

Of Those Who Take Risks

Humanity is all about taking risks – be they big or small, well thought out or rash, for a good cause or driven by avarice. Everyone takes them during their everyday lives, many (if not most) of them minor and relatively inconsequential in regards to the "bigger picture", but risks they are nevertheless. "A [risk is the] probability or threat of damage"¹, and as such it is only natural that all of us are exposed to at least some shape of it.

Many who took great risks, be it to their social or financial status, or their personal well-being and even life, have gone down in history as persons of high repute, to be respected and admired. The Wright brothers, Neil Armstrong, Steve Jobs; these are just some rather recent examples of persons who exposed themselves to great risk for things like social and technological progress or personal (read: financial) well-being.

Reasons for taking risks are as manifold as they are irrelevant. Once the deed is done, the road leading up to it becomes largely inconsequential – whether the decision to sprint into a burning apartment complex in an attempt to rescue a child was made with extensive prior consideration or in the spur of the moment will matter little when the smoke begins filling one's lungs. Whether Steve Jobs dropped out of college in order to bring his master plan to completion or because he was uninterested in his classes has no real importance, in the end.

Going by the earlier definition, all risks bring with them probable or potential damage. In essence, taking a risk opens up the possibility of incurring any kind of negative occurrence. Further, the definition states that "[risks] may be avoided through preemptive action". But "[the] only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks"², and all potential consequences pale in comparison to those which are then inevitable.

Risks are necessary and important not only for furthering one's own agenda but also for allowing society and technology as a whole to progress. Why we take risks is a question that, in the context of the risk itself, becomes meaningless.

¹<https://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/risk.html>

²<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/facebook-mark-zuckerberg-insights-for-entrepreneurs/>