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Are you Living?

By Leon Logothetis

Leon Logothetis is a travel host and writer who hosted three seasons of the adventure travel show 'Amazing Adventures Of A Nobody' which aired for three seasons in over 100 countries on National Geographic.

As a young boy I vividly recall informing my mum that I wouldn't be spending life lost behind a desk. I wanted to be an adventurer someone who lived life to the fullest. I was going to live. I truly recoiled at the thought of spending days tethered to an office desk

Things did not go as planned.

As I approached my thirties, I found myself firmly behind a slab of wood, oak to be precise. I was depressed, uninspired and disconnected from family and friends. My life was going nowhere fast.

Even though I loathed the thought of entering the business world I found myself applying to business colleges in high school. At college I spent most of my time avoiding the business courses and enrolled in the more creative ones. Ultimately I graduated with a business degree, fell into a life rut and ended up in the city of London working for a brokerage firm. My life was seemingly spiraling towards fulfilling other people's dreams.

This is my story of how things can change.

Life shifted gears after I stumbled across an indie film called *The Motorcycle Diaries*. In the movie, Che Guevara rides across South America on a vintage motorcycle relying on the kindness of strangers. The powerful imagery of a man breaking free from his familie's wishes for his life (which for Che was to become a doctor) and his competing desire to go off into the world blazing his own path was intoxicating. I was drunk with opportunity. In that seminal moment, all my childhood dreams seemed viable once again. I realized I could change the life I was leading. I could create a life worth living; a life that inspired.

My life.

I had a friend who was a television producer so I contacted him with an idea. I wanted to travel around the world with limited resources relying entirely on the kindness of strangers. I always yearned for adventure and real human connection. I simply craved something different. This little experiment was conceived as a way to reinvigorate my life and help me connect with humanity once again. My long and arduous days behind a desk had created an abject disconnection to life. I needed to get in touch with my own dreams, my own desires. It was time to reshape my future.

I set off on my quest around the world on \$5.00 a day with a trip across America starting in Times Square and ending at the famous Hollywood sign. The rules were simple: I could not accept money,

just acts of genuine kindness. I would be followed by a film crew, who were unable to help me in any way. As I sat in Times Square I really wasn't sure of what to expect. Would I go back to my old life when all this ended? Would I fail miserably in my quest? I soon realized I had to throw out any preconceived ideas and simply take this long awaited leap of faith.





My experiences along the way were enlightening to say the least. Here are some of the most colorful ones. I spent the night in a blood soaked hotel room in Gallup New Mexico. I crossed paths with a lady who thought the FBI was building a drug factory under her house. I was given a \$190 jaywalking ticket on the Las Vegas strip. However, all these experiences paled when compared with the acts of generosity I received on the road. A kindhearted lady from Chicago put me up in her house even though she wasn't home (I had met her in Indianapolis!) The leafy town of Galesburg, Illinois raised \$110 for me to travel by train to Denver, Colorado. (I didn't handle any of the money as it was given to Bob, the friendly chap who put me up for the night who then purchased the ticket.)

I reached the Hollywood sign about a month after starting my odyssey in Times Square feeling like a new man. The experiences along the way invigorated my spirit showing me how damaging and destructive my old ways had really been. I wasn't living my true and authentic calling and was fulfilling someone else's dream for my life.

It never ceases to amaze me how a small indie film inspired such a dramatic shift in one mans attitude. My experiences across America changed me. I found my voice and the courage to follow my dreams. Living behind my proverbial slab of wood was no longer an option! I was never going back! I decided my true calling was in the creative world. A world I had dreamed of since childhood. I decided to spend my energy writing about my experiences and continue with my television endeavors, creating programs that inspired.

This new way of life is far from perfect; it is however, far improved from sitting behind a desk living someone else's life. Today, I am fully responsible for whether or not things go well, if they do not, I cannot blame others. I have chosen this path. Sometimes we have to ask ourselves why we are doing what we are doing. Is it for us? Is it to please family or society? The reality is that you have to wake up and live your life, if you don't live it your way, someone else will live it for you. My grandfather once told me "We all die, but few of us live." Are you living?

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