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As a family, we've always valued education. Both my brother and I were excellent students in school and university. I pursued a BSc in Molecular Biology and Genetics and later I received a scholarship for academic excellence to fund my Master's in Gene Therapy followed by another scholarship for my PhD. My brother became a software developer. Science excites me because it constantly stimulates and challenges my brain. There are so many problems to solve that you can never be bored. You might just need to search hard enough to find something that clicks with you. I also have a natural talent for breaking down and explaining concepts to people and students. If you have this communication talent, don't ignore it—cultivate it. It eventually got me hired as a Teaching Assistant. Whether or not I continue in science all my life I don't know, yet I will always strive to work on something that keeps my brain ignited. Feeling intellectually stagnant makes me depressed. I dislike feeling that I'm wasting my time and become sad and bored when I can't assign a purpose in a situation/activity. So, keep an eye out for what keeps your mind engaged as we might share some traits. You likely have the cognitive abilities to learn and teach yourself anything, so use them. Don't shy away from challenging homework and problems—embrace the work and let your determination guide you.

Although I've spent most of my time in science, I cannot say that I am not religious. I am baptized as a Christian Orthodox. While I may not practice it by the book, I have always felt that we belong to something bigger. Making peace with this idea can be helpful. You can get philosophical about it, but it will most likely remain unanswered throughout your life. I pray, ask for things, and manifest my desires, always remembering to be grateful when they come to fruition. If you choose not to believe in any god or higher power, that's fine, but remember to respect others' beliefs. Religion is personal and meant to provide inner peace. As long as you are at peace within, there is no need to fight anyone's religion or get upset about the existence or absence of a god.

My temperament is that of an empath who strongly feels his own emotions and, strangely enough, sometimes senses others' emotions too. I am outgoing and communicative, enjoying listening to stories. However, too much socializing drains my energy, and I need to recharge alone, which is a sign of my introverted side. I tend to be very analytical, which can be both useful and exhausting. I spend a lot of time talking to myself and reflecting on my experiences. This self-reflection has helped me learn from both good and bad experiences and grow. Building your character is a dynamic process that should never stop. I naturally tended to be a perfectionist and I figured out, the bad way, that it can be more paralyzing than helpful. As a high-school student, I avoided trying new things for fear of losing my status as a good student. I regret not participating in math and physics competitions because I was afraid of failure and what people would say. Perfectionism extended my procrastination as a teenager because I feared the work needed to do something well. It also kept me away from trying new hobbies. I thankfully figured out later in life that the most important thing is to start/try and then decide your way as you go. Don't wait for the perfect timing or perfect conditions to do something as I did. Make a plan but leave plenty of room for error. Perfectionism will tire you out. Always give your best effort, even if the result isn't perfect. I have a feisty and confrontational personality that won't back down in the face of perceived injustice. Rudeness is one of the few things that truly angers me whereas kindness will win me over. At the age of I am patient, calm and a listener, but I assure you that wasn't the case with my over-energetic, irritable, uncompromising and adamant temperament of earlier years.

In terms of sports, I was fortunate to be gifted with a nice physique. I have mainly played basketball through my childhood to teenage years and tried swimming on the side but you could tell I wasn't the dolphin in the pool. However, later in life, I discovered martial arts and was surprised at how naturally they came to me. I only wish I had tried them sooner and I would strongly encourage you, regardless of your gender, to try any of: Judo, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Krav-Maga as they might suit your body-type and body kinetics the best, while avoiding head-striking sports as much as possible. At the time of writing, I mainly stay active through weightlifting. If you choose to sculpt your body, you will most likely be rewarded with good results. This good physique, combined with empathy and understanding social cues, kept me out of trouble and allowed me to talk my way out of difficult situations. I always found dancing to be my way to relax and have fun. I don't drink alcohol and never needed it to socialize, make friends, belong to a group, or flirt with a girl I liked. Its taste never connected to my brain as coffee never did either. If you also feel that way, embrace it and don't try to conform to peer pressure. My love for theatre led me to perform in university for the drama society. While it fit my personality well, I chose a different path. I've always been good at addressing large audiences. Although I always get an adrenaline rush before a talk/performance, I use it to fuel and excite me instead of letting it paralyze me. I have a wild imagination and often created short stories and pictures that I didn't know how to express, mainly because I never practiced sketching or

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painting when I was younger. That's why, later in life, I found Photoshop very relaxing. You might have a similar imaginative streak, so practicing sketching, painting, or any form of art could uncover a hidden talent in you. I've never practiced playing any instrument or trying to write music; I am a horrendous singer, so if you happen to be blessed with a great voice, that wasn't my contribution!

