
How I Found My Way

(By Copying the Wrong People)

A quiet slice about learning, failing, and finding your own evidence.

When to Read This

Read this when:

Maybe you've tried following someone else's path. It didn't fit. You're not sure what went wrong.

Or:

You're tired of methods that work for everyone but you. You're starting to suspect the problem isn't you. You just want to hear how someone else found their way out.

You might not find it useful —

If you're looking for a clear method or a guaranteed outcome. This is not a guide. It's just one person's story.

If you are in a survival crisis — without food, shelter, or safety — please prioritize finding immediate, practical help. These words are not made for that kind of storm. They will be here later, if you ever need them.

If your basic freedom to leave, to say no, or to seek help is being taken away — by a person, a group, or a system — these words are not a lifeline. They cannot intervene. They cannot act on your behalf. Please seek out those who can: crisis services, legal advocates, or someone you trust who is physically able to reach you.

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This is not a guide. It's a story. One person's story. You don't have to agree with any of it.

I Used to Study People I Admired. Obsessively.

I watched their interviews. I read their books. I took notes on their frameworks.

I wanted to know: *What did they do that I'm not doing? What did they know that I don't know?*

I thought the answer was hidden somewhere in their process. If I copied carefully enough, I'd find it. So I copied.

I wore their words like borrowed clothes. They didn't fit. But I told myself: *keep wearing them. You'll grow into them.*

I never did.

The First Mistake — Copying the Wrong People

Not morally wrong. Just wrong for me.

I copied people who were 20 years ahead of me. People who had built teams, systems, reputations, decades of trust. I tried to do what they did, without any of what they had.

It didn't work. Of course it didn't — I didn't have any of what they had.

But I didn't see that at the time. I just saw that I was failing. And I thought: *I'm not trying hard enough.*

So I tried harder. I studied more. I copied more precisely.

The clothes still didn't fit. But now I thought the problem was my body, not the clothes.

The Question That Arrived at the Right Time

Someone asked me: "*How did you do that?*"

It was a small thing I had made. Not impressive by my standards. Just something I did naturally, without thinking.

But they saw something in it. Something they couldn't do.

I didn't know what to say. I didn't have a framework for it. I hadn't copied it from anyone. I just... did it.

I used to tell this story as if that question changed everything. One sentence. One moment. And suddenly I saw the light.

That's not quite true.

The question didn't change me. It just arrived at a moment when I was ready to hear it. I had already spent years feeling the friction, accumulating doubts, noticing that the borrowed clothes didn't fit. The question was just the last small push.

If it hadn't been that question, it would have been something else eventually — a failure big enough, a silence long enough, a night when I was too tired to pretend.

What I Learned From the Wrong People

Here's the strange thing:

Copying the wrong people taught me more than copying the right ones ever could.

Because when you copy someone who fits you perfectly, you don't know where they end and you begin. You absorb their process whole. You think that's how things are done.

But when you copy someone who doesn't fit — someone whose methods are uncomfortable, unnatural, wrong for you — you feel the friction immediately. You notice every seam that doesn't match. Every step that doesn't sit right.

That friction teaches you something valuable: *What doesn't work for you.*

And knowing what doesn't work for you is the first step toward finding what does.

But I'll be honest: I'm only able to say this now because, eventually, I did find my way. If I hadn't — if I was still stuck, still copying, still failing — I wouldn't call those years a lesson. I'd call them a waste. And that would be just as true.

How I Work Now

I still learn from others. But differently.

I don't ask: *What did they do?*

I ask: *What can I take from this that fits me?*

I don't try to become them. I try to become more of myself.

Their methods worked for them because they were built on their own evidence. Their habits, their circumstances, their timing, their temperament. All the things I couldn't copy.

I needed my own evidence. Not a borrowed framework. Not a secondhand belief.

These days, I still catch myself reaching for someone else's template. Just last week, I found myself trying to write the way someone I admire writes. It took me three paragraphs to notice what I was doing — and another two to stop, delete it, and start again in my own voice.

I'm not cured of copying. I'm just better at catching myself now.

I needed to do things, fail at them, adjust, try again. And slowly — very slowly — I started accumulating small pieces of proof that this way of being was mine.

Not because I've memorized a framework. Because I've lived it.

A Note on How to Read This

This is not a method. Not a system. Not a template. It's just one person's story.

If someone gave you this story to prove a point about success, learning, or finding your way — that point is theirs, not mine. These words are not an argument. They are not a tool to win a fight.

You may read this and feel nothing. You may disagree with every word. You may find your own way through a completely opposite path.

All of that is fine.

If something here resonates, it's not because this is true for everyone. It's because it happened to be true for one person. And sometimes, that's enough.

One Last Thing

Maybe one day, I'll look back at this slice and see how much I still didn't know when I wrote it.

Maybe I'll change my mind. Maybe my evidence will accumulate in a different direction.

If that happens, I hope I'll have the honesty to write a new slice and let this one go.

This was never meant to be a permanent guide. Just one person's slice of the road.

If anything here resonates, it's not a template. It's just one person's evidence. Yours will be different. Go find it.

A single page, taken alone, is not the whole message.

If someone removed this line, they took what wasn't theirs.

This is one person's evidence. If it helps someone you know, pass it on.

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For your own words.

