


**Don't let your
Life rot away!**



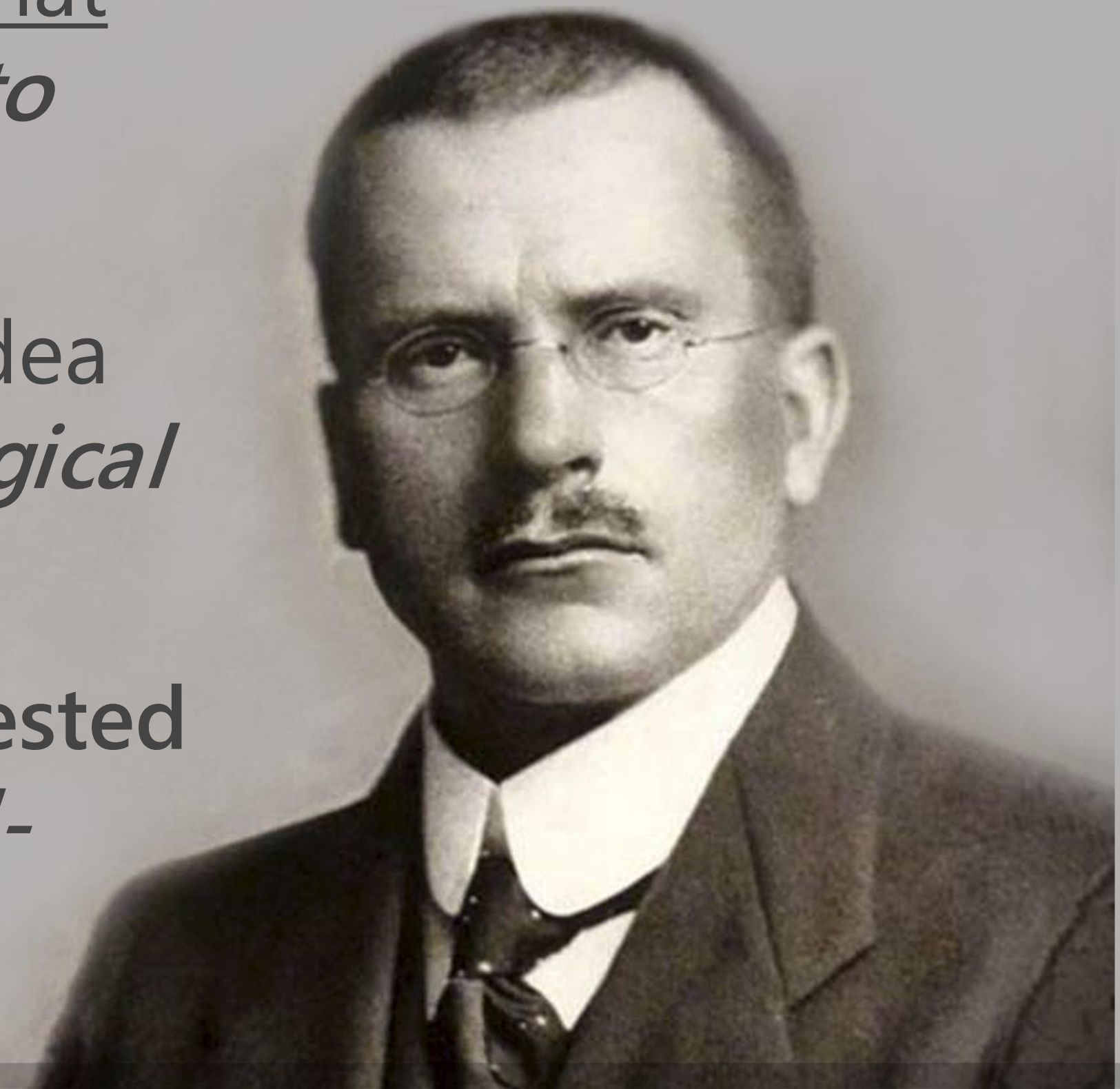
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There's this idea in Jungian psychology, called the circumambulation. And Jung had this idea *that you had a potential future self which would be in potential everything that you could be. And that it manifests itself moment to moment in your present life by making you interested in things.*

And the things that you're interested in, are the things that would guide you along the path, that would lead you to maximal development.

