

# THE FORT LIFE

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## When The Future Answers Back

One day, the person you are becoming will respond to the life you are living now.

Satisfaction Is  
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Life

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# WHEN THE FUTURE ANSWERS BACK

“One day, the person you are becoming will respond to the life you are living now.”

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***“If nothing changes in your personal and professional life today, what would your world look like in 2040?”***

No matter where you are in life, by now you should have realized that change is inevitable. Change is a part of life whether you acknowledge it, embrace it, repel it, or simply ignore it.

However, why is it that so often, we fight the very change we desperately crave? Because with age and life's bruises, the “new” becomes more frightening, more risky, and a lot more disappointing when failure greets us at the doors of our efforts.

Who you are today is the sum of all the choices you made the past 10, 20, 30 years ago. We are all simply consuming the fruit of seeds planted long ago.

As we prepare to say farewell to 2025 and reflect on another year almost gone, I want to share one important reason to remain mentally agile, forever optimistic, and constantly curious... Fear!

Fear of the consequences of becoming boring, outdated, and dependent.

Most of our lives fall into two time periods, the pre and post conscious ones!



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Who you were before admitting that there are absolutely no shortcuts, and who you became once you had that information. Your choices in these two distinct periods shaped your current status. Some earlier choices were corrected by the newer version of you, others are still weighing you down as you may be stuck wondering why you are in a position detrimental to your progress.

Only you know which period you are in, but here are 3 tips to combat the fears that at some point or another we all have shared.

### **Challenge the mind: Boredom is the enemy!**

One of the easiest ways to remain exciting and therefore attractive to both personal and professional opportunities is to be an active participant in life's classroom. Make it a norm to **teach** yourself something new on a daily or weekly basis.

Key phrase **"teach yourself"**. This means to make a conscious effort to educate yourself using multiple angles towards any mental endeavor you choose to pursue.

For instance, don't just approach learning as a student, also try it with a teacher's mentality. When your brain switches from student and receiver, to presenter and provider of information, it expands your overall scope of learning.

Learn something, break it down until steps, and then prep the information in the form of a lesson plan so you can force the brain to engage with the content in a different manner. It will help with retention. Want to improve at something you are already proficient at? Teach it.

You'll find holes in your knowledge you didn't know existed, and with new technological tools readily at your fingertips, the process can be extremely engaging.

Whether it is learning the daily word, participating in a strategy game, or taking a musical lesson, these daily challenges, when done repeatedly, add a little spice to the routines of the day.

### **Challenge the Body: A body at rest will remain at rest!**

*"Nothing worse than to have gained wisdom but not the physical energy to use it"*

With age comes foresight, but also aches and pains.

Many drift through life with just enough energy to repeat the daily cycle of commute, work, commute... until one day, they are simply just too outdated and too tired for work experience to be relevant or important.

