

SUBJECT: Guilt and Unusual addictions

I used to define entrepreneurship as guilt.

I felt like every second I wasn't "doing something" or "growing" I was dying.

I don't mean that lightly.

My honest to God damn near constant feeling was: If I'm not growing, I'm dying.

I did my best to fill every minute with learning or making money.

I had to be reading a book or listening to a podcast. If I was watching TV I had to make sure it was a documentary or Shark Tank so I could feel like I was still working or learning.

Each minute felt like it had to have an ROI attached to it.

"How is this thing I'm doing going to make me richer, smarter, better connected?"

Each person I'd meet would be scanned for potential dollar signs they could produce for me...or someone they could introduce me to. Each conversation was supposed to have some sort of ROI.

It felt normal to me.

My entire childhood (and life until recently) was based around winning and being the best. (A longer story you'll hear soon.)

But it's NOT healthy to feel like you're only ok if you're moving, growing, or becoming more.

Here's the weirdest and most dangerous part:

This constant need for stimulation and growth is an addiction. But we don't treat it like one.

If someone is addicted to alcohol or drugs, we say: "you better quit that shit. It's bad for you. It's ruining your life. It's not healthy etc..."

But no one says "Hey Greg, I've noticed you're reading a lot of books and listening to a lot of podcasts. I'm worried about you. All this learning is really gonna tear you apart."

NOPE.

Instead people say "Man, Greg I'm really impressed by how committed you are to your growth. You're so dedicated and disciplined."

When the reality is Greg is just using learning as a way to keep himself from having to hear his own thoughts and feel his feelings. He's using achievement and learning as a drug to validate himself and make sure he feels ok.

Quick side note: I don't think learning or reading a ton of books is bad. I still read one or two books a week. I used to three to four when I was younger. It's insanely valuable...but not if it comes at the cost of dealing with the deeper things going on inside of you. And not if it's at the level of an addiction.

So what's the secret to breaking free from this learning addiction and constant sense of guilt?

You need to uncover and resolve the deeper reason why you feel the constant need to learn and grow. Then you need to learn to feel comfortable enough with yourself to simply BE instead of constant feeling the need to DO.

I was a guilt and learning addict for most of my life. It helped me a lot in certain ways.

But I'll say that one of the greatest feelings of my life was when I finally learned to shut that off and simply be. The ability to do something solely because it brings me joy...with no end goal. With no justification other than the fact that it pleases me.

So how did I get rid of this addiction and learn how break free of the chains of guilt that used to bind me?

Well, the reality is I did some deep work with a coach/therapist to uncover and resolve the underlying issues that were causing my behavior. (Which I wasn't even aware of at the time btw.) The guy's name is Brent Charleton...

And the thing I did the day after my "intensive" with him was something I'd never done before...

I woke up and watched an hour of Netflix in the morning (I think I watched New Girl haha) before I did any work...and I felt ZERO guilt. I didn't look at my phone. I didn't check my email. I didn't think "I should be writing right now." I simply watched TV and laughed. It was glorious.

Since then it's only gotten better. I watch tv shows and movies. I go for runs on the trail in the middle of the day. I sometimes go multiple days in a row without working...even if it's not the weekend.

Frankly, I enjoy my life a lot more. I was even able to quit my ADD medication that I used to rely on and cut back my caffeine to consumption to an extremely low amount. (Something I secretly worried I'd never be able to quit. Seriously, I never told anyone I thought I'd need that medication for the rest of my life because I was ashamed of it.)

All while somehow getting more important work done and enjoying the process a whole lot more.

I know it seems like it could be too good to be true. If it wasn't my own story I'd probably have a hard time believing it. And if you're skeptical, I don't doubt you...in fact I'd encourage you to turn the skepticism dial up even higher.

But I'd also encourage you to imagine a future where you don't feel the constant need to do more, learn more, or grow more every second.

If the guilt and learning addictions resonated with you at all...then I think I may be able to help you kick those habits for good.

I'm doing a workshop with Brent (the coach/therapist) guy in Austin, TX from April 13-15. We're going to work on uncovering and resolving the hidden blocks that are holding you back.

It's only about 20-25 people so it will be intimate and DEEP work. In fact, it'll only be about 25% presenting/teaching and 75% actually working with people individually in the group.

There are literally only a few spots left since the room we're using can only hold a limited number of people.

Check out the link below if you're interested. And if those dates don't work for you, you can still put in your info to get on the waitlist for our next event.

>>> I'm interested

Or you can hit reply to tell me you're interested and we'll hop on a call to see if it's a good fit.

Talk soon,
Ian "guilt-free since 2017" Stanley