

Principle 2. If you have any doubts, stop!

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When the Pope asked Michelangelo how he managed to create the beautiful statue of David, the sculptor replied, "I just removed everything that has not David in it."

That being said, excessive amounts of information prevent us from distinguishing important news from "noise" and responding appropriately to it.

The teaching is, "Get rid of everything that no longer serves you, no matter whether it is material possessions, beliefs, identities and habits: you will get the benefits without potential side effects."

There always comes a time in life when we feel the need to simplify, removing those unnecessary *superstructures* that sound so good in *theory* but serve little purpose in *practice*.

This time generally coincides with a particularly *stressful* and *challenging* period. However, it is not necessary to wait for difficult times to simplify.

To be antifragile, one of the key steps is to focus on the essential, follow "*a few but good principles*" and get rid of everything else.

In times of adversity, in fact, these few cornerstones will help us not to lose our compass and to better face the challenges of everyday life.

The right question to ask yourself is, "What habits, routines or activities actually create real value in your days?"

For example, in your personal, life and professional growth journey, you may be wondering what you need to add to your skill set to be competitive and employable. You hear from all sides (the above-mentioned noise) that everyone needs to develop new skills because the world is changing and requires you to be on the same page. Intuitively you might put your attention toward the new skills you need. And so on, and so on...

But an interesting question might be: what do I need to unlearn? What do I need to take away from my skills that, by conditioning me, might prevent me from developing in the future? What knowledge and skills do I need to unlearn in order to learn new ones and be adequate in the job market?

But the practice of "unlearning" (the "taking away method" as Michelangelo did) is also very useful in the relationship with one's children: they were born in the technological age and have a very different mindset from ours. To understand our children, more than learning things, we should be able to remove some of the fixed points of our mindset, we should suspend our prejudices. This will help us to see their periods, to evaluate them and connect with them from those perspectives as well. Certainly, our relationship with them will improve as we will be much better at understanding each other.

To be personally antifragile, it is helpful to constantly eliminate what is fragile in you, that is, what does not like chaos.

If you see that you are going down a dead end, turn around and start again from another point. Never consider a failure as wasted time - learn from it and try to make it better for the next time.