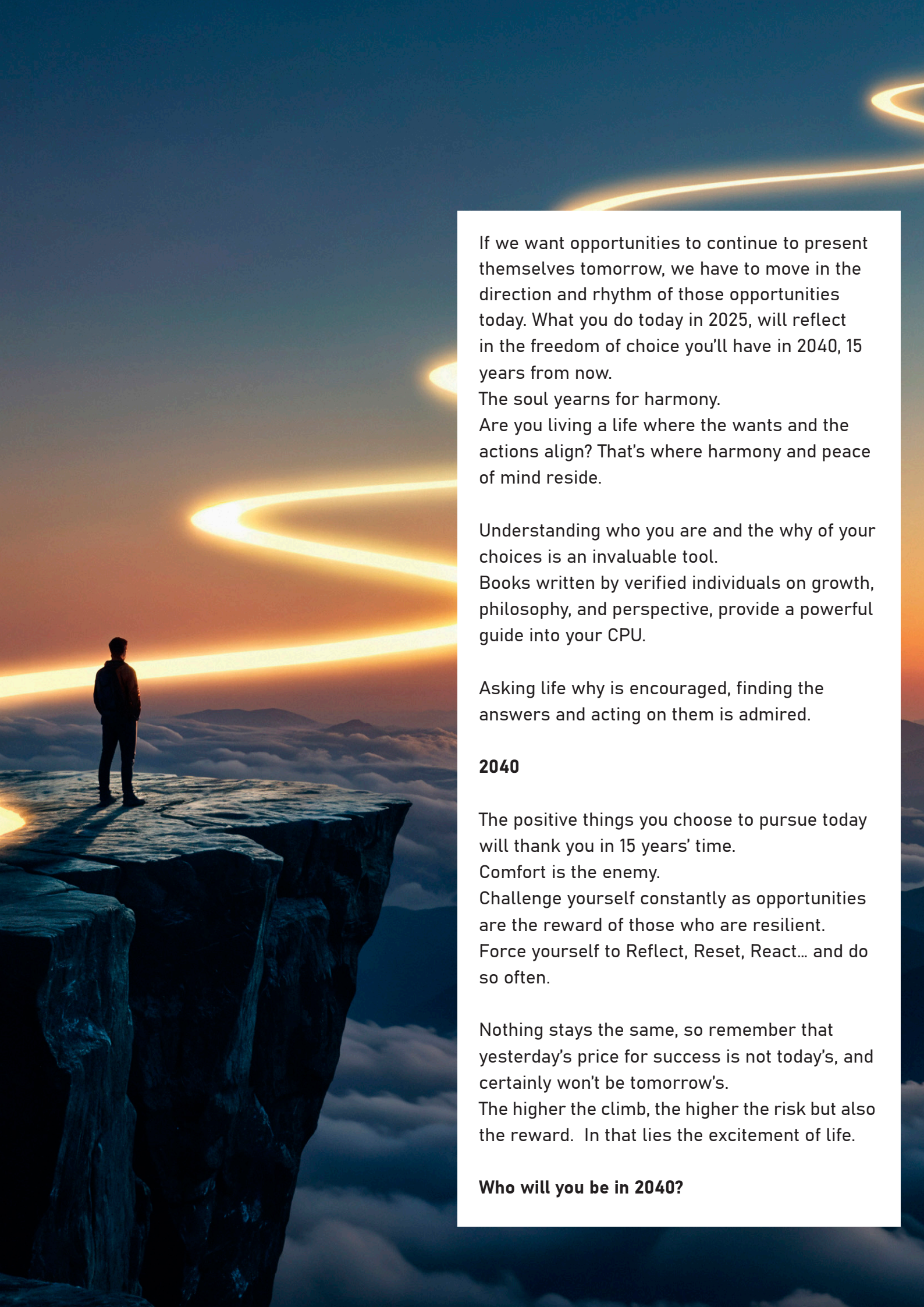
Engaging the body in a new and challenging activity will add tremendous performance energy to all aspects of your life.

The body is meant to move. Constant physical body care movements create a state of flow as Dopamine is slowly released. Websites like ClassPass.com are great for this type of discovery. Being physically vulnerable provides a dose of humility we all can use.

### **Challenge the Soul**

*"The moment we stop chasing growth, the fewer appointments our future has available."*





If we want opportunities to continue to present themselves tomorrow, we have to move in the direction and rhythm of those opportunities today. What you do today in 2025, will reflect in the freedom of choice you'll have in 2040, 15 years from now.

The soul yearns for harmony.

Are you living a life where the wants and the actions align? That's where harmony and peace of mind reside.

Understanding who you are and the why of your choices is an invaluable tool.

Books written by verified individuals on growth, philosophy, and perspective, provide a powerful guide into your CPU.

Asking life why is encouraged, finding the answers and acting on them is admired.

## **2040**

The positive things you choose to pursue today will thank you in 15 years' time.

Comfort is the enemy.

Challenge yourself constantly as opportunities are the reward of those who are resilient.

