

Delphi: Self Assessment



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INTRODUCTION

Personal Evolution is that process of ongoing change which all of us are subject to as we live our lives. But, modern Life is enormously habitual and routine as compared to any life which is lived in a more organic interaction with the earth. Even agricultural life, involves enormously different activities in the different seasons of the year. Modern industrialized life by comparison, tends to involve mostly all of the same activities, day in and day out, with the exception of the “work week” and the “weekend”. We may have a vacation each year, but this is too infrequent to significantly modify our reactions to the consistent repetitions of our lives.

In our evolutionary psychology discussions we go into more detail about how our brain is evolved for a hunter-gather niche, but suffice it to say, we are poorly adapted to this intensity of repetition. Of course, the roles that we play, as cogs in this vast and powerful machinery, have a lot to do with happenstance for most of us, rather than as expressions of our own personal preferences and desires. Indeed, those of us who can do for a “living” what we enjoy are among the most fortunate of individuals.

Most of us have to put up with our day to day labors because they pay the bills. Personal growth and personal expression therefore is often possible only on our off-time, and is found in our recreational pursuits. Even these, though are often routinized down channels that have to do with what the larger machine would like to sell us for recreation. By and large what the machine sells are things like alcohol, loud music, and rich, high salt, high calorie foods. It is not surprising that going to bars and going to restaurants figures very prominently in the population’s average “entertainments”, along of course with TV programming, which is also a medium for selling things. All of this means that our recreations are intensely important pathways to self-expression and self-exploration, and personal evolution.

Paradoxically, we are led, by the machine, to believe, that to be valuable recreations have to be commodities to be bought and sold (which is very much what the machine is about). In truth, recreations that can be bought and sold are incredibly mundane as compared to those which are free, or in which expense is merely a by-product of the activity. The best sorts of re-creations are those which involve a passionate personal interest, and a creative application of one’s personality, skills and abilities. Indeed, the word Amateur comes from the root Amat, Latin for Love, or one who does something for “the love of it”. And yet the words Amateur and recreation have negative connotations in the conditioning of the machine.

The machine wants professionals to do everything. Of course professionals, by definition have to be paid, their services are a commodity that you can purchase. Well as much as this may appear to be a ranting rage against the machine, it really isn’t. I love the machine. I serve the machine. I worship the machine, same as you. But that doesn’t mean I can’t reserve a little of my humanity for myself, and things that don’t have to do with the machine does it? Hmmm? Maybe? Well, ok, probably a vain hope, but at least an aspirational statement then.

So what do you think?

- ≈ Is recreation an important part of your life.
- ≈ Is it better to go on a cruise, or is it better to have a passionate interest in something free?
- ≈ Is SL a passionate interest?
- ≈ Does it engage your creative potentials and your individual personality? Hey!!! And SL *is* free!!!!



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DISCUSSION:

[16:38] DanD Rau: We are all re-creating instead of talking :-)

[16:38] Yanne Proudfoot: You left us speechless!

[16:38] Kiera Zenovka: I think the use of the word passionate interest is most appealing.... because it is what I am passionate about , what I most love that gives me the most joy and fulfilment

[16:38] Reflection Freenote: yes, meditation was last week folks!!!

[16:39] Reflection Freenote: yes kiera, passion is so important in our growth as people, I think, but so hard to come by sometimes

[16:39] Kiera Zenovka: and those things I am passionate about RL and SL are creative

[16:40] Elizabeth Mapholisto: I am trying to remember if I have ever seen anyone at a resort that was truly happy, and not tense over a budget, timetable, service issues, or fighting with their family.

