

Five Minutes to Thrive: 09-13 Oct 17

STAY CURIOUS, MY FRIENDS

Physician John Lilly liked to do copious amounts of LSD and ketamine. He would regularly design “experiments”—personal explorations into altered states of consciousness—devoid of fail-safes and other safety precautions in order to heighten his immersion. The thought was that by testing the limits of what is known to be possible, he could achieve a higher state of enlightenment and knowledge, believing this potential benefit was worth all the risk. And to some extent, he was correct: by the late 20th century, Dr. Lilly was known as one of the world’s foremost pioneers in the fields of biophysics, neuroscience, psychology, and cybernetics. He was also the world’s chief expert on the subjects of sensory deprivation, floatation therapy, and interspecies communication (specifically, between humans and dolphins).

What made Dr. Lilly so extraordinary was not the way he took to scientific experimentation with such reckless abandon, but rather his *intellectual curiosity*. Curiosity is essentially the innate desire for experience and knowledge. It is the driving force behind innovation, technological advancement, and imagination, and it therefore has the potential to propel us to new heights, both as individuals and as a community. Curiosity led to the European discovery of the “New World.” Curiosity created your favorite craft beer. And curiosity was behind the folks who one day not too long ago asked, “What if we could access the internet *from our phones?*”



So this week, I encourage you to indulge your sense of curiosity, whether it be seeking out a new experience, learning a new skill, or gleaning a tidbit of information. However (just to be 100% clear), I am NOT endorsing the use of psychotropic or mind-altering substances to this end!

- **Learn about something that interests you.** Ever wished you knew more about Greek mythology? Or always wanted to learn how to cook or play the piano? Seize the opportunity to increase your knowledge or to learn a new skill—don’t put it off for that elusive “someday!”
- **Recognize a problem, and develop a novel solution.** Some of the best innovations we have today were made by those who simply took an existing product or process and improved upon it; look for opportunities in your everyday life to improve upon something that may (or may not) be “broken.” Never be afraid to ask the question, “what if ___?”
- **Challenge yourself to try new things.** Step outside your comfort zone and try something you have never before experienced: paintball, golf, scuba/sky diving, yoga, meditation, bungee jumping, jai alai, psychotherapy, manicures/pedicures (trust me, dudes, they’re awesome), Thai food, etc. You never know what you may have been missing out on all this time....
- **Replace fear of the unknown with curiosity.** Fear and anxiety have the power to squash our natural curiosity, limiting us from accessing the amazing experiences this life offers. Instead of viewing the future with temerity, look toward the possibilities and opportunities!