My mother is quite traditional, romantic, and old-fashioned, easily saddened by the suffering of others and always feeling the need to help. She is a strong empath, and even a bad news article from a faraway country can affect her day. She is incredibly patient, calm, and seeks peace in her environment. She is not feisty or confrontational and would willingly step back to bring peace to a heated argument. She genuinely possesses a natural ability to connect with children, understanding how to communicate with them effectively and discipline them when needed. I sometimes characterize her as a professional mother. Keep these traits in mind if you ever find yourself interested in an occupation that involves taking care of kids or other people.

Furthermore, she is a daydreamer, much like I am. We often find ourselves lost in our imaginations, envisioning things that may never happen, which can help you be a visionary. She is outgoing and social, naturally making friends and connecting with people, and always assumes the best in everyone, which can sometimes come off as naïve. Additionally, she is an amazing cook, a skill she started practicing in her early teenage years, so you might want to explore cooking as a hobby as well. With her creative and artistic mind, she has been painting for many years. She loves decorating spaces and is obsessed with organizing them and keeping everything clean and neat. She also has a keen interest in fashion and its many branches and can turn a bad day into a good one by indulging in her favourite collection of expensive perfumes. Her father, my grandfather, was a great tailor, so if you find yourself interested in fashion design, styling, or have an eye for beautiful things, don't be surprised.

In contrast, my dad is more reserved and often suspicious of people, preferring to consider all possible negative outcomes in a situation. He was also a top-performing student from an early age. His mental sharpness, consistency, and stubbornness built a strict and strong work ethic that enabled him to work his way up from poverty to become a psychiatrist, providing for our whole family. He is a very family-oriented person, and we undoubtedly felt that we have always been his first priority. A frugal and simple man, he never sought to acquire or possess fancy things. Humble to a fault, he would feel awkward accepting a compliment and always tried to tone it down. He is a perfectionist and feels uneasy in situations with multiple variables that he cannot control. He also has a good hand at sketching and enjoys creating, building, and fixing things with his hands and tools. He is crafty and particularly admires art that focuses on "Realism through Observation." To his own words, he has always described himself as a simple man who wanted to build and love his family and enjoy life, seeing this as the best way to thank God. Although not a Christian by the book, he always maintained a personal and unique connection with his faith and God.

At our core, we have always been a family of well-intentioned and kind-hearted people who want the best for their loved ones and strive for contentment. It is likely that you, too, have an inner compass guiding you on what is socially perceived as right or wrong. However, let's not confuse a kind heart with a weak spirit. You may also feel a strong, fiery, and powerful spirit that wants to prove to the world "how things are done." Sometimes, this intensity can create dark thoughts that feel beyond your control. But remember, it is better to be a soldier in a garden than a gardener in a war. You likely have the fundamentals to combine both a kind and a strong heart. Strive to find the balance between the two and use these qualities to benefit society. Holding back on your skills, values, and temperament will only create space for those who do not share your values to take positions of power and influence your world. Embrace your strengths and values, and use them to be the change you wish for and make a positive impact.

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Reasons for becoming a donor:

█ I realize I've won three lotteries: health, family, and a great birthplace. These lotteries have shaped my life, and I want to increase the chances of someone else experiencing these blessings.

Health: I've been fortunate to enjoy good health with no genetic, terminal or any serious diseases in my family. This genetic advantage has allowed me to pursue my dreams and joy without health setbacks, and I believe passing this lottery on is valuable to any child.