Force yourself to Reflect, Reset, React... and do so often.

Nothing stays the same, so remember that yesterday's price for success is not today's, and certainly won't be tomorrow's.

The higher the climb, the higher the risk but also the reward. In that lies the excitement of life.

**Who will you be in 2040?**



# “Satisfaction Is Contemptuous”:

How Comfort Quietly Kills Career and Business

Not because gratitude is bad. Gratitude is necessary. But there is a quiet line that gets crossed when “I am grateful” slowly turns into “I am good”, and from there into “why bother”. That is when satisfaction becomes a form of disrespect, toward personal potential, a family's future, and the people who are watching for an example.

This shows up clearly in careers. Someone lands the job they prayed for, gets the title, the salary, the company laptop. Then the learning stops. The reading slows down. The risk taking disappears. A year later, complaints start about the same job that was once a dream. Satisfaction quietly turns into contempt. The same pattern appears in business. A company hits a few good quarters. Leadership starts coasting. Training budgets get cut.





Innovation turns into repetition. Then a hungrier competitor shows up, and suddenly everyone is “shocked” that customers left.

Students experience it as well. A young person who was once hungry to be first generation anything receives a small scholarship or an acceptance letter and then relaxes as if the work is done. A semester later, academic warning arrives, and the blame often goes outward instead of toward the shift in effort.

The pattern is almost always the same:

1. There is a fight to get into the room.
2. There is a release of effort once inside.
3. There is resentment toward the room once it stops rewarding that comfort.

This is what “satisfaction is contemptuous” really describes. It is contempt for the process that opened the door in the first place. Contempt for the sacrifices other people made so that opportunity could exist at all. Contempt for the younger version of self who would have done anything for what is now taken for granted.

The answer is not a life of constant stress. The answer is living in the tension between gratitude and hunger.

Gratitude says, “Remember when this was just a prayer.”

Hunger says, “Growth is still required.”

For students, parents, employees, and entrepreneurs, a simple test helps reveal where satisfaction is sitting:

- When was the last time something new was learned on purpose?
- When was the last time a decision was made that stretched the comfort zone?
- When was the last time it felt normal to be a beginner again?

If the answers are blurry, satisfaction may already be working against future potential. Gratitude should stay. Humility should stay. What must go is the quiet belief that the destination has already been reached.

In most healthy careers and lives, the truth is simple, this is only the beginning.



# Scholarships as Strategy:

## What the King Solomon Award Taught About ROI on Generosity

Most people hear “scholarship” and think charity. In a strategic context, “scholarship” also means strategy.

When the King Solomon Award was formed, the focus was never just on writing checks. The deeper intention was to build long term relationships with students, families, schools, and communities that would outlast any single purchase order or contract. Several lessons have emerged from that approach.

First, scholarships make values visible. Any organization can say, “We care about the community.” Many already do.

But when real dollars are tied to real students with real stories, values move from marketing language to documented proof. Schools remember who showed up. Families remember who believed in their children.

Second, scholarships create multi decade goodwill.

A purchase order has a date. A scholarship has a memory. A student who receives one thousand dollars does not simply graduate and forget. That name and that act of support travel into a career, a social circle, and future decisions. Many of those students will become leaders, decision makers, and parents.



They will remember who stood in their corner when money was tight.

Third, scholarships sharpen internal culture. Teams work differently when profit is clearly connected not only to bills and overhead, but to opportunity. Every efficient process, every closed deal, every cost saved starts to have a face attached to it, a student who moves one step closer to a degree. That awareness changes how people show up to work.

Fourth, scholarships attract the right clients and partners.

Not every potential client is a fit. The goal is alignment, not volume. When a brand is publicly anchored to education, access, and long term impact, some prospects will move away, and that is acceptable. The ones who lean in tend to be those with whom meaningful, long term work is possible.