[16:40] Sazzy Oh: Yes... when you are in a creative mood.. It is passionate

[16:40] DanD Rau: I think satisfying our passions is most important because they seem to derive from what we lack

[16:40] Kiera Zenovka: I have a quote about Passion that I love

[16:40] Reflection Freenote: yes, it seems as though we all have creative potential, but sometimes we are shut down about it

[16:40] Kiera Zenovka: *“Passion, it lies in all of us, sleeping... waiting... and though unwanted... unbidden... it will stir... open its jaws and howl. It speaks to us... guides us... passion rules us all, and we obey. What other choice do we have? Passion is the source of our finest moments. The joy of love... the clarity of hatred... and the ecstasy of grief. It hurts sometimes more than we can bear. If we could live without passion maybe we'd know some kind of peace... but we would be hollow... Empty rooms shuttered and dank. Without passion we'd be truly dead.”* Josh Whedon

[16:40] Reflection Freenote: hahaha, right Liz:))

[16:41] Cerridwen Greenwood: That is true Elizabeth. I have noticed that at casinos too. I saw a guy win \$30,000 at a slot machine and sit there impassive, like a zombie as all the bells and whistles went off around him. :(

[16:41] Reflection Freenote: that is a really wonderful quote Kiera, thank you for sharing it with us:))

[16:41] Kiera Zenovka: yw

[16:41] Sazzy Oh: Second life allowed me to learn to write.. to learn to take pictures.... things I would never have done without this world to try them in

[16:42] Kiera Zenovka: nod

[16:42] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Of course a small percentage of people in SL begin to recreate and end up working hard here.

[16:42] Reflection Freenote: I do think that tranquillity can coexist with passion, generally although maybe not in the very same moment;-))

[16:42] Reflection Freenote: that's wonderful Sazzy, I've learned so many things here too:))

[16:42] Kiera Zenovka: exactly not in the same moment

[16:43] Reflection Freenote: yes, Liz, we do have a penchant for turning things into work sometimes;-)

[16:43] Kev Uladstron: In Finding Flow Csikszentmihalyi states were are more 2.5 times more likely to produce a state of heightened enjoyment with hobbies than TV

[16:43] Reflection Freenote: that's really interesting Kev

[16:43] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Depending on if it is sweeps week?

[16:43] Kev Uladstron: lol

[16:44] Yanne Proudfoot: I rarely watch TV, get my news from the internet or NPR.. I think TV is the machines trap for us...laughs

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- [16:44] Reflection Freenote: yes, it is an amazing thing, that as modern people we have so many options, but mostly we go down the path that are considered "normal" by our culture. Even SL is something that it is possible to be a little embarassed about, I think ;-)
- [16:44] Kev Uladstron: He goes on to say that the same people who report this often watch more TV than spend time on their hobbies.
- [16:44] Cerridwen Greenwood: Me too Yanne
- [16:45] Yanne Proudfoot: People that know I am in SL think I live in another world...oh if they only knew...grins
- [16:45] Elizabeth Mapholisto: TV is a trap though, it replaced the campfire.
- [16:45] Reflection Freenote: hahahahaha
- [16:45] Reflection Freenote: yes, I think it is impossible for muggles to really grok what is going on here ;-)
- [16:46] Yanne Proudfoot: hehe at the word...muggles
- [16:46] Cerridwen Greenwood: I love it! :) Reflection was the first person to call me a cyborg :)
- [16:46] Sazzy Oh: would have been interesting to put muggles and grok into a new story
- [16:47] Yanne Proudfoot: I would rather be in my world as I know it, then in some peoples worlds that are so small, narrow, sad, full of grief, anxiety, frustrations, denial!
- [16:47] Kev Uladstron: I've been given a hard time for talking about SL as the person dishing it out won't look up from their mobile Twitter.
- [16:47] Reflection Freenote: to some degree, it is like preaching to the choir here on this topic, because by definition everyone here not only knows what I'm saying today, but is engaging creatively at a high level here in SL:))
- [16:48] Yanne Proudfoot: I also have a very guilty pleasure...I have been playing star wars galaxies for almost 6 years. I love the mythology of it...grins
- [16:48] Reflection Freenote: yes, Yanne, we are very free to create an existence here that conforms to our ideas of what constitutes a meaningful life, I think
- [16:49] Yanne Proudfoot: so true, Reflection, and it has helped me so much in RL too
- [16:49] Reflection Freenote: Yanne!!!! Why guilty?!!!!
- [16:49] Yanne Proudfoot: welllllllll
- [16:49] Kev Uladstron: I think there are levels even in SL. I am a consumer, but, other than a few lame jokes during discussions, I'm not really creating here.
- [16:49] DanD Rau: Yes it is amazing what we take from SL into RL
- [16:49] Yanne Proudfoot: I am a light side Jedi there, and I take the role very seriously, about honor, helping in need, etc
- [16:50] Yanne Proudfoot: and that is way corny in this society today
- [16:50] Elizabeth Mapholisto: I see many people using SL as a direct balance to their RL.
- [16:50] Reflection Freenote: Kev, you are always a very important contributor to group process (and not just with jokes), and I think that is creative
- [16:50] Kev Uladstron: Could you elaborate Elizabeth?
- [16:50] Sazzy Oh: so many ways to create in SL.... you can build... you can write.. you can play music.... even creating the look of your avatar.. is creative
- [16:50] DanD Rau: Some let SL take them down. Is that recreation?
- [16:50] Kev Uladstron: thanks Ref :}
- [16:50] Cerridwen Greenwood: How so Dan?
- [16:51] Elizabeth Mapholisto: I see people in my sim seeking the exact opposite of what their RL experience provides them.
- [16:51] DanD Rau: I have heard of serious broken hearts and other disappointments that affect them in RL
- [16:51] Sazzy Oh: but that's the joy of SL. Elizabeth.. to try things you never would in your real world