Family: Although the perfect parent does not exist, through my childhood, I undeniably felt unconditional love and knew my parents would always support my decisions. This nurturing environment laid the foundations for my character. I believe that any woman or couple who decides to go through this process of IVF must be serious, educated, and committed to parenthood. This increases the chances for the child to experience the lottery of being born into a caring family environment that will give them a head start in life.

Birthplace: I was born in Greece, a developed Western country, that spared me from poverty, hunger, and war, allowing me to exploit opportunities and chase my goals. Being born in the UK, an even more developed, richer, and safer country with abundant opportunities, would be a winning third lottery, providing a fortunate start in life for a child.

A child, lucky like I was, who receives these lotteries, has increased chances to get an advantage in life, get creative with it, and find purpose. Despite the world's dangers, life is still worth living. Humanity keeps evolving, and the world is undeniably better than it was a thousand years ago. Amidst destruction, corruption, and unfairness, life can still offer love, responsibility, integrity, creativity, and joy. The world belongs to the optimists and the brave, who shape humanity and make the world better for future generations. I wish for the family receiving this gift to be deeply committed to the challenging yet uniquely rewarding role of parenthood.

Advice to consider:

The advice below may not apply to everyone, and it's certainly not a manual for living life. You will have the joy and responsibility of living your life your way. These pieces of advice mostly come from things that have worked very well for me, making my experiences positive and feeling grateful for where I am. Given that we are genetically linked, there's a chance that your brain might think somewhat like mine. So, some things that worked for me might also work for you. I would have loved to have these insights sooner in life, and I hope they can be of some help to you.

Health and Fitness: At 16, it's the perfect time to start thinking about your fitness and eating habits. You only get one body, and it has to carry you through life, so it's essential to take care of it. Everyone should exercise, and the sooner you start, the better. Find the style of exercise/sports that suits you and stay disciplined to it. Also, educate yourself about nutrition and discover nutritious foods, including vegetables, that you like. You are what you eat. If you don't like any specific meals, learn to cook the meals that you will like.

You deserve better: Stay away from drugs, smoking and addictions as they will objectively take a toll out of your youth and health. Whatever problem you will have, it's an opportunity to figure out how to solve it. Humans are problem solvers. Take responsibilities instead of avoiding them.

Education: You're growing up in a highly technical and rapidly advancing world. Don't skip your studies and homework, even when school feels pointless. School and university mould your work ethic. Every new academic year humbles you with new modules that you struggle with, teaching you what it means to be a lifelong learner. Reflecting on my own experience, school built the confidence in myself that I now know how to learn things that I don't know. That will pay you out later in life even if it feels painfully boring at times.

Financial Wisdom: At 16, it's a great time to start thinking about your financial education. In Greece, many teenagers get their first summer jobs at this age, and it's a perfect opportunity to learn how to budget and be resourceful. Don't overspend your income; focus on spending on things you genuinely like. A cautious reminder: Money is a tool and should be treated as such. There is more to life than money. A good book to start with is: "I Will Teach You to Be Rich" by Ramit Sethi.

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Who do you want to be: That you will find by yourself and it's a dynamic process. However, you should remember that your reputation will precede you, so act in a way that reflects how you want to be known. It's wise to learn to be respectful of others' beliefs, culture, religion, occupation, style, and sexual orientation. Don't look down on people, and don't put anyone on a pedestal. Judge everyone by whether they walk their talk.

Being smart can go wrong: Just because you are clever doesn't mean you will always be right. If you ever find yourself thinking, "I am surrounded by idiots," recalibrate, as you might be the one missing what is really going on in the situation. It's very easy for a smart individual to become overconfident and arrogant, especially when they are succeeding. This will eventually cloud your judgment. Some of the most miserable people you will meet are smart individuals. If you study history and read biographies, you would be amazed at how many successful, smart, famous people—who seemingly had everything—ended up miserable, poor, alone, or worse, with nothing. The main culprits are pride and ego. Remember, you are not as good as you think you are when you are winning, and you are not as bad as you think you are when you are losing. Balance this mental scale. Strive to combine mental sharpness and ingenuity with humility and contentment, as they best complement the gift of intelligence moulding a strong character.