On a spreadsheet, generosity appears as an expense. In practice, it becomes an asset with compounding returns, in reputation, in relationships, in referrals, and in internal alignment.

For operators, founders, and department heads, a practical path may look like this:

- Start small if needed. One student. One award.
- Tie the scholarship directly to profits so that the mission remains sustainable.
- Track the stories as carefully as the dollars.

Generosity does not sit outside of strategy. Sustained generosity is strategy, when approached with intention and patience.



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Photo by Freepick

# The Operator's AI Playbook:

## Preparing Business and Career for 2025–2030

AI is no longer a future concept. It is already part of the operating environment.

Most operators are not software engineers. The daily focus is on trucks, inventory, invoices, patient flow, students, guests, and people receiving what was promised. From that perspective, AI is not magic. It is leverage.

For supply chain, healthcare, hospitality, education, and career building, a simple framework helps position AI correctly for the next five years.

### **1. Treat AI as an assistant, not a replacement.**

The first mistake is trying to make AI do everything, then feeling disappointed. A better approach is to start with simple, repetitive tasks, drafting emails, summarizing long documents, turning meeting notes into action items, translating content, creating first drafts of ideas. AI can handle much of the grunt work so that more time is left for judgment and relationships.



*Photo by Freepik*

### **2. Protect thinking, not tasks.**

If personal value at work consists mostly of typing into systems or copying information from one place to another, AI will eventually compete with that. If value is rooted in making good decisions with incomplete information, there is much more stability. Time invested in thinking, negotiating, analyzing, and communicating pays off because those skills connect to any tool.

### **3. Document processes, then invite AI into them.**

Many small and mid sized operations still rely on tribal knowledge. "Ask Maria, she knows." The first step is to write things down, how clients are onboarded, how returns are handled, how quotes are built. Once the process is documented, AI tools can help tighten steps, reveal gaps, and assist in training new staff faster.

### **4. Go deep on one AI tool.**

There is no need for a large collection of apps. The real advantage comes from choosing one core AI tool and learning it well, from prompting, to organizing information, to integrating it into daily routines. Depth beats novelty.

### **5. Introduce AI literacy early.**

The next generation should not grow up as passive consumers of AI. They benefit from learning how to build prompts, question outputs, and understand the basic logic underneath. Curiosity will matter more than perfection.

The goal is not to turn everyone into AI specialists. The goal is to develop adaptive operators in a world where AI quietly supports many processes, screens, and decisions. Ignore the hype. Ignore the fear. Use the tool. Protect the edge.



# Agility Over Titles:

## Why the Next Decade Belongs to the Humble, Teachable, and Skilled

There are professionals with impressive titles who are quietly stuck, and others with modest titles who are quietly becoming very dangerous in the best way.

The difference is not the business card. The difference is agility.

Agility is the capacity to learn, unlearn, and re learn without becoming offended by reality. The next decade is likely to reward those who remain humble enough to be taught and ambitious enough to keep stretching.

For students, parents, employees, and entrepreneurs, agility looks very practical.

### 1. Skills matter more than labels.

Job titles can disappear overnight. Skills travel. Clear communication, problem solving, project management, the ability to sell ideas, and the ability to work well with people are portable. Titles may get cut. Skills get redeployed.

### 2. Being a beginner stays acceptable.

Agile people do not hide behind experience. They willingly say, "Teach this", even after many years in their field. On the BJJ mat, the belt does not protect anyone from reality. The workplace operates under a similar principle.

### 3. Identity evolves over time.

When identity is built on "I am this title", resistance to change becomes natural, even when that change would be beneficial. Agility comes from shifting identity to "I am a person who learns and adapts." That identity can survive restructures, layoffs, and industry shifts.



Photo by Freepik

4. Movement from consumer to creator.

Most people consume information. Agile professionals turn information into something new, a refined process, a clearer report, a better way to serve a client, a small experiment. The difference is action, not access.