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[16:51] Reflection Freenote: ah yes, Yanne, you are touching on an important point. The machine, and through it's representatives, public opinion, tends to make us embarrassed about our passions, I think, which is how the machine keeps the masses running down the same mazes

[16:51] Kev Uladstron: Elizabeth. Interesting. I am the opposite. I seek what geography does not give me the opportunity in RL

[16:51] Yanne Proudfoot nods sadly

[16:52] DanD Rau: Yes, the cost of failure in SL seem to be less than RL for the most part

[16:52] Reflection Freenote: yes, Liz, about balancing RL

[16:52] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Well, I agree about trying new things but, I see that as a separate experience, Yanne was touching on what I mean.

[16:52] Kiera Zenovka: i think it is places where you can play with all your inner barriers to life and relationships and explore them...safely

[16:52] Elizabeth Mapholisto: She seeks honor in her game that is lacking in rl.

[16:52] Yanne Proudfoot looks to Elizabeth and nods

[16:53] Reflection Freenote: yes, Dan, the opportunity of emotional exploration is so great here, that painful awarenesses often occur, I think. But that is growth too, I think

[16:53] Sazzy Oh: does not seem like growth... when you are in the middle of the pain

[16:53] Yanne Proudfoot: no it does not, Sazzy; The pain is very real

[16:54] Kiera Zenovka: growth is always a little painful though isn't it... like breaking a shell

[16:54] Sazzy Oh: yes.. the pain.... the joy... the love in here... are sometimes greater than what we have in our real worlds

[16:54] Elizabeth Mapholisto: I see the slow migration to growth as people are on SL longer, they tend to create content more...some of that is pure time to learn the skill though.

[16:54] Yanne Proudfoot: I think it is because of the intensely mental aspect of it.

[16:55] Reflection Freenote: yes, Sazzy, I think SL can approach Plato's realm of ideals because we are not constrained by RL limitations. So our experiences of thought and feeling can transcend what we find in RL pretty easily, I think

[16:56] Yanne Proudfoot: But even in the pain, I have learned so much about myself, and yes it was very hard, but through SL and the classes and people here...I grew tremendously by it...looks to Reflection and what he teaches here.

