

Get Big or Die Tryin'

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Every morning I wake up and there is only one goal in mind: survival. I know what makes me happy in this world, and I know what makes me sad and frustrated. I try to maximize the good while inflicting as few regressive external and internal stimuli as possible. In my mind my day is mapped out; I know exactly what I'm going to do and when I'm going to do it. Granted, most days for me are exactly the same, minus a few details here and there. Even still, I know what I am going to do because I know what I want to do.

I have found something in this life that consumes me. Call it what you want—addiction, dedication, obsession—I know what makes me happy and I know what makes me really, really happy, and it is that latter that I have found to be the focus of the majority of my waking hours. This stimulus puts me in a state of being where I am not myself. A transformation takes place and I am no longer part of a society. I am so entranced with what I am doing that I feel as if I am in my own world. And it is this feeling that I try to pass on to others.

The feeling of finding something in your life that turns you on and allows you to be something that you never thought you could be. So many people in this world go through their life doing a bunch of things that they kind of enjoy, or doing things they don't enjoy at all. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why this is. I am not trying to say that all of your actions need to be focused towards maximizing your personal utility or that there isn't any benefit from struggling through times of the despair. In fact, I believe that some of the darkest times in one's life can produce the greatest qualities in a person, allowing them to succeed in the rest of their life.

My apprehension lies in the effort individuals put forth towards activities that they are less than interested in. Too many people fill the majority of their days with activities they do not enjoy, while not paying enough focus and attention in doing these activities to make the outcomes worthwhile. Because of this cycle, we are left with a society of mediocrity, mild depression, and no signs of change to come soon. And to top it all off, every time you open a newspaper or turn on a television you have to hear and read about how bad the current times are. We are trapped in this bubble of gloom that never allows us to truly live, and this is where "Get big or die tryin'" steps in.

You need to find something in your life, whether it is an activity, a cause, or another person, that, to you, is greater than yourself and that inspires you to become something greater than yourself. In fact, you need to find something in your life that is so important that you would be willing to die for it. Now, I am in no way promoting self-sacrifice. However, I do believe that it is vital to have something, anything, in your life that you are willing to give anything for; all of your time, focus, energy. Whether you do or not is a different story, but it is important that you have something in which you would at least be willing to.

Just by having something of such magnitude in your life you will now have a reason to wake up each day, you will have a reason to be better each day, and you

will have a reason to help others each day. There is now this concept of being a “well-rounded person” that much of society seems to follow. This is fine and well if you actually commit to involving yourself in the activities you partake in, but too many of these “well-rounded individuals” never get any farther than skin deep in their activities, they never progress beyond mediocrity in their activities, and their activities end up being a source of frustration and stress for these individuals as they never find something truly worth committing to and their schedules are constantly full.

So this is what “Get big or die tryin’” is implying. This is why I sign off all of my articles and e-mails with this phrase, to constantly reinforce the idea that there are some things in this life worth dying for, and until you have something in your life worth dying for you are not really living, you are just simply getting by from day to day with no real purpose or direction to focus your energy and intentions towards.

So find something in your life, anything in your life, that is so incredibly important to you that you would be willing expend everything to ensure its success. If you don’t think you have anything in your life that would qualify, stop what you are doing and assess where you are at. Step back and figure out what makes you the happiest in your daily activities and concentrate on that. If you still can’t find something, strongly consider a change in what you are doing with your life because you can’t go through your life doing activities in which you are only halfway committed, attending events and fighting for causes in which you are only halfway interested. Find that one thing that lets you know you are truly alive.

Get big or die tryin’.

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Charlie Cates is the owner and head performance coach of Self Made (www.selfmadefitness.com), and is a Certified Personal Trainer and Performance Enhancement Specialist through NASM. He has worked with athletes of all ages and ability levels, from 9-year-old kids to NFL MVP's. He can be reached via e-mail at charlie@selfmadefitness.com.

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