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Standard Edition

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The **Read** String

Part of my plan for this year is to move **The Red String** from simply being an outlet for my thoughts, to being an income generating outlet for my thoughts. But don't worry, I don't want to immediately begin charging everybody for every edition. I just want to begin to experiment with allowing donations & payments through the website **(at least for now)**.

So I will soon be introducing ways through which you can give your financial support if you enjoy reading **The Red String**. Because it does cost money to host this website, and it takes time to put together each edition. That said, whether you decide to make use of these options or not is entirely up to you, and what exactly I want to do to monetize this serial is still very much up in the air.

But whatever it is I finally decide to do, I plan to keep everything ridiculously cheap. Because I enjoy writing, and I enjoy knowing that my work is being read - and I don't want money to be a barrier to that. I won't let money keep **The Red String** from being read, but I look forward to your financial support nonetheless. So keep on reading! 😊

Expanding My Dropbox

It's always a great feeling when **something you've given up on**, unexpectedly comes through. Some of you may remember how, about this time last year, I wrote **an article about Dropbox**, unashamedly asking everyone to sign up using **my referral link** (so that I could get some extra space).

At the time, I was a bit disappointed because after a month of watching, almost nobody had signed up. Instead, I had had to delete a folder in my Dropbox to create the extra space. Well, all good things come to those who wait and apparently a month was not long enough.

But after a year, the goodness has finally come pouring in. Since my Dropbox article in April of last year, my Dropbox size has increased from 2GB to **4.2GB**. Essentially doubling in size! Unfortunately, I know not who has been using my referral link, but my thanks goes out to them: whoever they may be.

Expanding My Dropbox

Now to those who have already signed up with Dropbox, whether through [my referral link](#) or not, here's a bit of good news for you... and me 😊

The folks at Dropbox have decided to [double the bonus space](#) given for new referrals. Instead of 250MB, every new referral now gets you and your reference **500MB!** So if you've signed up already, now's the time to spread the word and [share your referral link](#) - and if you have a blog, just do like I did (I'm proof that it works).

Otherwise, if you still haven't signed up, please use [my referral link](#). There's no such thing as too much space, and I want to get as much as I can. That said, it would be beneficial for you too! So once again, [Do Me a Favour, Get Dropbox!](#)

The **Right** Term

It recently occurred to me that there is a term that describes what type of person I am. I often tell people, that I don't really care about the world around me. I'm more interested in the people and activities close to my heart and those people and things that are within my immediate sphere of existence.

But I am a big fan of conciseness, and recently I was thinking that there must be a better way to explain myself. For I've always believed in getting straight to the point, and an explanation that spans the better part of a paragraph is far from concise. That's when it came to me: **Self-absorbed!** 🤪

Self-absorbed: To be preoccupied with one's own emotions, interests, or situations.

Essentially, it means a person is preoccupied with his/her own inner being. **The Red String** is a prime example of this. While it is indeed my attempt to reach out to others, it is nonetheless, all about my life and it reflects just how much time I spend ruminating over my thoughts and feelings.

The Right Term

But to be self-absorbed is not altogether a bad thing, and it is not as some may believe, the same as being self-centred. Now this point in itself is quite interesting, because it means that being absorbed by your affairs is not the same as not caring about anyone else's.

“**I often tell people that I don't really care about the world around me, I'm more interested in the people and activities close to my heart...**

Thinking about myself in this new way has been very enlightening. It has helped me understand why I am rarely concerned with the world around me; why it rarely occurs to me to make that friendly phone call just to say "hello"; and why, as with **Yes vs. No**, I can easily detach myself from the worldly situation, and respond based on my rules of thumb.

The Right Term

Still, the difference between being self-absorbed and being self-centred is very tricky. Even now I find myself second-guessing my presumption. Because looking from the outside, many of my actions can be interpreted either way. From the inside however, being self-absorbed really means that I spend so much time in my own head, that I see little of anything else. Consequently, how involved I am in something dictates how in touch I am with it, and how in touch I am with it dictates how much consideration it gets. Increasing any one of these three factors, similarly increases the rest (or vice-versa).

But a self-centred person would only look out for themselves, even to the detriment of those things in which they are very involved. In practice, this translates into the difference between unintentionally knocking someone over (and apologising furiously), and purposefully doing so because the way they walk irritates you. The action is the same, but the intent (if any) different.

The Right Term

Consider these habits of mine:

- *Most people rarely hear from me*: But those that do are generally integral to my daily activities.
- *I hardly watch tv*: Because the outside world always seems secondary to my present circumstances.
- *I am often oblivious*: Usually too busy thinking about one thing or another.

