

A Musing

Podcast Transcript

002 ▸ Choose Manual Mode

We take the time to learn how to operate all sorts of devices and gadgets in our life. But how about ourselves? A musing inspired by the purchase of a new camera? Yup... that happened. If you wanna chat about this week's topic, hit me up at contactamusing@gmail.com. I'd love to hear your thoughts.

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00:00:00.320 - 00:00:01.760

Welcome to A Musing.

00:00:13.754 - 00:00:19.074

Today's episode, Choose Manual Mode.

00:00:35.624 - 00:00:39.584

I recently bought my first DSLR camera.

00:00:39.584 - 00:00:44.524

It was an exciting purchase, especially because my kids were really hyped about it.

00:00:44.524 - 00:00:56.064

My daughter has an affinity for photography, and my son wants to dress up like Frank West from Dead Rising for Halloween, so yeah, he's got the camera part of the costume covered.

00:00:56.064 - 00:01:02.804

In any case, excitement was in the air as we opened up that package and started to play around with the beautiful device.

00:01:04.484 - 00:01:17.264

Now, being the nerd that I am a few days before the camera arrived, I signed up for an online course teaching how to understand and use the various settings the camera has.

00:01:17.264 - 00:01:25.184

I'm a creative professional by trade, so I've always had a deep respect for photographers and their mastery of their cameras.

00:01:25.184 - 00:01:33.284

The way that they're able to capture spectacular shots that no one else can capture no matter how advanced that mobile phone camera gets.

00:01:33.284 - 00:01:36.544

So I was eager to get into this course.

00:01:38.704 - 00:01:47.484

So during what we call boring Sundays, I sat with my kids, we grabbed snacks and drinks and started the course on our TV.

00:01:47.504 - 00:01:58.224

And after a couple of videos speaking about the very basics of the camera, the instructor made a very deliberate pause and he put up a sort of fork in the road.

00:01:58.224 - 00:02:02.604

He said, at this point in the course, you need to make a choice.

00:02:02.604 - 00:02:08.544

Do you want to learn the technical aspects of the camera, all its settings and possible functions?

00:02:08.544 - 00:02:12.044

Or do you simply wish to get to the picture taking?

00:02:12.044 - 00:02:22.224

If you simply want to get out there and start taking photos, you can set your camera dial to the green automatic setting, skip the next six lessons and hop over to the tip section.

00:02:22.224 - 00:02:24.824

That will get you out there quicker.

00:02:24.824 - 00:02:30.444

For those of you interested in learning the more technical side of your camera, I'll see you in the next video.

00:02:30.444 - 00:02:37.704

Now, as you can imagine, this led to a bit of musing on my part.

00:02:39.924 - 00:02:40.764

Here's what I thought about.

00:03:00.178 - 00:03:12.118

Sometimes, life seems like one of those decision-based video games, where your choices impact the course of the story and ultimately the ending of the game.

00:03:15.558 - 00:03:31.898

You're faced with a moment, that could be an argument with a loved one, a life-altering event, the loss of a job, some financial hardship, perhaps being dumped in a relationship, situations that make us decide what path we're going to take.

00:03:31.898 - 00:03:41.938

Do I brew in my resentment, or should I dig into what that loved one yelled at me to find the pearl of truth in it?

00:03:41.938 - 00:03:47.578

Do I take this as a defeat, or use this opportunity to learn a new skill set?

00:03:47.578 - 00:03:55.678

Do I look at this as my ruin, or identify the flaws that led me here, so as to not repeat the same story?

00:04:18.962 - 00:04:22.302

One of these paths is seemingly easy.

00:04:23.102 - 00:04:34.002

We dismiss the other person as the villain in our tale and move on, telling our sob story to anyone with a bias for us, seeking out pity and confirmation that we're the victim in the scenario.

00:04:34.002 - 00:04:46.122

Or perhaps we blame our former superior for having a vendetta against us, and we prep our victim story well for when we're asked, why did you leave your previous employer in our next job interview?

00:04:46.142 - 00:04:58.842

Or maybe we blame the economy, or the president, or the gods for our misfortune, and burrow deep in a pit of pity until life stops being unfair and gives us what we're entitled to.

00:05:05.537 - 00:05:10.417

For some reason, these seem like the easy paths, but they're not.

00:05:13.177 - 00:05:17.517

Harboring resentment poisons the well of our own life.

00:05:21.297 - 00:05:33.597

Blaming others for our misfortunes without ever seeing our own responsibility in situations turns us into limited human beings, never growing, never evolving, just cowardly.

00:05:37.297 - 00:05:48.857

Seeing ourselves as the victims in our own story robs us of seeing the blessings and benefits life has already given us in the present.

00:06:08.397 - 00:06:10.977

That's not easy, friends.

