

Finn Beery

Ways of Knowing

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Knowledge Portrait

I know how to ski. While I have yet to master skiing, I am assured that I do know how to ski. I learned from a set of various instructors who changed my life in more ways than just recreationally. These individuals taught me skills of compassion, leadership, bravery, and trust. Skiing for myself is more than sport; it becomes an art. There are endless paths or lines that everyone can choose from. Choosing which line speaks to you and skiing it the way that feels the most fun and comfortable to yourself is the true awe in the sport. I also find confidence in knowing how to ski through the fact that I used to teach at the ski school. Teaching people from age 4 all the way to age 60 at times how to even get into skis for the first time. Passing on a skill that I know and love so deeply to others has been a major impact in my life, giving me the opportunity to share my passions.

I know how to solve a Rubik's Cube. I learned how to solve a Rubik's cube in the 1st grade after countless hours watching various YouTube videos and forcing muscle memory upon myself. A Rubik's cube as a physical object has forty-three quintillion possibilities of how it

could be oriented. Yet one is determined to be solved when all six sides of the cube have just one color on them. I, as a human, can recognize that the cube is solved by investigating the colors. After twelve years I am still capable of picking up a Rubik's cube, and regardless of the orientation, I can return every side to be one singular color. This was something as a child I dedicated much time to and developed a deep admiration for the puzzle and how many possibilities one small thing could have. Rubik's still has this deep meaning to me for how it is possible to come to a solution. When critically thought of, the solution is relative, though; often I will orient my cube in ways more artistic than just a solid color. Creating patterns representing that there is not one set definition for anything.

I know I hold fear. Fear is an internal factor, and while it presents differently in every single human, or even being, we all by nature hold fear. I have come to learn that no fear is irrational, but at the same time, as that is true, no fear is too big to conquer. Growth often happens through fear. I can point directly to a time when I was climbing one of my first times, and I was visibly in so much fear of the wall that I was on. Feeling my body is becoming shakier and weaker. My friend Will gave me a few instructions followed by "trust your body; it is stronger than your thoughts." Since that point I have absolutely grown and begun to trust my body physically and mentally when I become afraid of a situation. Climbing Mt. Hood and Mt. Adams for two higher-level glacial volcano summits in the Cascade belt, I felt beat to completely new levels, but I had assurance and the power to understand the fear is truly just a piece of doing hard things. Fear is a real thing and challenging; it is a humbling and rewarding feat.

I know that I enjoy art. Art is simply something that has always inspired me and given me a sense of joy. Illuminated in so many ways, art can speak to each person a little differently, and no one's art is made the exact same. I personally create using the medium of photography. I also have a love for listening to music, drawing, and many other forms of art. While I am not certain that this is a trait that has come by naturally as humans or if it comes through how one is raised. I know that art around me consistently is something that brings extra flair into my life. Having my rooms and spaces filled with my own art as a reminder of what I am capable of and inspiration to continue using this avenue of my brain. Even just wearing and showing off others' art brings me a sense of creativity that soothes my mind. While art is not a one-way avenue, it is very subjective to what art people enjoy and want to see. I do know that seeing a new piece of art never fails to give me at least a small smile and allow me to engage my mind with the story behind it.

I know orange is my favorite color. This came to be through a lot of time and understanding of color. Growing up I always would answer to anyone that my favorite color was blue. While at the time this presented itself to be true, it was not really a color that I felt deeply. Blue is the color of so much in the natural world, but it was also the color that Martin Kratt from the Wild Kratts wore. My brother and I adored this show and went full in; he had everything green, and I was always blue. This is still often the case anymore; just this week Simon called me for opinions on what new jacket to buy. The options were green and blue, and I immediately said “green so that I can buy the blue one,” but blue is no longer my favorite color. As a photographer

I always found myself taking photos with the subject being a vibrant orange-red color. Slowly as I purchased new things for myself, they were always unintentionally orange. Orange is a color that brings joy, creativity, and socialness to people. All values that I hold to myself trying to be an extremely outgoing, optimistic person, I have come to know that orange is in fact my favorite color.