5. Comfort is understood to have an expiration date.

What provided security this year may not be enough next year. Agile people do not panic when conditions shift, they look for new places where existing skills can be applied. They keep their hands and minds moving.

Children, teams, and personal habits benefit from this mindset early:

Do not chase the title. Chase the toolkit.

When the market inevitably shifts, the most important question is rarely, “What was the last position held?” The real question becomes, “What can be done well, consistently, and under pressure?”







Photo by Freepik

# Desire vs. Necessity:

## Making Decisions When Money, Time, and Energy Are Limited

Most people do not live with unlimited options. The real world is full of trade offs, especially in the areas of money, time, and energy.

That is where the tension between desire and necessity becomes visible.

Desire says, "This is wanted."

Necessity asks, "Is this needed right now, given everything else on the plate?"

In business, desire often shows up as shiny ideas, new products, new markets, new offices,

new technology. Necessity is less glamorous, payroll, inventory, taxes, and the core clients who actually keep the lights on.

In family life, desire may appear as spontaneous trips or big purchases. Necessity is tuition, healthcare, and a basic emergency fund.

Both desire and necessity have a place.

Enjoyment matters. Life is not meant to be a constant austerity program. The real problem arises when desire is repeatedly mis-labeled as necessity. That pattern quietly taxes the future.



A simple decision framework can help separate the two:

1. Does this protect or expand the foundation?

Actions like paying down debt, strengthening margins, and investing in core skills all reinforce the base.

Pursuits that only feed ego or impulse usually do not.

2. Will this matter in five years?

Some perceived “needs” are actually short term impulses. If an expense or commitment will not matter in five years, it can be treated as a luxury, not a necessity.

3. What is being said “no” to if “yes” is given here?

Every yes is financed by a hidden no, less savings, less rest, less focus, less margin somewhere else. Naming that no before committing creates clearer decisions.

4. Does this align with the person being built?

Identities such as operator, builder, parent, spouse, or giver provide a filter. If a choice weakens one of those pillars, a second look is wise.

For students, this tension may look like choosing study over certain nights out, not always, but often enough.

For employees, it might mean mastering a current role before chasing the next title.

For entrepreneurs, it can mean delaying a flashy expansion in order to protect the business during a rough cycle.

Desire adds color, fun, and texture. Necessity keeps the structure from collapsing. The real art is knowing which one is driving the decision at the moment it is made.



# Word Search

Entertain yourself for a while and solve this word search as quickly as possible. If you prefer you can click on the link below and solve the challenge from your cell phone or computer.

## Movie Genres

W	T	C	C	U	R	O	M	A	N	T	I	C	S
T	H	R	I	L	L	E	R	T	A	S	M	N	C
O	N	L	A	C	I	T	C	C	E	T	C	T	I
C	O	A	I	M	K	M	E	M	E	R	I	O	E
C	L	C	K	A	Y	S	A	T	N	A	F	K	N
A	A	I	S	A	O	C	A	A	C	L	R	A	C
R	C	R	R	N	O	O	A	N	I	A	S	C	E
T	I	O	O	A	W	M	O	I	R	I	L	T	F
O	S	T	R	I	O	E	A	M	N	T	O	I	I
O	U	S	R	W	Y	D	S	A	S	R	A	O	C
N	M	I	O	N	A	Y	E	T	L	A	A	N	T
F	N	H	H	R	H	R	O	E	E	M	E	R	I
R	L	F	A	T	A	I	C	D	D	R	O	A	O
C	C	O	M	I	C	B	O	O	K	A	N	T	N

MARTIAL ARTS  
MUSICAL  
THRILLER  
HORROR  
ANIMATED  
ROMANTIC  
WESTERN  
FANTASY  
HISTORICAL  
SCIENCE FICTION  
ACTION  
COMEDY  
COMIC BOOK  
CARTOON  
WAR

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## TEAM FORT



Damian



Ely



Danny



Sebas



Goretty



Brian



Kaylee

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