

# Sustainability Sunday: Models for continuity

This thing Motuv is has come a long way, I've had some hard talks with some good people over the last week and really when isn't that the point of living a life the right way. We've discussed Kansas City, the movement of like minded individuals towards cohesive and measurable goals and the relation of distance and space to the effort and bounty of beginning things vs. seeking them out in the world already made. And what I have noticed in thinking about it lately is the number of people my age or younger that are sourcing their inspirations and applying them to physical action. As the summer unfolds and energy lingers in the air and fills us with the need to work the earth or build dreams or find love or rip apart our lives and start anew I begin my preparations for an 18 week class I will start teaching in mid August and it's gotten me thinking a lot about children, about the state of a mind when it hasn't been bombarded and assailed by myriad inputs and hard lessons inescapably learned as we grow and face the reality of the world in which we live.

So I find myself here on Father's day, with a whole melting pot of conflicting emotions, Wiki's definition of "Father" is: A male parent of any type of offspring, but I think it means something entirely different when we talk about a human father, which ironically comes up right next to authority figure. We are the only species that can choose to go against our nature, that can construct great lumbering devices and distractions to fill or explain time and then question the value of it in the first place. I hear people always making note of simpler times when complaining about the decline of moral values or the state of modern families or they reference "tradition" as if there was a time in the past where women weren't subjugated or children taught that innovation meant consumption in western culture as a whole. They don't like thinking about it let alone where we put the major emphasis on the blanketed importance of our children's education in relation to the real and true issues that will face them as they get older. Instead I find most people not really thinking much about it all, advocating a system sometimes without even knowing it that literally changes its own rules to endorse mediocrity instead of taking life head on teaching acceptance of failure instead of self esteem and empowerment as a pathway to achievement and identity. The point of looking at any of this is to understand that the mind of a child is quite literally the most malleable stuff on the face of the planet and whether it be us, their parents or the infinite variables of input that surround them every minute of every day we must think about how these minds are developing and nurture progress and awareness of living within a system not sitting atop some thrown above and apart from it. So I want to think about what it means to have a patriarchic figure, and how that implicitly dictates how those under who's authority deal with the meaning in their own lives. For some reason France has been the breeding ground for what I consider the most solid and groundbreaking philosopher's of our time, from Descartes

to Deidre but from them today I want to focus on Albert Camus, who wrote a book called The Myth of Sisyphus to describe the responsibility of us as human beings. Sisyphus was a man punished by the Gods to roll a boulder uphill for eternity and every time it crested it would roll back down and thus, repeat. The point that Camus brings up is simple- what happens if Sisyphus smiles? It means that he is aware that his actions are futile, it means he can exercise his free will, his choice. He can look at the way the clouds look like mountains or paintings, he can embrace the breeze on his face, he can place his attention anywhere he chooses. The point is that we live in a world automatically assumedly designed by a patriarch, a grand artisan who crafted you and the world and the meaning therein.

But how often do we take for granted that meaning or how we maintain it, just because you are allowed the gift of life doesn't mean the job's done, that you can put it in a box leave it alone to collect dust and couch it. Our lives are so often relegated to futility yet the beauty is that WE can decide to acknowledge that and place our meaning in the things, actions, and people we love, that regardless of who or what created these lives we live, WE are RESPONSIBLE to create the meaning, to challenge ourselves and lead by example. I think about growing up and seeking out all these bands or authors or anyone anywhere that inspired me, these "role models"....yet over and over again when I finally tracked them down or got a hold of them I realized they were just people, just good folk tryin to get by, to provide for their own not bigger than life entities with some secreted or fabled treasure chest stocked with answers and advice. I think about these journeys and people I have met and how they have affected me It leads me to say be inspired and moved by role models or mentors or fathers or mothers or brothers or second cousins or total strangers but most importantly BE YOUR OWN ROLE MODEL, or better yet think about the phrase itself: role as in to play one, model as in to show or convey a product or idea. Hold yourself accountable for your actions, think about the things that moved you in those you have looked up to and be it yourself not next week or next year but NOW. If there is anything I have taken from all the summed up experiences I have been lucky enough to live through it's this: **TOMORROW ISN'T PROMISED**. The world doesn't care if you're afraid or confused or lost or angry and time will move regardless of whether or not you ever keep your promises to yourself or others. But think about the sheer beauty of being able to have a goal and meet it, to dream a dream and then ACT, to BE it, to literally take the most intangible of materials and weave and work them into existence as they have never been before because never in all of the long history has there or ever will there be again....a you to create them or organize them in the way you see their place in the universe.

But it's more than just doing it for yourself, I mean it when I bring up thinking multigenerationally the point of being your own role model isn't just to get your jollies off or even to create a community of like minded individuals that are proactive about their wants, it's more importantly to lead by example to show the youth that can see in us even if we don't realize it that anything is possible when you approach life with passion, fervor and the unwillingness to settle or compromise our dreams or capacity for joy. So this

week you've got some homework- it maybe the easiest thing in the world. I want you to think about a child you know about [I define child as anyone under the age of 16] who has a dream, desire or want [healthy] and I want you to find a way not to pat them on the head but to do something simple that fosters or reinforces within them their own journey towards it. It's most likely something you do anyway but I want you to premeditate it, to think specifically about how it does and will leave a lasting impact and then take into account how you live your own life and how they and other youth might see in you a vision of the world. I hope we begin to take these things into the account and inventory of our actions, that they might become more and more a part of our direction as good and honest human beings dedicated to sustaining ourselves and taking the best of what we are and making more of it. I thank you for sharing your time with me on this day, and for those of you who are father's I wish you a happy and hopefully healthy Father's day don't forget the strong and beautiful women and mother's that have made your fatherhood possible, remember you may often be caught in futility and if so, just take a breath, feel the wind and take in the beautiful sun filled sky. All things after all both pleasant and otherwise will pass, and after they do our children will be the one's to take up the work- let's do what we can to honor them.

-Dane