I know that I enjoy exercising. I am at a point where it drives me crazy if I do not dedicate at least an hour of my day towards bettering my physical shape. This leads me to know that while it is not joyful, there is a part of my brain that desires exercise. Being active has always been a piece of my life, whether that be in a direct sense of making sure I run day in and day out. Or when I was just a regular skier and mountain biker. The sense of getting up and using my body in a way that challenges myself is an important thing to me. Through my last years of high school, I bounced between being a runner and lifting daily. I found myself wanting more out of what I was doing often and striving for the next challenge. Shifting into life here in Missoula, I have found nothing but the motivation to continue these efforts in improving my endurance and strength daily. Previously, once I had worked out, I was thrilled with myself and felt successful. Now I find that in every still moment I get the urge and thrill to get up and challenge my body. Finding a happy balance of knowing when my body needs to take a break still must fully catch up. This all proves that there is true joy in exercise of all variety for me.

I know that most of my clothes are thrifted. Knowing this is incredibly obvious to me, so I wear at least one thrifted article of clothing daily. This has been something that I have adopted myself to not purposefully, but I am so glad it is the case. Clothes and fashion have held my

interest since middle school, while at that point I had not fully grasped my personal style. I am confident I know what I am comfortable with now. Thrifting has 3 main benefits to my lifestyle; one, it is incredibly sustainable, and I am super thrilled by the fact of using secondhand items and reducing the items that end up in a landfill. Secondly, it saves me immense amounts of money, as secondhand clothing is much cheaper. And third, it often is easier to find clothing that will fit. My personal style consists of vintage graphic tees or outdoor-oriented clothing paired with looser Carhartt or other carpenter-style pants. Finding worn-in pants with more classical fitting is far easier in thrift stores than buying new ones. I also find joy in having to search for the item of clothing that I want.

I know I prefer mountains over beaches. This is an internal investigation that proves itself through the places I choose to go when traveling. Mountains to me have such an incredible factor in how they can be so unique, with ridgelines that are all so unique. Growing up in Port Angeles on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, I always enjoyed the beaches, especially climbing around and making forts out of the incredibly extravagant driftwood piles that ended up on shore. However, the mountains have always had a larger effect on me. Growing up a skier and in an environment that hosted a lot more mountains, they had the power of humbling myself. Walking and exploring the mountains has so much to offer as a unique habitat ecosystem and just a general landscape. Mountains have always had an incredible role in my upbringing, which explains how I ended up at the University of Montana.

I know I hate wearing socks. While this is a comedic take, it truly is something that I know. Socks have always been incredibly uncomfortable to me. One of the first things I do every day when I return to my own home is taking my socks off if I even have any on in the first place. I could not pinpoint an exact reason as to what this explains to myself; it just simply is something

that I often acknowledge. Most days when I wake up, I choose to put on a pair of sandals that do not require me to put on socks. This fact becomes especially true as the warmer the temperature gets. Socks or most any clothing that is exceptionally compressed to my body makes me feel trapped inside of them. Through most of high school I chose to simply take on the dread of wearing socks, so my feet were not exposed constantly. Coming to college, one thing I have made sure to prioritize is allowing my feet to breathe and not be constricted all day. There is also a lot to say about foot health and not wearing socks or traditional shoes daily. As a runner, allowing my feet to be stretched and freer keeps my risk of injury significantly lower as well.

I know I am an incredibly forgiving person. I have never found a reason or the capability to hold grudges against others. Exploring this idea even in moments when people have hurt me most, I very quickly have the ability to navigate beyond the issue. An example of this that many may be able to relate to is a good friend of mine that ruined a relationship I was in at the time and then proceeded to begin a relationship with the girl. While he and I were never as close after this fact because it was an awkward situation to be in. I never once put the blame on him nor her. I have adopted a mindset of "whatever happens happens"; often this could be neglected in what things may actually be problems. I find it allows me a stable peace of mind and the ability to continue moving through my days unbothered. If I were to sit around and grieve every inconvenience that occurred or blame someone for everything I didn't like, then I would live a reasonably miserable life. Being a forgiving person has granted the ability to be much more optimistic and clear-minded while going through my life.

