

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

Why Self-Improvement Is Not About You

I only recently discovered that I am rich beyond belief. This was a shocking revelation to me and one that caused me to rethink everything.

According to GlobalRichList.com, I am the 2,974,323rd wealthiest person in the world. That puts me in the top 0.05% of all income earners on the planet.

The crazy thing is that I never thought of myself that way. Even when I was growing up with a single mom, living in trailer parks and tiny apartments, we were abundantly wealthy compared to the rest of the world. Here's what the rest of the world looks like statistically:

- One-third of the human population lives on less than \$2.00 per day. That's almost 2,500,000,000 people.
- One-fifth of the world's population live on less than \$1.25 per day. That is, by definition, extreme poverty.
- 10% of our fellow human beings do not have safe water to drink. Their water is filled with bacteria, disease, and other deadly substances. Each sip of water could be the one that kills them.

Why You Don't See Yourself as Rich

By definition, the overwhelming majority of you reading this are rich. Even the 1,000+ readers a month in sub-Saharan Africa (a number which blows me away) are probably among the wealthiest people in their areas.

Most of us have access to unlimited resources and opportunities. Yet, we take so much for granted. We have clean water, enough food that Americans alone waste more than *240 pounds* per year, and virtually unlimited access to information.

But you probably don't see yourself as rich.

Why? Because there is always someone else richer.

Growing up, on the way home at the trailer park, I saw the nice houses with the perfectly manicured lawns and thought, "they are rich." *One day*, I thought. *One day*.

One day came. But down the street there is *still* a nicer house on a bigger property with nicer cars. *One day*, I tell myself. *One day*.

The question is: When will that day actually come? There will always be someone else richer, so the obvious answer is *never*.

The Myth of Self-Improvement

For far too long, I bought into the lie of self-improvement which says that if I can just get a little bit better, *my life* will be more complete, more meaningful, and more fulfilling. That is simply not true, though. It's an empty and ultimately meaningless pursuit.

Pursuing self-improvement isn't about a bigger house, a nicer car, or a more luxurious life.

It's not about me.

It's not about you.

It's about all of us.

In the end, you have to ask yourself: Do I want to be the best me or do I want to make a better world? Which one has more meaning and purpose? Which one is more fulfilling and rewarding? Which one sparks more passion, energy, and creativity inside of you?

The Math of Self-Improvement

The crazy thing about my *one day* thinking is just how *small* it is. How much better does a bigger house make my life? Marginally at best. How about a few million dollars? What if I moved from the top 0.05% to the top 0.03%? Surely that would give me the self-esteem boost I've been looking for all my life.

Have you ever felt that way? That you are putting so much effort into self-improvement but it's barely moving the needle.

Perhaps you were already made pretty awesome. Perhaps you already have all that you need to have. Perhaps you're striving for meaning and fulfillment in *things* when your soul is crying out for you to aim for something much higher.

With the effort you put into improving yourself 1 or 2%, you could improve the lives of thousands immeasurably. With the effort I put into achieving my own personal *one day* dreams, I could change the world *today*.

Don't get me wrong...self-improvement is important. *A better you means a better world.*

But ask yourself if the effort is worth it. Ask yourself what kind of an impact you could have if your goal was to make a better world, not just to live a "better" life. You are already rich, now go out and make someone else's life richer.

What can you do today to make someone else's world better?