

Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

Robert M. Pirsig

- Read only once -

"[...] the laws of science contain no matter and have no energy either and therefore do not exist except in people's mind"

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"If someone's ungrateful and you tell him he's ungrateful, okay, you've called him a name. You haven't solved anything"

41

"Some things you miss because they're so tiny you overlook them. But some things you don't see because they're so huge"

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"Mark Twain's experience comes to mind, in which, after he had mastered the analytic knowledge needed to pilot the Mississippi River, he discovered the river had lost its beauty"

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"If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government. (There's so much talk about the system. And so little understanding.)"

88

"The real purpose of scientific method is to make sure Nature hasn't misled you into thinking you know something you don't actually know"

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"Einstein had said:

Man tries to make for himself in the fashion that suits in best a simplified and intelligible picture of the world. He then tries to some extent to substitute this cosmos of his for the world of experience, and thus overcome it... He makes this cosmos and its construction the pivot of his emotional life in order to find in this way the peace and serenity which he cannot find in the narrow whirlpool of personal experience. ... The supreme task... is to arrive at those universal elementary laws from which the cosmos can be built up by pure deduction. There is no logical path to these laws; only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding of experience, can reach them...."

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*"You are never dedicated to something you have complete confidence in. (No one is fanatically shouting that the sun is going to rise tomorrow. They *know* it's going to rise tomorrow.) When people are fanatically dedicated to political or religious faiths or any other kinds of dogmas or goals, it's always because these dogmas or goals are in doubt."*

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"Peace of mind isn't at all superficial [...]"

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"To doubt the literal meaning of the words of Jesus or Moses incurs hostility from most people, but it's just a fact that if Jesus or Moses were to appear today, unidentified, with the same message he spoke many years ago, his mental stability would be challenged. This isn't because what Jesus or Moses said was untrue or because modern society is in error but simply because the route they chose to reveal to others has lost relevance and comprehensibility"

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"For every fact there is an infinity of hypotheses"

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"The more you look, the more you see"

171

"The past exists only in our memories, the future only in our plans. The present is our only reality."

222

"Look and notice well; but as there isn't time to see everything and as it's better not to see than to see wrongly, it's necessary for him to make a choice."

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"The difference between a good mechanic and a bad one, like the difference between a good mathematician and a bad one, is precisely this ability to select the good facts from the bad ones on the basis of quality."

(He has to care!)

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"The way to solve the conflict between human values and technological needs is not to run away from technology. That's impossible. The way to resolve the conflict is to break down the barrier of dualistic thought that prevent a real understanding of what technology is - not an exploitation of nature, but a fusion of nature and the human spirit into a new kind of creation that transcends both"

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"We have artists with no scientific knowledge and scientists with no artistic knowledge and both with no spiritual sense of gravity at all, and the result is not just bad, it is ghastly"
(Time for real reunification of art and technology is really long overdue)

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"Peace of mind produces right values, right values produce right thoughts. Right thoughts produce right actions and right actions produce work which will be a material reflection for others to see of the serenity at the center of it all"

267

"Well, he should somehow try to slow down deliberately and go over ground that he has been over before and see if things he thought were important really WERE important [...]"

282

"We just have to keep going until we find out what's wrong or find out why we don't know what's wrong"

308

"[...] the real evil isn't the objects of technology but the tendency of technology to isolate people into lonely attitudes of objectivity"

322

"(The One in India has got to be the same as the One in Greece. [...]) The only disagreements among the monists concern the attributes of the One, not the One itself.) Since the One is the source of all things and includes all things in it, it cannot be defined in terms of those things, since no matter what thing you use to define it, the thing will always describe something less than the One itself."

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"- Will you show me all of them?"

- Sure

- Is it hard?

- Not if you have the right attitudes. It's having the right attitudes that's hard"

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