Now, it sounds like a metaphysical idea, or a mystical idea even, but it's not. It's not, *it's a really profoundly biological idea.* The idea is something like.

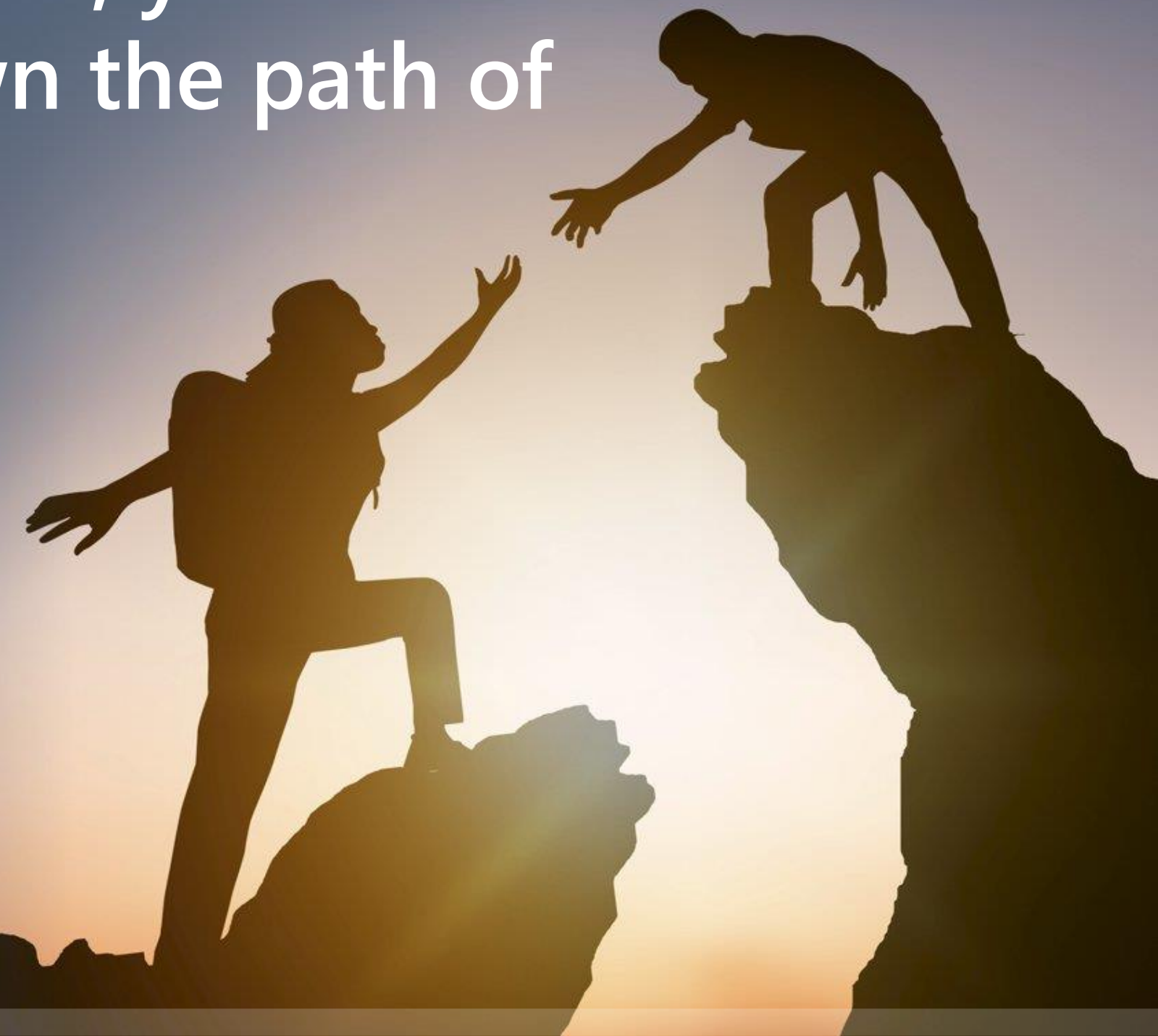
"Well, you're set up so that you're automatically interested in those things, that would fully expand you as a well-adapted creature."



