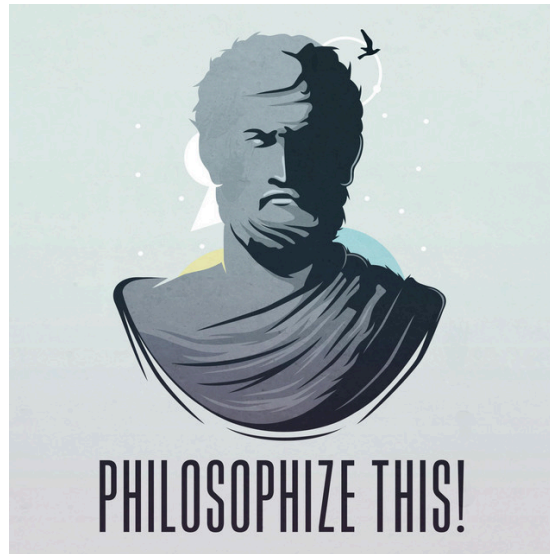


**“Anxiety is the dizziness of Freedom”**

3.31.26 @ Paul Cafe



*How come in every stone sculpture of these guys from ancient rome/greece their jawline is like razor sharp, they have high cheek bones and are basically built like they follow Clavicular's lookmaxxing routine? Makes you wonder how many of these guys were just fucking chuds/chopped and told the sculptor to catfish (sculptor fish?) their looks into these stone carvings. If all these dudes were doing was sitting on their ass and thinking they can't all have looked like greek gods. To be fair I'd probably do the same shit.*

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Last week, when I was in the city at my regular cafe, some English guy saw me reading and asked what I was reading. We struck up a conversation and he was a pretty educated guy and somehow we got to talking about philosophy and he recommended the philosophy podcast, "Philosophize This!" I wrote it down in my notes and forgot about it but yesterday I went to my notes to write something I thought was really clever (I'm a gaffer with the sauce they're calling me Vincent Company) (my notes are filled with bs like this lmao) and I saw the podcast in my notes. At the time I was riding the bus and I thought fuck it lets do this shit and #addvalue by listening to something new and different as opposed to shuffling Taylor Swift's greatest hits for the next half hour. Safe to say I was pleasantly surprised by this pod and immediately got sucked in no diddy. The beautiful part about this podcast is you can listen from the beginning to the end of the episodes chronologically because of how the episodes themselves follow the chronological order of philosophy through time from the first humans in Africa to present day, contemporary philosophy. I have since gone back and started from episode one but one of the episodes I originally dropped in on was an episode titled "Anxiety" (not to be confused with that shit ass DoeChii song) and centered around the ideas of Søren Kierkegaard: a philosopher in the 1800s who is known as "the father of existentialism." I found this episode fascinating, so I'm gonna talk about it cause thats wtf I want to do today. Clock it. Let's work.

**Link to podcast if you care to listen:**

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5z7eh16f1HeBreYcRzBf8o?si=6b0b1117283540c3>

So off rip I just want to say I don't necessarily wholeheartedly agree with everything Kierkegaard (you just created a million Kierkegaards) is saying here but I really appreciate the perspective he is providing and the thinking he is making me do. I really liked the notion of how the greatest mission/struggle in life is maintaining ones individuality and becoming ones TRUE self. He makes a great point that if you asked everyone in the world if they were an *individual*, they would unequivocally say yes, of course I'm an individual, what the fuck are you talking about bro? But in reality, many people have completely lost their individuality / true selves in absorbing societal norms / expectations or other outside forces. He is essentially saying that you can lose yourself and not even realize you are doing so. You can just melt into this blob of societal expectations, pressures, and cultural norms until you are hardly discernable from your fellow societal members. I think being consistently challenged on this front and questioned is extremely important for me. I can easily fall into my routine of "healthy" habits and tell myself "man I'm so happy I ate well, worked out and read today, life is good." It isn't until you are hit with this and take a step back that you can truly assess your individuality and fulfillment of lifestyle. I'm going to go into more personal detail in a moment.

