



Getting Off The Stage

— from the perspective of an experienced observer —



Even in quasi-civilized society more care is evidenced in the breeding of animals than in the breeding of humans. Members of the opposite sex begin to look increasingly more attractive as closing time approaches, ya'know. Are we evolving progressively or regressively?

There are multiple indicators that our evolution is regressive. Per this Proverbs 1:22 indictment, human cognitive regression started long before modern times: “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?...and fools hate knowledge?” And then there’s the equally visible physical regression. I started observing as a young teenager that far too many of our species are casually passing their glaring genetic deficiencies to their offspring. The multi-generational social, psychological and physical handicaps grow increasingly more debilitating with each new round of procreation.

At 16, I made a decision that everyone in my family was certain I’d abandon as an adult. I’m pretty sure they’re all quite surprised that I did not: I resolved never to saddle future generations with my genetic physical deficiencies. They’re not what you’d categorize as classic physical handicaps, mind you, but I had to work really hard to overcome the social and personal developmental handicaps they were yielding for me. I have wrestled both unsuccessfully and successfully with morbid obesity for as long as I can remember. Yes, there are a few annoying health issues, but there are lots of skinny folk who’d pay good money for the blood pressure readings I typically get...110 over 80 just last week. In this early Springtime of 2019, I am looking forward with enormous pleasure to my 76th year and many beyond it.

At this point I suspect that you’re beginning to anticipate an especially depressing monolog. If you’ll hang on for a few short minutes, though, you just might learn a thing or two. You may even find a thing or two that’ll be worth passing on to somebody you love! Let’s start with this: Arguably, I was a fairly decent stepfather to two children – a daughter and a son. They are brilliant and physically attractive and they have adult offspring of their own. So, then, who won the lifelong wrestling match between me and morbid obesity? Well, dang! It appears that I’m the winner! But how’d I do that?

For starters, I inherited some reasonably strong cognitive abilities. Then, by eventually latching-on to the only source of wisdom there is,¹ I gained the spirit of a sound mind.² Yeah; there are huge, observable differences between having a high IQ and being smart.³ Accumulating lots of knowledge, honing a quick wit and becoming competitively articulate are legitimate indicators of intelligence but, unless and until you’ve gained wisdom, you just ain’t smart! Take that to the bank and write checks on it.

The “All the world’s a stage...” line from *As You Like It* was spoken in Act II Scene VII by the melancholy Jaques. It characterizes the world as a stage and life as a play. It visits the seven stages of a man’s life—infant, schoolboy, lover, soldier, justice, pantalone and old person contemplating mortality. It’s among Shakespeare’s most frequently quoted passages.

At the age of 16, I made another pivotal decision that has served me more than well: I decided to get off that stage and into a prime spectator box. Yeah; that. Most of the kids with whom I attended school and church were extremely self conscious, as was I. I knew that everybody could see that I was an awkward little fat guy with zits and freckles and stuff. Once off the stage and into the spectator box, though, I had made the definitive switch from thespian to theater patron. My consciousness shifted, then, to everyone else’s imperfections. In my mind, I became almost invisible! No more self consciousness. Time to shift my focus away from what others might be thinking about me to developing myself into the worthy human being I knew I could become.

Shining the stage lights away from myself and onto everyone else worked! But, naaahhh, nothing here could prove helpful to anyone you love. Maybe I should just take it all back...

¹https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/pro/9/10/s_637010
https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/psa/111/10/s_589010

²https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2ti/1/7/s_1126007

³You can find more about that at this link: www.Link1.info/iq.
...and at this link, too: https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/2ti/3/7/s_1128007.