



latest word

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Survival or Indulgence?

“The art of survival is a story that never ends.”

- ▲ How different are we to our cavemen ancestors really?
- ▲ Is it as much about survival today as it was back then?
- ▲ Do we feel life should be about indulgence, but it's still essentially about survival?

While we are less likely to meet our end by being killed by a bear, or some natural disaster or, *in our part of the world*, starve to death, and it's unbelievable that in this day and age that I have to qualify *“starve to death”* by adding *“in our part of the world”*. Life and survival is still primarily about access to food, water, shelter, rest, healthcare and education.

survival can be threatened by lack of financial resources. It wouldn't be the first time we've heard something like, “there is a drug or treatment that can greatly increase the survival rate from an illness but we cannot afford it.” or indeed medical misadventures being linked to lack of financial resources.

Now unlike our cavemen ancestors, it's not a matter of going out and killing an animal, or finding a cave in quite the same way as it was then, we need to survive within a mechanism called a society or an economy and what this really means is that we need MONEY to access all the necessary resources we need to survive.

So it's still all about survival, and in many ways as much as it ever was but our behaviours don't always reflect that reality. While the cavemen would focus very clearly on enough food, shelter, heat and protection to survive, we have all the same basic needs but we often prioritise indulgence over necessity. What that means is, we have stuff we don't need and don't have stuff we do need. Sky sports or health insurance?

Now I know it's not the same world, there's a time for survival and a time for indulgence. We just don't see things as clearly in a complicated world. However, if we could see things in a clearer way, it's possible to achieve survival easier and enjoy more indulgence.

Here's how I like to see it:



← « YOU CAN » →

SURVIVE

<p>3 MINUTES without AIR</p>	<p>3 HOURS without SHELTER</p>	<p>3 DAYS without WATER</p>	<p>30 DAYS without FOOD</p>
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Sure in some countries there's some form of low level safety net through a welfare system, but we've seen even in our first world Ireland, that your very

Service

Earning money, our route to survival and indulgence, is all about service. Who do you serve? How do you create

value? What are your natural talents and can you use those strengths to generate more value for the same effort? The more you serve the more you earn, the more value you can provide to others, the more you earn. This is modern day hunting, gathering and foraging.

Income

Your Income will be a reflection of how much you serve. Of course you can point to this case and that, where others are getting more income than you believe they've earned, I can too but I wouldn't waste my time and energy on that. Focus on what you bring to the table, how you serve and what value you create, and you'll increase your income. With income, within that modern mechanism we live in called an economy, you can get access to food, water, shelter, heat and those basics of survival.

Survival

Provide enough service, provide enough value, and you'll grow your income and when you've enough for your highest priorities, that's called survival, and it's not just for cavemen, it's very much a modern reality too. Serve, earn, provide that's the order of things. Anything else is a false economy!!

Assets

The big problem is that as soon as you stop serving and earning (for whatever reason ... poor health, economic recessions, natural disasters), then your ability to survive is threatened. Do the kids need to eat every day? 😊
Yep, I'm afraid they do. That's where assets come in. Assets are essentially money farms. With assets, you can grow money. So your next goal after earning enough to survive, is to earn enough to buy assets. That's using your money to create more money. So you're serving and earning to generate money, and at the same time, your asset can be creating money at the same time. Buying a bike to rent out is a very basic example of an asset and an income from that asset.

Security

When you're earning enough income through serving and your assets, such that you're beginning to build some savings for that rainy day and for the future, now you are reaching the security stage. You have a *plan b* for survival in the event that you can't earn in the short term and your survival ability has increased but not indefinitely. Unlike our cavemen friends we do have other options such as insurance, which has to be funded too, but let's not over complicate our simple framework for thinking about this at the moment.

Independence

When you've earned enough money to build enough assets to provide the income not only for survival but for a life with comfort, now you're financially free, financially independent. Even if you're not directly earning income through service, you have enough income from your assets to survive and more. Now that's passive income (largely) and that's freedom.

Indulgence

Now you're earned to right to be indulgent. You've by and large resisted short term and instant gratification, to get you to the point when you can be long term indulgent because you've earned it. The problem for most people is that short term indulgence and gratification threatens their short, medium and long term survival and security. I met a lot of people in the early days of the recession who were driving around a luxury short term indulgence at the cost of their present survival. In Ireland, we are not necessarily talking directly about life or death survival but very much day to day struggle or day to day comfort.

Look, I'm not attempting to over dramatise the matter and I'm not telling you anything you don't already now but I am providing a way to think about it, so that you make the best decisions for short term survival and long term security.

The personal development speaker Zig Ziglar used to say *"Money isn't the most important thing in life but it's reasonably close to oxygen on the "gotta have it" scale."* The art of survival is a story that never ends, it's just different every half a million years or so 😊



Last word

Thanks for taking the time to read our "latest word"

Feedback on our newsletters is always welcome and gratefully received. joe@fwf.ie.

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