Now this next part Kierkegaard talks about is where I really began to do some real reflection. Kierkegaard says there are two ways people can lose themselves. The first way is being *lost* in the **"finite"** or the external world. This means becoming whatever your environment TELLS you to be. Example: "I'm successful because society tells me what I'm doing is successful." This may feel good because you have a societal seal of approval, but in reality you have completely lost what YOU want and YOUR own individual desires/asures of success and substituted them with societies. I journaled after this episode and wrote about where I feel like I'm currently lost in the "finite" and my reflections in general in regards to the finite.

- This is a big reason why I deleted my social media. I felt like I was consistently posting or existing online to prove to society I'm happy / successful in others eyes. Pulls you deeper into the societal cesspools of "proving" myself or conflating some twisted sense of self-worth to my / others social media presences. I say all this but still religiously scroll twitter tbf just want to throw that in here to make it clear that I'm not speaking from some moral high horse.
- I have improved greatly on this, but linking my performance on the basketball court (which is my job although it doesn't really feel like it) to my self-worth and how it impacts my mood/demeanor/enjoyment of life off the court is an example of me being lost in the finite. I'm defining myself by my job and the expectations that come with my job of playing high level basketball and being "perfect."
- Socially, on a more micro level, I think is where I really tend to get lost in the finite. I lose my true character in trying to conform to societal expectations or what is societally "cool." I'm an athlete and hang around other athletes and in athlete society its not really

common place to passionately debate which Harry Potter book is the best or ask why didn't Frodo + Sam simply fly the magical eagles to Mordor instead of going on a months-long grueling mission to deliver the ring to Mt. Doom? Essentially I think I dumb myself down to fit in instead of just embracing being nerdy about shit that others around me may not be nerdy about. Lost in the finite in the sense of conforming to social expectations of being an athlete and that I should be a certain way and like certain things. The second way Kierkegaard talks about losing oneself is getting lost in the

**“infinite”** which is essentially being paralyzed with the sheer freedom and options in life and overthinking / never committing to one path. Example would be talking about all the things you want to do in the world but in reality sitting on your couch on your phone all day gooning and playing Clash of Clans (no Clash of Clans hate here, or gooning hate for that matter shoutout all my gooners fr). This was the one that struck a chord with me when it comes to losing myself. I have so many ideas in my brain of things I *want* to do but often I end up not doing them at all and they live in this imaginative conceptual space that never is brought to fruition. This is what I wrote in my journal in response to where I'm lost in the “infinite”:

- My phone is the literal living existence of the “infinite.” the minute any activity/task requires an ounce of effort/persistence it is so easy to just turn to my phone and put it off or just completely forget about it. Just minds the numbs and keeps me paralyzed. Not really adding anything of value, just the brain equivalent of empty calories and an absolute time suck. #noticing. Anytime I'm not “taking a leap” or grabbing life by the horns I can almost ALWAYS point to my phone as the culprit, and yet I continue to piss away time on it, especially at night. We are locked in an old fashioned showdown and my phone is beating my ass. Good wake up call in this eternal battle with lowering my screen time. I saw a tweet that said “the guy that invented the infinitely scrollable timeline must feel like Oppenheimer” and I genuinely believe that man or woman (or they/them #ally) had just as negative an impact on the world as Oppenheimer did.
- With my hobbies. I have wanted to go on this beautiful hiking trail about 35 minutes from my house for months. I have wanted to take a day trip to Metz for months. I have wanted to start filming music stuff for youtube for months. I keep saying/writing I am going to do these things but end up passive and sitting on my ass on my free days. This is why I loved this episode is because it gave me the shot in my arm I needed to start doing what tf I want to do with my life. Take the leap of faith towards my individuality will not be easy but it will be worth it!!!!
- No action - no identity is what Kierkegaard says in this part. Notice he says ACTION and not THINKING. I want to work towards more ACTION and less thinking about that action. Do and react + process as opposed to meticulously planning +thinking and then acting.

There's a lot more to this episode but I'll cap it here. Highly recommend a listen to this on your commute. During any freetime you may have. Easy listen and extremely interesting/thoughtprovoking. 2 day streak btw lets keep it rolling tmrw #takethaleap. Until next time.