All these things point to a self-absorbed nature, and there are a lot more where they came from. Yet even though I am sure that I have other character traits that lead me to behave otherwise at times, I find that more and more, my self-absorption seems to dominate. Having discovered this new term to describe myself, I have learnt a valuable lesson.

The Right Term

If it wasn't for my discovery of the term, many of the insights I covered in this article would have been left unseen, or at best, vaguely acknowledged in my mind. Without this core definition, I would have remained none the wiser to what influences my absorption. Now I know of 3 factors I can tackle to improve communication, productivity, and at least avoid seeming like a self-centered jackass.

There's a big difference between knowing oneself intuitively, and knowing oneself definitively. Simply identifying the right term can clarify a lot. That said, I also think that definitions change with time and my ability to self-assess will increase with knowledge. So even if I haven't entirely hit the mark, having a more accurate self-description is definitely a step in the right direction.

But enough about me. How about you? What term would you use to describe yourself? What term would you use to describe me? Leave a comment, send an email, drop a note. I'd be very interested to hear your thoughts.

Words With Me



Now that we've talked about how important it is to know the right term, let me introduce you to my favourite game of late: **Words With Friends**. I play this game obsessively, night and day. I started playing the game after getting fed up with Scrabble online play and its Facebook interface. But once I began playing WWF, I quickly forgot all about Scrabble, and now I can't remember the last time I played a true Scrabble game.

Words With Me

For, those of you who may be unfamiliar with the game, Words With Friends is essentially the same game as Scrabble - the differences being that the board is different, and some of the tiles are scored differently. With more opportunities to score higher, it is not unusual to see scores over 400 points and consequently, the almighty 7-letter premiums, which Scrabble is famous for, are not as devastating (they also don't weigh as much, only 35 points as opposed to Scrabble's 50).

This results in a few interesting things:

1. You don't have to be great to score highly, and high points make us feel good.
2. You can more easily recover from a 7-letter whopper, and...
3. You are less able to monopolise bonus point locations, because there's more than enough to go around.

Words With Me

But even better than these 3 things, is WWF's seamless integration into Facebook and across platforms. I play WWF night and day not primarily because I enjoy it, but because I can. It's on my iPad, my Android device, and if worst comes to worst I can always start a game directly from the Facebook website.

Coupled with this ease of use, is the ease of finding challengers. Nobody really wants to play a game with someone they do not know. With Facebook, the days of hosting a game and waiting for random people to join in are on the decline. We want to play games against our siblings, our friends, our colleagues at work, and if not **against** them, then **with** them against other people.

The makers of WWF, Zynga, understand this, and using this approach have launched and continue to launch many games that capitalise on this simple fact. **Hanging With Friends**, **Scramble With Friends**, **Chess With Friends**, and so on and so forth. Because this is how we play games in real life: We gather with those we know and begin a game. Our opponents are never random, even if our acquaintance with them is.

Words With Me

The world is a small place, and it has gotten even smaller with the advent of social networks. The **6 degrees of separation** that once were obscured from our knowledge are now both visible and accessible to us. So much so, that I feel it can no longer be considered to be 6. More like 2: You->[insert social network here]->Anyone else in the world.

It's pretty cool if you think about it. It means that if I really wanted to, I could probably get introduced to Jules Hoffmann, Adam Reiss, Thomas Sargent, Daniel Shechtman, or Tawakul Karman. And if you don't know who those are, you should Google them [Hint: They have no bells].

But getting back to a more practical application, how 'bout you get on Facebook, or your iPad, iPhone, or Android device, and play a game of words... with **me**?

Like Us

Here comes the almighty plug. The "word from our sponsors." The scene with the starving children in Africa who need your money, or the abused animals who need your tender loving care. Except... there are no animals, no starving children, and no sponsors. It's just me... and all I want is for you to click a button.

Just one click, and you will have told me how much you like this newsletter. Just one click, and you might turn one of my horrible days into a happy one. Yet I can't remember the last time I got a "Like" on the blog. It has been hanging permanently at 42 for the longest time, and I... am beginning to feel ignored and unappreciated. 😭

Okay, maybe that's a bit of an exaggeration, but I truly haven't gotten a like in like... forever! LOL! Yet I've gotten many likes in words and compliments. So what's the problem then? The problem is, as my girlfriend once told me, that I need more than your words. *You have to show it!*

So here's how you can show it people, **CLICK LIKE** on [our Facebook page](#). **DO IT NOW!** And while you're at it, maybe leave on comment on the [Guestbook](#)? 😜

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So please don't. I don't want to sue anybody.