures who pass each other in the nocturne before the torchlight of a revolution lights the new day, with little more than a half-nod of kinship and a match to change hands.

BC Not all is profitable (godliness is temporal & eternal beauty).

Christlikeness is the std of enduring beauty/value. Attain ur purpose!

Js 1:4 Perseverance finish its work...mature/perfect and complete;

Phil 4:12 perfect and complete in all the will of God

13. In any bond/*rlshp* of depth and significance, forgive, forgive, forgive.

And then forgive again. The richest relationships are lifeboats,

but they are also submarines that descend to the darkest and most disquieting places, to the unfathomed trenches of the soul where our deepest shames and foibles and vulnerabilities live, where we are less than we would like to be.

Forgiveness is the alchemy by which the shame transforms into the honor and privilege of being invited into another’s darkness and having them witness your own with the undimmed light of love, of sympathy, of nonjudgmental understanding.

Forgiveness is the engine of buoyancy that keeps the submarine rising again and again toward the light, so that it may become a lifeboat once more. {Light banishes darkness}

BC Eph 4:32 Forgiving one-another as.. 1Jn 1 walking in the Light.

God needs fruits of repentance, so do we. Js 2 Show faith by works

14. Choose joy...at first consciously, effortfully,

pressing against the weight of a world heavy with reasons for sorrow, restless with need for action. Feel the sorrow, take the action, but keep pressing the weight of joy against it all, until it becomes mindless, automated, like gravity pulling the stream down its course; until it becomes an inner law of nature.

If Viktor Frankl can exclaim “yes to life, in spite of everything!... he lived thru, then so can any one of us amid the rubble of our plans, so trifling by comparison. Joy is not a function of a life free of friction and frustration, but a function of focus — an inner elevation by the fulcrum of choice. So often, it is a matter of attending to... “the little joys”; so often, those are the slender threads of which we weave the lifeline that saves us.

“So few grains of happiness -measured against all the dark -and still the scales balance” Hirshfield-The Weighing

BC Philippians= Joy comes from choosing what is best! DTB 1Jn 1:4 4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. Jn 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.