

Jack Williamson
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Topic: Alone or Choices

LESSONS FROM LEAPS AND LADDER CHOICES

The podcast introduced him as a forty-five year old serial entrepreneur who starts businesses built on the platform and power authenticity, vulnerability and personal story. Most recently as the co-founder of Noble Impact, an educational non-profit providing students with purpose-driven education, he designed an entrepreneurial/social consciousness curriculum for K-12 students now being taught in STEM education classrooms through Arkansas and beyond.

I recently had the privilege of spending a weekend with Chad, the entrepreneur. During some long walks at a Franciscan Monastery in South Carolina, I surprised myself in telling him several personal and vulnerable stories from choices I made throughout my life--both good and painful ones.

For most of my seventy-three years I have navigated my life with leap and ladder choices, some conscious, many more unconscious. Choices that literally paved the way to leap around the world, courtesy of a twenty-four year Air Force career. Ladder choices resulted in upward mobility and success in a several large and small institutions. Many of these leaps and ladder choices have been roads to wonderful places, unimaginable in my youth--roads leading to amazing locations, people and experiences. Some were off-the-grid, pothole littered rocky roads, eliciting some of my most painful yet valued life lessons.

Now that I am in the 'unyoung' stage of life, my third act some say, I am told I should be to be more cautious about leaping and climbing ladders. But then again, I have not always been known to follow sage advice nor to resist unwise choices.

I recognize there are I choices I have made and choices by others, impacting the trajectory of my life. I am realizing more and more that choices throughout my life write the story of a lifetime, underscoring the adage: "I am now what I have been becoming". This last phrase is one I heard from a speaker some thirty or forty years ago. I am recycling it again from the cobwebs of my mind with refreshed appreciation. In turn, choices I am making now

during this stage of my life are forecasting who I will be in the future--around the next unexpected curves up the road.

At the risk of sounding overly dramatic, I am realizing I only have one more choice to make. More accurately, only one best choice I want to make going forward--living in the present, everyday, one moment upon the next.

As I navigate the curves ahead, I hope to be able to tell that entrepreneur son of mine more stories of vulnerability and value leaving this life having lived fully alive, fully human one moment at a time.