Well like, there's nothing radical about that idea. What else could possibly be the case? Unless there's something fundamentally flawed about you, that is what the situation would be.

It's kinda interesting to think about how that would be manifested, moment to moment, but the idea is something like: "Well, your interest is captured by those things that lead you down the path of development". Well, that better be the case.

And so, there's some utility in pursuing those things that you're interested in. That's the call to adventure, let's say. And the call to adventure takes you to all sorts of places. Now, the problem with the call to adventure is like, *what the hell do you know?*



*You might be interested in things **that are kind of warped and bent.** And often it's the case that when new parts of people manifest themselves and grip their interest, say, **they do it very badly and shoddily.***

And so, **you stumble around like an idiot when you try to do something new.** That's why *the fool is the precursor to the savior*, from the symbolic perspective.

It's because *you have to be a fool before you can be a master*, and if you're not willing to be a fool, **then you can't be a master.**



It's an error-ridden process, and that's also laid out in the Old Testament stories, because the first thing that happens to all these patriarchal figures when God kicks them out of their father's house when they're like 84, is that they, *they run into all sorts of trouble.*

And some of it's *social*, and some of it's *natural*, some of it's a *consequence of their moral inadequacy.*

So they're fools. The thing that's so interesting is that despite the fact that they're fools, *they're still supposed to go on the adventure.*

And that **they're capable of learning enough, as a consequence of moving forward on the adventure, so that they straighten themselves out across time.**



And so, it's something like this, this **circumambulation** that Jung talked about was this *continual circling*, in some sense, **of who you could be.**

You might notice, for example, that *there are themes in your life* you know, when you go back across your experiences, you see, you kind of have your *typical experience* that sort of **repeats itself.**

And there might be a variation on it like a musical theme, but *it's like you're circling yourself and getting closer to yourself, as you move across time.*

That's the circumambulation. Now, remember that for a second because *we'll go back to it.*



Okay, *so imagine that something glimmers before you, it's an interest that's dawning*, and you decide well, first of all, you're paralyzed, you think. "Well, how do I know if I should pursue that? It's probably a stupid idea."

And the proper response to that is: You're right, *it probably is a stupid idea because almost all ideas are stupid*.

And so, **the probability that** — *as you move forward on your adventure — that you're gonna get it right*, the first time, **is zero**. It's just not gonna happen.

And so, then you might think: "Well, maybe I'll just wait around until I get the right idea."

And which people do, right? So they're like 40-year-old thirteen-year-olds, which is not a good idea.



And so, *they wait around until it's waiting for Godot until they finally got it right*, but the problem is, *you're too stupid to know when you've got it right*, so waiting around isn't going to help.

Because even if the perfect opportunity manifested itself to you, in your incomplete form, *the probability that you would recognize it as the perfect opportunity, is zero*.

You might even think it's the worst possible idea that you've ever heard of anywhere. Highly likely.

