

• ● ● **THE GROWTH MARATHON** ● ● ●  
— One Stride At a Time —

**HUMAN BEHAVIOR**  
**BY JORDAN PETERSON**



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———— **One Stride At a Time** ————

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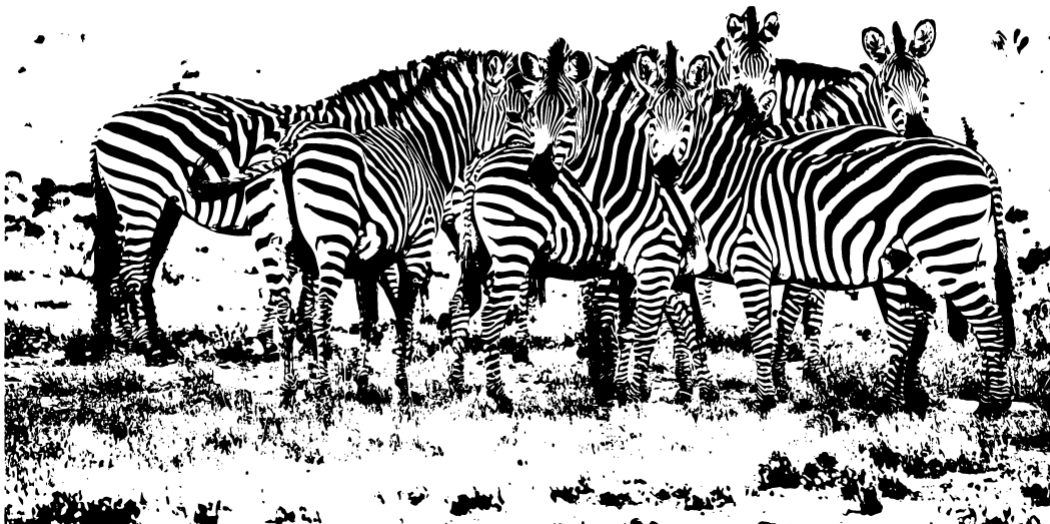
## Introduction

It's great when YouTube's algorithm recommends an interesting video when you are mindlessly scrolling. It can help you get out of the trap. On one of my lazy days, I was recommended a video on [human behavior by Jordan Peterson](#). I was researching for my [article on motivation](#) at that time, hence I ended up watching it. I present the key insights from that video in this short piece.

People do not care much about succeeding. Surprising right? They just don't want to fail. Showing someone how to avoid failure might be better than showing them how to succeed. You might be showing them the same thing, but the way you word it has a different impact. This point from Peterson is interesting. I think most of the population falls into this category, but in my experience, there are some people who seem to care more about succeeding and don't worry much about failure.

## Camouflaging against the herd

I like Peterson's Zebra example. Zebras don't want to fail (i.e., they don't want to be gnawed on by predators). The way they avoid failure is by camouflaging, but not just any type of camouflage, camouflage against the herd. Zebras walk in large groups (dazzle), making it difficult for their predators (typically lions) to plan an attack (lions probably think they are tripping, seeing all these stripes moving). Hence, they are not trying to blend with the environment, but rather ensure that each individual cannot be picked out from the bigger group and be devoured.



Human beings act in a similar way. In group settings, the average human will always want to be somewhere within the group where they cannot be picked on (think of a class setting, where do you want to seat to avoid the teacher from picking on you?). Front seaters can easily be picked on. Being picked on is

similar to a lion locking you as a target, you can be eaten up. You won't die, but that fear of "failing" typically holds us back.

There are real dangers in being visible because you are a clear target. Think about it, if a group needs to be attacked, who is hit first? The leader. A few people like the spotlight, even if it means they will fail here and there. They keep on getting up and moving.

Peterson also indicates that people's fundamental motivation is to be invisible and to be left alone. On a similar breadth, human beings want to avoid suffering, not necessarily be happy. These motivations pointed out by Jordan Peterson, are in line with the negativity bias pointed out by Maslow.

## Negativity bias

According to [Healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com), negativity bias is "a tendency to give more importance to negative experiences than to positive or neutral experiences". Aren't we all guilty of that? The reason for that is evolutionary. Our ancestors had to fight against nature (weather, surroundings, predators etc.). Noticing and remembering predators and natural hazards became more important than finding food. To ensure you value your experiences holistically and not be stuck in the negativity bias frame, I suggest you keep a gratitude journal, to remind yourself of all the positives around you.

## Closing thoughts

The main idea I took after watching this video is how susceptible human beings are to negativity bias and how it can affect our behavior. But what should we do about that? Should we just run away from negative emotions and events in our lives? I don't think so. It seems to me that a bit of discomfort and pain in one's life are required to push the current boundaries that exist within oneself. For example, to be able to run longer distances you need to suffer on that road, to increase your number of pullup reps those muscles need to tear up and build up stronger, to build strong and resilient relationships, you need to let go of those that are damaging, even if it hurts. I think we should decide for ourselves what we want to achieve in our lives and accept to bear whatever hardship comes with that (even if it involves a bit of negativity bias).

Carrying a load in life makes it worth living, it provides meaning and gives you a reason to do hard things. I have come to accept that a life without some form of challenge is just boring.

What is the load you are currently carrying in life? Do you cherish it and are fully responsible for it? If you are then there is not a lot that can stop you in life. If you don't have that load yet, find it.