[16:56] Kiera Zenovka: nods

[16:56] Sazzy Oh: we almost have to share more here than in the real world.... in the real world.. you can spend time with someone and never share a thing... just silence.. Here.. you must constantly share.. or they think you have been disconnected.. :)

[16:57] Kiera Zenovka: giggles

[16:57] Yanne Proudfoot laughs softly

[16:57] Reflection Freenote: It seems as though, pain is always wanting to show us something important. And even though the pains we can experience here are very great, they are still more manageable than what we would experience in RL if we were conducting the same experiments, in growth, I believe

[16:58] DanD Rau: I disagree, Ref. I think pain in SL is more severe than in RL

[16:58] Kiera Zenovka: I do not think the organism knows the difference in pain ...pain is pain when it is experienced here or RL

[16:59] Sazzy Oh: yes I agree Kiera

[16:59] Reflection Freenote: yes, Sazz, we seem to very quickly get down to very genuine discussion here. The absence of a need for being on guard, can't be over stated

[16:59] Elizabeth Mapholisto: In RL, the brain can easily mask pain for you, in SL, it is more concrete I think.

[16:59] DanD Rau: Part of that lack of inhibitions is due to anonymity

[17:00] Kev Uladstron: I understand that consequences are different here, but is it more than that? Is it more accepting group norms that change how we handle pain in SL vs. RL?

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- [17:00] Reflection Freenote: It may be that we experience such exquisite pain here because we attempt and explore things, that we would never dream of approaching in RL
- [17:01] Kiera Zenovka: absolutely, I agree with that
- [17:01] Reflection Freenote: can you elaborate on that Kev?
- [17:03] Kev Uladstron: Sharing is more of a group norm here than in RL, which I do not believe is just a matter of the medium. Other social networks do not encourage as much authenticity, but they still over the ability for anonymity.
- [17:03] Kev Uladstron: offer not over
- [17:03] Reflection Freenote: I do think it is interesting, the degree to which we are often embarrassed by our recreations. Even to admit having a hobby can be a bit anxiety provoking "You collect stamps? Are you kidding me now?!!!!!"
- [17:04] Elizabeth Mapholisto: In order to experience pain here, it must come from your own mind. Who is better to create the most efficient horror than your own mind? It knows all of your secrets that you might not even know.
- [17:04] Kev Uladstron: At the same time, there is great joy in finding someone who shares that hobby.
- [17:05] Kiera Zenovka: stamps ...giggles ...my hobby is being a slave
- [17:05] Reflection Freenote: that's interesting Kev. SL does have a cultural expectation for direct and pretty uninhibited discussion
- [17:05] Yanne Proudfoot whispers: So true, sometimes you almost fall over yourself with excitement when someone else shares your passion!!!
- [17:05] Reflection Freenote: hahahah Kiera, sure but that's cool!!!
- [17:05] Kiera Zenovka: giggles
- [17:06] Reflection Freenote: agreed Liz about pain being in the mind of the person who experiences it
- [17:06] Kev Uladstron: Are we more likely to express feelings of pain in SL than RL?
- [17:06] Elizabeth Mapholisto: If I may...I am a Mistress here sometimes and my most severe punishment is to have a slave become isolated because the most dangerous cellmate to have is your own mind.
- [17:07] Kiera Zenovka: nods
- [17:07] bea Subagja: it is in your own mind, yet you need another person to bring it up inside you to experience it with similar interest.
- [17:08] Kev Uladstron: I'm not sure we even need similar interests. Seems to me that just finding someone to listen is helpful.
- [17:08] Reflection Freenote: Most of us present facades of pleasant competence as a rule in RL, Kev. We seem to have an innate sense that to expose weakness is to potentially invite attack. That seems less the case here. People admit to emotional pain, like tonight for example
- [17:09] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Yes, I can feel people when they want to talk....when I listen I can feel their anxiety floating away.
- [17:10] Elizabeth Mapholisto: You can tell people anything here.
- [17:10] Yanne Proudfoot: I went to a lecture the other night, about Myers Briggs Psychology and D/s...in the room were many INFPs and the instructor said she was not at all surprised as SL is an ideal environment for those of us with this profile stat
- [17:11] Elizabeth Mapholisto: INFP's?
- [17:11] Kev Uladstron: introverted intuitive feeling perceivers
- [17:11] Reflection Freenote: people do certainly perceive reality in ways which are characteristic for them. And so are susceptible to pain which is also characteristic for them. And if one person ceases to provoke that, then another will be found, until the solutions to the pain are determined
- [17:11] Elizabeth Mapholisto: aaah...ty
- [17:11] Yanne Proudfoot: thank you Kev..smiles
- [17:11] Kiera Zenovka: as per Jung?
- [17:11] Yanne Proudfoot: aye

