A few thoughts on self-development

"The unexamined life is not worth living" - Socrates
"The art and science of asking questions is the source of all knowledge" - Thomas Berger.

- You need good raw data. This is a great post (and the source of the epigram): [10 questions I wish I'd asked more to turbocharge my career | by Julie Zhuo | Medium](#) about how to ask questions that prompt interesting reflections.
  - Ask questions about yourself and your work, and try to capture thoughts and reflections on a regular basis. These can be **very rough**, but you want raw material to come back to at a later point.
    - As well as the questions in the post above, consider a weekly retro or regular notes, for example: https://twitter.com/patriciamou_/status/1401748387691589633?s=21
    - Other good exercises are "Chris's favourite question" https://www.svpg.com/chris-favorite-interview-question/?sfw=pass1667860735 and Shreyas https://twitter.com/shreyas/status/1375491623308550144
      - 3 types of product leaders:
        1) The Operator
        2) The Craftsperson
        3) The Visionary
    - Previously we've also covered ▢ Leadership Opportunity Analysis
  - Which questions do you find useful and interesting?
  - Which questions are hard to answer? Consider using them as prompts for
- The raw data can be useful in a variety of ways, but around dev talks, the questions become more focussed around "am I doing a good job?"
  - Might feel uncomfortable at first! But it's part of taking the above input and shaping into something more specific, and important to recognise that everyone is doing well some places, and can improve in others.
  - Lenny ([How to know if you're doing a good job as a product manager](#) / [PDF link](#)): "To answer [this] question very practically, although the PM role varies widely by company, you can evaluate an IC product manager's performance with three simple questions (in priority order):
    - Is your team delivering business impact?
    - Are you personally contributing to the team's success?
    - Do stakeholders regard you highly?"
  - A widely cited blog post on "top 1%" performers has some interesting frames, including the idea of focussing on impact. I phrased this as "look for high priority, high annoyance problems to fix," and we can relate it to Spotify's 50/50 rule - spend 50% of your time on just running your area well, looking after a wide range of activities, meetings, docs, projects… and the other 50% on a single high leverage problem, that if you solve it, and solve it well, will pay outsize dividends.

- - - Podcast:
      https://www.lennyspodcast.com/what-it-takes-to-become-a-top-1-pm-ian-mcallister-uber-amazon-airbnb/
    - Blog post:
      https://ianmcallister.substack.com/p/what-distinguishes-the-top-1-of-product
  - In our team, this final question can be thought of as around trust - do my team, do my peers, do leaders trust my judgment, my priorities. Am I able to understand what these people are thinking about looking for?
  - I would add a fourth and fifth questions:
    - What have I learned?
    - What are the big questions my team and I are trying to answer – and why do those questions matter (to me, and to Spotify, and to the world)?
      - Here's my own attempt to think about that!
        - ▶️ 🏗️ What Can You Build that Really Lasts—Alex Watson, He…
- Look at the Spotify career path documents, and consider what you've learned from the above reflections/data:
  - REMOVED
  - REMOVED
  - And if you're thinking about progression, here's the template for a promo case - useful to see what you're expect to be able to provide examples for:
  - REMOVED
- Use your 1-1 with your manager; consider scheduling a separate 1-1 that is focussed on development periodically (every month or two?)
  - Let's work together to improve how often we talk about development