Essentialism

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STAYING FOCUSED IS VERY CHALLENGING THESE DAYS.

- Too many options
- In many directions
- Too much information
- We need to focus ...
- ... in order to make any progress
THE ESSENCE OF ESSENTIALISM

Choice:

“I have to” ➤ “I choose to”

Choice: Billie Ward, flickr.com
The essence of Essentialism

Noise:
“IT all matters”
“Only a few really matter”
THE ESSENCE OF ESSENTIALISM

Trade-off:

“I can do both” ➤

“I can do anything, but not everything”
**STEPS**

- Cut the trivial many.
  - Say no often.
- Have clarity.
  - Clarity of intent and mind to be able to say no.
- Explore a lot.
  - This is where clarity comes from.
  - Usually missed or ignored.
ESSENTIALISM IN READING RESEARCH PAPERS

- Skim many many papers.
  - 5 minutes time max.
    - Go through title, and abstract; skim the intro, section titles, and conclusion.
- Select few (5-6 for a course project) to read with more care.
  - One hour maximum.
    - Focus on big picture (ignore details); pay attention to the story, figures, and the flow.
- Select 1-2 papers and read them in depth.
  - 4-5 hours.
    - You should know how to reproduce the results (e.g. proofs).
ESSENTIALISM IN WRITING ACADEMIC PAPERS

- Exploration is the secret key here.
  - You explore by writing, and revising.
- Start with an outline (skeleton).
  - Includes your section titles, and one sentence for each paragraph.
  - Revise the outline, over and over, until you are happy.
- Finally write the whole paper.
  - And then revise some more!
REFERENCES