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- [17:11] Kev Uladstron: based on Jung
- [17:12] Yanne Proudfoot: and not one of them were Dominants...laughing
- [17:13] Kev Uladstron: If SL were the opposite of RL you would think they would all be dominant. So, are we really recreating RL in SL with slight variations? Makes sense, changing our values little by little as we are comfortable with the changes
- [17:14] Reflection Freenote: Kev, I don't think we change our neurologic nature here. (Which is more what a personality dimension is, I think), but the radically changed environment allows us to explore our potential as INFP's for example, in very different ways
- [17:15] Yanne Proudfoot: I personally am thankful for SL and the incredible people here.
- [17:15] Kiera Zenovka: me too, very much so
- [17:16] Kev Uladstron: I like that, reminds me of Marcus Buckingham saying we do not find our strengths fully formed, but our attention is what enables us to develop them.
- [17:16] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Incredible sims and builds are worthless without special people using them.
- [17:16] Kev Uladstron: SL provides the ability to attend to things in a different way.
- [17:16] Reflection Freenote: that is an interesting statement Kev
- [17:17] Reflection Freenote: yes, Liz, and the builds are sets, which enable people to explore dimensions of meaning, within them
- [17:17] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Some scripts written better than others...lol
- [17:17] Yanne Proudfoot: Does it enrich your RL , Reflection?
- [17:17] Reflection Freenote: it is always about the people and what meanings they can create
- [17:18] Reflection Freenote: oh absolutely Yanne
- [17:18] Yanne Proudfoot: I am glad
- [17:18] Reflection Freenote: there is a very vibrant give and take between SL and RL for me; I make a conscious effort to bring things to RL that I explore, first here
- [17:19] Kev Uladstron: That's interesting Ref. How do you do that?
- [17:19] Reflection Freenote: Well, I've gotten involved in a RL group that is not unlike some of our groups here. I've also, broadened my social behavior significantly in other ways. Of course, as a psychologist, I have been developing parts of my RL practice with what I do in SL in mind
- [17:21] Yanne Proudfoot: You have given us so much being here and facilitating. I am so happy you receive as well
- [17:21] Reflection Freenote: thanks Yanne, and we receive from you also:))
- [17:22] Kev Uladstron: I think SL works much like therapy in that it gives us the ability to practice.
- [17:22] Reflection Freenote: yes, Kev, absolutely
- [17:23] Reflection Freenote: in fact, we can try out lots of different things here and see what works for us and what doesn't
- [17:23] Kiera Zenovka: exactly; that is what is so amazing about sl it is like experiential psychotherapy ...delving into the experience
- [17:23] Reflection Freenote: I think in that way, cyberspace is very much a revolutionary opportunity for the evolution of thought and being, in a Darwinian sense
- [17:25] Reflection Freenote: yes, Kiera, this seems to be almost the quintessential experiential opportunity
- [17:25] Kiera Zenovka: yes I agree, in that way it is amazing
- [17:26] Reflection Freenote: and it is just beginning:))
- [17:26] Kiera Zenovka: smiles
- [17:26] Yanne Proudfoot: yess!
- [17:26] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Sometime SL circumstances force the experiment.
- [17:26] Reflection Freenote: I don't think we can really imagine what will be happening in the not too distant future
- [17:26] Reflection Freenote: yes, Liz, I think so too

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[17:27] Yanne Proudfoot: i would love it to be more virtual reality where somehow we are plugged in and can experience touch, taste, smell

[17:27] Elizabeth Mapholisto: I experiment with that.

[17:27] Reflection Freenote: although, sometimes, just as in RL, we unconsciously set a stage for explorations to occur. I have certainly been surprised at existential places, I suddenly found myself in

[17:28] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Yes reflection I would agree.