00:06:10.977 - 00:06:13.057

That's an unhappy life.

00:06:13.057 - 00:06:15.937

That's living life on automatic mode.

00:06:24.137 - 00:06:25.757

Listen, I get it.

00:06:25.757 - 00:06:31.897

The manual mode is not easy at first.

00:06:31.897 - 00:06:38.577

Not lying to easily get away with a failure forces us to take responsibility and assume consequences.

00:06:42.497 - 00:06:51.597

Not complaining, but instead being willing to put in hard work at level A so that we can one day be worthy of level B feels like a long process.

00:06:54.163 - 00:07:06.603

Swallowing our pride when that loved one is smack in the middle of their tirade so as to try and see what truth there might be to what they're saying, albeit improperly, is a heart wrenching challenge.

00:07:12.297 - 00:07:20.757

Not pointing fingers, not blaming others for our failures, not entertaining feelings and thoughts of injustice in the face of misfortune.

00:07:20.757 - 00:07:24.137

None of these are automatic in nature.

00:07:26.217 - 00:07:31.097

To achieve every single one of these, we have to make deliberate decisions.

00:07:35.637 - 00:07:40.697

Living life on manual mode is about getting to know ourselves to the core.

00:07:41.377 - 00:07:44.937

Not just the superficial basics that let us get through things quickly.

00:07:44.937 - 00:07:46.757

Not just appearances.

00:07:46.757 - 00:07:57.077

It's about learning our capabilities entirely, what we can do as individuals, the good and the bad, the bright and the dark within us.

00:07:59.817 - 00:08:03.557

What was the last thing you learned about yourself?

00:08:05.457 - 00:08:07.297

Seriously, ask yourself that right now.

00:08:14.880 - 00:08:22.740

What was the last discovery you made about your character, about your personality, about your passions, about your flaws?

00:08:53.779 - 00:08:59.379

There's a scene in The Matrix when Neo meets the Oracle for the first time.

00:09:00.139 - 00:09:05.579

You know, when he goes to the apartment building and the woman is there baking cookies.

00:09:05.579 - 00:09:12.739

He's looking for a quick, clear confirmation on whether or not he is The One.

00:09:12.739 - 00:09:17.679

And her answer does not please him one bit.

00:09:17.679 - 00:09:25.719

She points to a sign above her doorway that reads, Know thyself.

00:09:25.719 - 00:09:29.079

Neo wanted the automatic.

00:09:29.079 - 00:09:40.599

Instead, she invited him to set himself on manual mode.

00:09:40.599 - 00:09:48.659

And that is my invitation to you today.

00:09:48.659 - 00:09:49.719

Know thyself.

00:09:50.339 - 00:09:52.859

Get off that automatic mindset.

00:09:52.859 - 00:09:54.259

Learn yourself.

00:09:54.259 - 00:09:56.879

Like that camera I just purchased.

00:09:56.879 - 00:09:58.379

You're a beautiful design.

00:09:59.127 - 00:10:10.707

Whether crafted intentionally by a god of some sort or randomly emerging out of the beautiful chaos of evolution in the cosmos, the fact remains that you are here.

00:10:10.707 - 00:10:14.267

And there's so much beauty to discover in yourself.

00:10:14.267 - 00:10:21.707

And when you've learned what makes you tick, you become free and able to see the beauty in life in a new way.

00:10:21.707 - 00:10:30.347

Sort of like the camera lens, capturing what's in front of it in the way that only a pro who understands all the capabilities and settings could possibly achieve.

00:10:36.290 - 00:10:38.470

Try this when you can.

00:10:38.470 - 00:10:46.710

Next time you're facing a conflict or a hardship or a challenge or a dark moment in your life, just pause.

00:10:47.950 - 00:10:52.030

Don't react based on the automatic setting.

00:10:52.030 - 00:10:58.850

Remember that silence and non-action are part of the choices in front of you.

00:10:58.850 - 00:11:01.110

Don't say or do anything in the moment.

00:11:01.210 - 00:11:09.970

Instead, find time to meditate on what just occurred and ask yourself, is there something I can learn about myself in this situation?

00:11:09.970 - 00:11:15.490

Let the situation serve as a sort of mirror to see yourself reflected.

00:11:15.490 - 00:11:21.070

And then ask yourself, what can I improve based on what I'm seeing in this situation?

00:11:21.070 - 00:11:27.750

And be proud of yourself for not acting on instinct, but rather for choosing the path of growth and improvement.

00:11:28.870 - 00:11:32.750

And I'd love to know how it goes for you.

00:11:35.010 - 00:11:35.830

Let me know.

00:11:35.830 - 00:11:40.370

Email me at [contactamusing at gmail.com](mailto:contactamusing@gmail.com).

00:11:41.730 - 00:11:42.450

Catch you next time.