

PETE OSWALD

LIFE OF A FREESKIERS

Words by Peter Oswald, Images by Jakob Schweighofer

The template of life: learn in order to get a job, to be able to earn money with which one can obtain the things one wants out of life and enjoy them with what little time is left over after working to pay for these things that are desired.

There are 3 types of people for whom this model works well. The lucky few who enjoy their work, people who are stuck in that system to support a family or debt and the people who are too ignorant to know any better.

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'DISCOVER
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This is the social norm accepted by many as freedom, the way to get what you want, at least the way to get material things. But what if the things you want are experiences of adventure in far flung foreign lands pursuing activities of passion creating treasured memories you can deposit in your bank of yarns to share with your grand-children when you are too old and buggered to do rad stuff anymore. If you have opened this magazine then it is more than likely that this is what weaves your base.

While the template of life gives you disposable income to create some freedom, if it is the pursuit of adventure you want then this model just does not work. It is fundamentally flawed. The key ingredient needed to pursue ones passion but which is somehow over looked and assigned little priority by the very people who need it most is time. Time should be the most valued commodity, not money. It is perceived that you can buy time and freedom with money.

Work hard, save money, take a holiday and do something you love. But is purely perception, inevitably one who tests this theory is restricted by time. I write this sitting at a dining room table of a 7 bedroom, 5 star chalet in the heart of Chamouix, France. It is day 7 of a 9 day weather window to climb and ski descend Mont Blanc, its raining hard outside and the prognosis isn't good. The other party members work corporate jobs and have travelled here from afar with an objective - the Mont Blanc summit. Considerable money has been thrown at the objective and the curtains are now closing on the weather window. Their leave is almost up and must return to their jobs if they wish to retain their employment. No amount of money will clear the weather. The one thing we need is the one thing we cannot buy - time.

The freeskier's template of life: discover ones passion, pursue that passion, live where one can dwell in that

passion everyday, become a master of ones passion and the rest of life's necessities will take care of themselves.

There is only one type of person for whom this model works, whether they are a freeskier or not they must first discover what their passion is. If you consider yourself a freeskier then you already know what your passion is because you know that freeskiering is better than sex.

Just like sex, money has no priority or relevance for a freeskier, in most instances anyway. A freeskier takes money out of the equation, they go straight to the source of what they want. By immersing themselves in their passion they become masters so return a living can be derived from such a skill set. An external source of money, a "job", is not needed, they are supported by their passion. Without the need for a "job", by living from what they love a free skier is rich in time. Time to wait for weather, conditions and opportunities.



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Time to appreciate, enjoy and exist in the environment they choose to be in. Time to live how they choose to live. Time to do what they want to do. This is freedom.

Late one evening in Innsbruck, Austria while I am studying the local snow forecasts on my laptop, Charlie Lyons pops up on my Facebook chat.

"Bro, have you seen forecast for tomorrow? Half a metre of fresh with cold temps and blue bird all day!"

"Yeah mate just looking now. Where you reckon we go?"

"Hochgurgl is looking like it's getting the most snow."

"Ok, lets wake at 6, suss out where has

best conditions, and leave by 7."

"Shall we get some shots?"

"Yep, I'll pack the camera and see what happens"

"Plan."

What happened was a powder day, a near perfect powder day. Few people, blue sky and dry powder. The day day for a freeskier, the reason we are in Austria and the pinnacle of our pursuit of our passion. We were elated.

We've discovered our passion, we live where we can thrive in it and life's necessities take care of themselves. This was just one of many perfect powder days of elation this season and we had all the time in the world to smash them all.



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