[17:28] Reflection Freenote: yes, Yanne, that will be quite fascinating when that happens, maybe next week, or the week after:))

[17:28] Yanne Proudfoot: haha!

[17:28] Elizabeth Mapholisto: We work on devices now to manipulate here rl devices in rl.

[17:29] Reflection Freenote: although, in some ways less is also more, and there are very special elements of SL discussion and thought, for example, which i think relate to the fact that we are not quite as inundated with primal physical sensation, as we would be in RL, if we were doing the same things:))

[17:29] Yanne Proudfoot: that is a very valid point

[17:29] Reflection Freenote: so, even the way it is right now, may be a very special chapter in this particular evolution

[17:30] Elizabeth Mapholisto: If you are a slow typist, you have a chance to consider what you are getting ready to say as well.

[17:30] Reflection Freenote: right Liz, our thoughts are very much more focused and accurate, I think

[17:31] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Maybe that's why our RL/SL devices are not gaining popularity.

[17:36] Elizabeth Mapholisto: I get the question if SL love is real love , all the time it seems.

[17:36] Reflection Freenote: really? That is interesting of course

[17:37] Kiera Zenovka: yes it is

[17:37] Reflection Freenote: English has to be the worst language in the world for this, only having one word for Love:))

[17:37] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Yes, because if you FEEL love, you cannot deny it, but...a love for what you see on a screen?

[17:37] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Yes.

[17:38] Reflection Freenote: yes, there are different dimensions of love and some of them are heightened here and some of them are reduced

[17:38] Reflection Freenote: SL is like a neurological filter, I think. Like glasses, it enhances our ability to see some things, and may cloud our ability to see others

[17:39] Kelvin Glimmer: or smell their farts

[17:39] Elizabeth Mapholisto: So, a redefinition of "love" then.

[17:39] Kiera Zenovka: not a redefinition but an expansion of it

[17:39] Reflection Freenote: yes, one that takes into account the complicated issues associated perhaps

[17:39] Kiera Zenovka: to allow and include other experiences of it

[17:40] Reflection Freenote: yes, Kel, we are not put off by those organic elements of people which we might not like for sure

[17:40] Kelvin Glimmer: o.o

[17:40] Elizabeth Mapholisto: An evolution....one that is bound to reflect itself back into RL sooner or later.

[17:40] Kiera Zenovka: yes

[17:40] Kiera Zenovka: nods

[17:40] Reflection Freenote: yes, I think so; on average over the years, it seems to me that relationships, I've become aware of in RL that began as cyber friendships have generally been very successful

[17:41] Kev Uladstron: that makes sense

[17:41] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Interesting....

[17:42] Reflection Freenote: all things being equal, the ability of people to become deeply aware that they are of like minds, seems to override what might be less than optimal organic attractions

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- [17:42] Kev Uladstron: less than optimal organic attractions...I'll have to remember that
- [17:42] Reflection Freenote: Whereas , the divorce rate emphasizes the unreliability of organic attraction to define compatibility of mind
- [17:42] Elizabeth Mapholisto: OMG so, I can tell my kids that having good grammar will soon be a sexual attribute.
- [17:42] Kiera Zenovka: smiles
- [17:43] Reflection Freenote: Liz, we can only hope;-)
- [17:43] Kev Uladstron: Longevity also impacts divorce. At the turn of the 19/20 century, I think the average life span was about 40 years.
- [17:43] Elizabeth Mapholisto: Yes, there is hope for my punctuation fetish then Yeaaaa!
- [17:44] Reflection Freenote: that's for sure Kev:))
- [17:44] Reflection Freenote: although most people who break up do it pretty young and early in relationships, relatively speaking
- [17:44] Kev Uladstron: I've been with my wife for 20 years, and we constantly need to evolve
- [17:44] Reflection Freenote: the midlife thing can be a pretty big test for others of course (as is often seen in SL)
- [17:45] Reflection Freenote: congrats Kev, both on the longevity and on the conscious evolution
- [17:45] Kev Uladstron: Thanks.