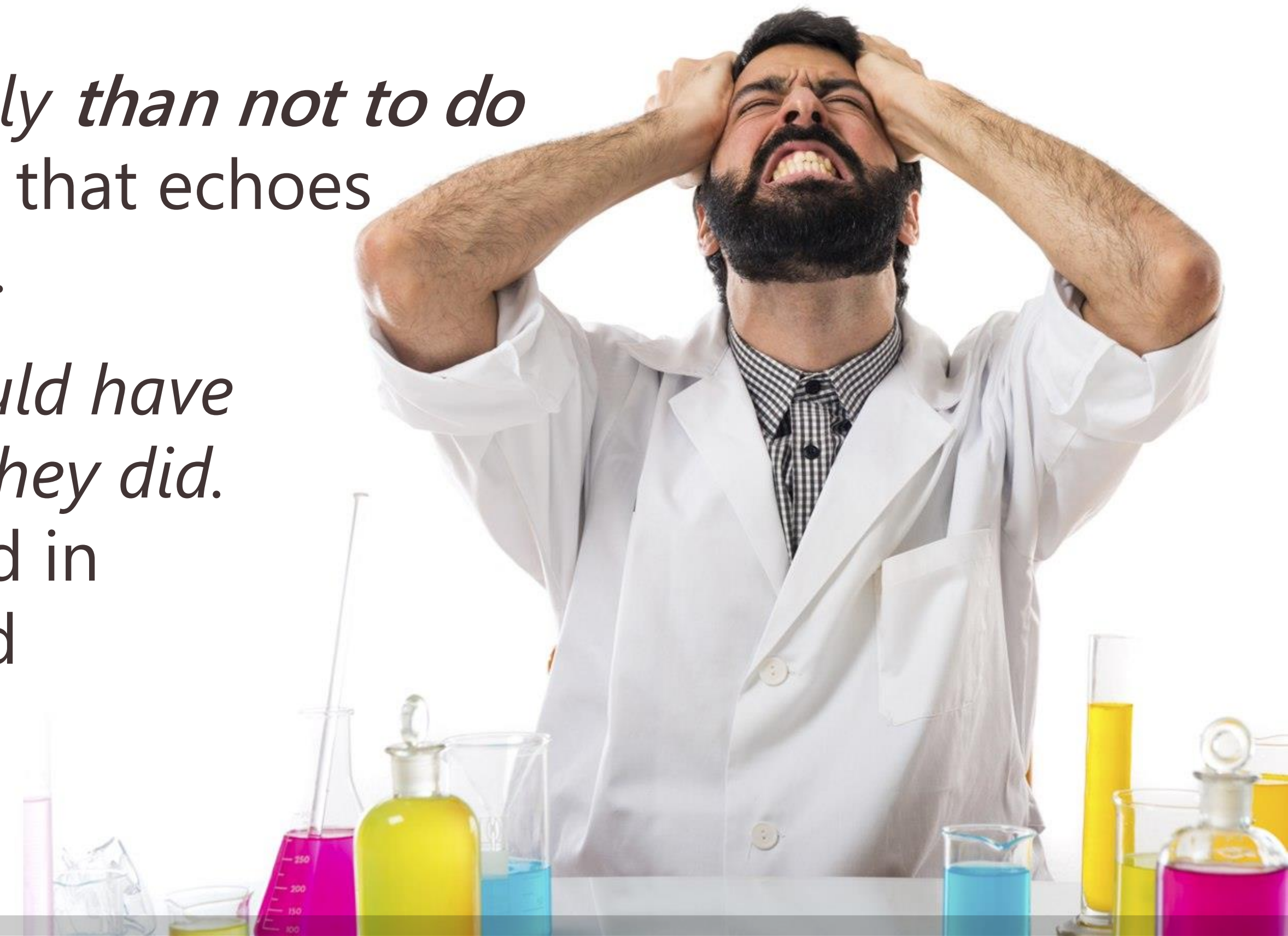
Nietzsche called that a "**will to stupidity**", which I really liked, so because *he thought of stupidity as being... you have to take it into account, fundamentally, and work with it*.



So, you can take these tentative steps on your pathway to destiny and **you can assume that you're going to do it badly.** And that's really useful because you don't have to beat yourself up. It's pretty easy to do it badly.

But the thing is, *it's way better to do it badly than not to do it at all.* And that's the continual message that echoes through these historical stories in Genesis.

It's like, these are flawed people, *they should have got the hell out of their house way before they did.* And they go out, and they stumble around in tyranny, and famine, and self-betrayal, and violence.



But, **it's a hell of a lot better than just rotting away at home.** And that's great, so, that's good.

So, why is that? Well okay, so you start your path and you think that you're heading, you know, towards your star and so you go in that direction.

Then because you're here, the world looks a particular way, but then, when you move here, *the world looks different and you're different* as a consequence of having made that voyage. And so, what that means is that now that thing that glimmers in front of you is going to have shifted its location.



Because you weren't very good at specifying it, to begin with, and *now that you're a little sharper* and more focused than you were, *it's going to reveal itself with more accuracy to you.*

And so then, you have to take 180° reversal, but it isn't, because you know, you've gone this far, and that's a long way to get that far.

But, *that's a lot farther than you would be if you just stayed where you were, waiting.*

So, **it doesn't matter that you overshoot, continually.** Because as you overshoot, *even if you don't learn what you should have done, you're going to continually learn what you shouldn't keep doing.*



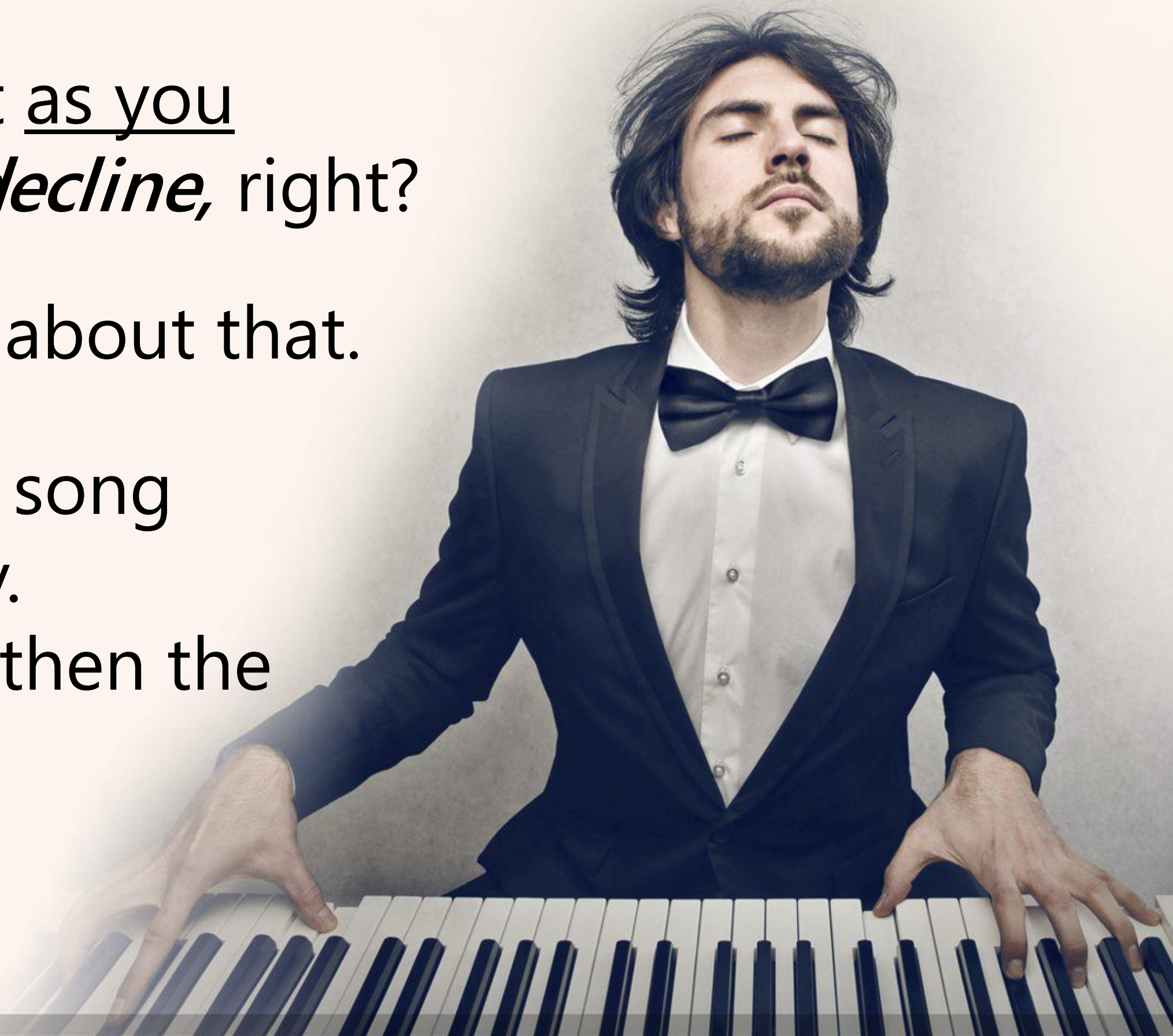
And, if you learn enough about what you shouldn't keep doing, then that's tantamount, *at some point to learning at the same time what you should be doing.*

Now, what's cool about it though, I think, is that as you progress, *the degree of overshooting starts to decline*, right?

And that, we know there's nothing hypothetical about that.

As you learn a new skill, like even to play, play a song on the piano, for example, you overshoot madly.

Making all sorts of mistakes, to begin with, and then the mistakes, they disappear.



There's a great TED talk, I think it was about this guy uh, who set up a really advanced computational recording system in his home and recorded every single utterance his young child made while learning to speak.

And then, he put together the child's attempts to say certain phonemes. And put them in the list - and you can hear the child deviating madly, to begin with, and then after hundreds and hundreds of repetitions, just zeroing right in on the exact phoneme.

So, you know, you might not know this but when kids babble, because they start babbling when they're quite young, they babble every human phoneme. Including all sorts of phonemes that adults can't say.



And then they "die" into their language. So that after they learn, say, English, then there are all sorts of phonemes they can no longer hear or pronounce. But to begin with, it's all there, which is really quite interesting.

But so, as they learn a particular language, they zero in on the proper way to pronounce that, and their errors minimize.

And every time you learn something, that's how it is. And that's really useful to know, too because it means, that it's okay to wander around stupidly before you fix your destination.



Now, you see that echoed in Exodus, right? Because what happens is that the Egyptians or the Hebrews escaped a tyranny. Which is kind of whatever you do, personally and psychologically, when you escape from your previous set of stupidly held and ignorant and stubborn axioms.

It's like, away from that tyranny. It's like: "Great, I freed myself from that." Well, then what?

Well, you think, "well, now I'm on the way." It's, no you're not, now you're in the desert! Where you wander around stupidly, you know, and worship the wrong things until you finally organize yourself morally again, and head in the proper direction.



So that's worth knowing too, because you think...

"Well, I got rid of a lot of things, baggage, excess baggage, that I didn't need in my life, and now everything's okay." It's like — no it's not! You've got rid of a whole set of scaffolds that were keeping you in place, even though they were pathological. Now you have nothing.

And nothing actually turns out to be better than something pathological, but you're still stuck with the problem of nothing.



And that's, well, that's exactly why Exodus is structured the way that it is. It's that, *you escaped from a tyranny*. It's "Hurray! We're no longer slaves." Yeah well, *now you're nihilistic and lost*.

It's not necessarily an improvement.

It's also useful to know that because you can also be deluded into the idea that, imagine that you're trying to become enlightened; which might mean, to turn all those parts of you on that could be turned on.

You think: "Well, that's just a linear pathway uphill, you know? It's just from one success to another."
No it's not!



It's like, here you are, and you're *not doing too badly*, and the first step is a *complete bloody catastrophe*, it's worse! And then maybe you can pull yourself together, and you hit a new plateau, and then that crumbles and shakes, and BANG! *It's worse again.*

And so... Because part of the reason that people don't become enlightened is *because it's punctuated by intermittent deserts*, essentially, by **intermittent catastrophes**.

And if you don't know that well then, you're basically screwed, because - *you go ahead on your movement forward, and you collapse, and you think: "Well that didn't work, I collapsed."*



It's like, no, that's par for the course. It's no indication that you've failed, it's just indication that it's really hard.

And that *when you learn something, you also unlearn something, and the thing you unlearned is probably useful, and unlearning it actually is painful.*

You know, let's say if you have to get out of a bad relationship. It's like, *there isn't any relationship that's 100% bad.*

And so, *when you jump out of it, well, maybe you're in better shape, but you're still lonesome and disoriented, you don't know what your past was and you don't know what your present is and you don't know what your future is.*



That's why people stay with the devil they know, instead of, you know, looking for the devil they don't know.

The fact that you're full of faults doesn't mean you have to stop!

And thank God for that! That's a really useful thing.

And the fact that you're full of faults doesn't mean that you can't learn!

And so, you can posit an ideal, and you're gonna be wrong about it, but it doesn't matter, because what you're right about, is positing the ideal moving towards it.

If the actual ideal isn't conceptualized perfectly, well first off, surprise surprise, cause like, what are you gonna do that's perfect?



So, it doesn't matter that it's imperfect. It just matters that you do it and that you move forward.

So, that's really positive news, as far as I'm concerned, because you can actually do that, right? You can do it badly. Anyone can do that. So that's useful.

Okay, so like, if you're an efficient person, you would have just done that. But, you're not. But who cares, you know? *You still end up in the same place.*

And maybe the trip is even more interesting.
Who knows? Probably too interesting.



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