Be a fair judge: One of the most useful pieces of advice I ever received from my father was: "Learn to be a fair judge of yourself." Keep the perfectionist at bay. Accept that you can't control everything and that sometimes things will fail. Handle failure and rejection with humor. Give yourself credit for great performances and hold yourself accountable when you make excuses. Balance these two and make yourself your best friend. You and your inner voice are both trapped to be together forever, so work out the best way to be good companion for each other.

Cherish People: Don't be a bully. You have a leader in your soul. True strength lies in staying true to yourself while lifting others up and celebrating their talents and achievements. Weak people pull others down to feel better about themselves, but this only reveals their fragility. Consider trying martial arts—you might have a natural talent for it. Martial arts can build your confidence by turning the feeling of danger into one of empowerment.

Pick your friends wisely: Your parents won't have much control over this, but they will worry about it. Understand that your friends will greatly influence both how you navigate life and how you view it. You are the average of the 5 people you mostly associate with. My approach was to cut off unreliable people and invest my time in kind-hearted and open-minded individuals. They are rare, but once you find them, put the effort for them and keep them. Nobody is perfect, but a kind heart can work out problems. Choose wisely as the responsibility lies solely on you.

Role models: Choose some heroes and role models. This can be your secret. It doesn't matter if they are fictional characters, historical figures, or living people. What matters are their values. Think, read, and get curious about this. It's a mental game where you can cherry-pick and mimic the traits you admire and actively avoid the ones you don't. My list is long, and I won't spoil it because you have to discover your own. However, if I had to give just one recommendation, it would be to start with "Meditations" by Marcus Aurelius.

Embrace Discomfort: At 16, it's the perfect age to master the art of getting comfortable with being uncomfortable. Start pushing yourself out of your comfort zone. Don't waste time worrying about looking silly or uncool. If you're not good at something, that's fine—move on to the next thing. Keep exploring until you find what ignites your interest and makes you want to try it already for a third time. Once you find it, stay disciplined and committed. This journey will take years, so better start exploring now.

In case you missed it: Discipline will take you further than passion, talent, and motivation. You cannot control your thoughts but you can control your actions, so even when you "don't feel like it" you can still show up and do it. To have something you never had you need to do something you never did. That's how discipline is built and it takes a long time, so I advise you to get on it early. When you combine discipline, talent, and luck is when impossible things become possible.

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The twins that make adults uncomfortable: Both "luck" and "risk" equally exist. I define "luck" as all the external factors beyond my control that turn out to work in my favor, yielding a positive outcome for me. Conversely, I define "risk" as all the external factors beyond my control that turn out to work against me, yielding a negative outcome. It may help you to remember that being lucky doesn't diminish the value of your hard work. Embrace the uncertainty and let life surprise you.

Some people are driven by envy: Remember, of all the emotions you can feel, envy and jealousy are the worst and consistently losing option. They cloud your judgement, degrade you and offer no pleasure—not even short-term. It's better to avoid situations that trigger these feelings, yet if you do feel jealous, admit it, wish the other person well, and move on. Don't go down that slippery slope and learn not to poison your brain with resentment. Don't compare yourself to others; you don't know the burdens they carry or the struggles they've overcome to be where they are. Be the main character of your life and measure your progress against your own achievements.

The Hot Topic: Love and romance should be fun, and it will be, but it can sometimes be a messy journey. As a straight male, I can't advise on all possible scenarios and you will find what works for you. However, a useful starter pack could be:

- Try saying "hi" instead of dreaming about it for weeks/months/years
- If you like something, appropriately compliment it
- Learn to accept "No" for an answer. Don't waste time. Time is waiting nobody.
- Remember that when someone shows their romantic emotions towards you, they choose to become vulnerable to you and that's a compliment. You are not obliged to respond, but it costs nothing to be polite and kind.
- Respect yourself and don't allow yourself to be forced into situations you don't like.
- If you get hurt or betrayed, shift the focus on healing yourself and stop re-living what they did to you. Talk to your friends or family to express your emotions. Crying heals, so use it, regardless of your gender. Everything is part of the game.
- If you choose to commit to someone, honour your word and remain loyal. In the long run, breaking your promises harms you more than it does them.
- Picking your partner will most probably be the most important decision you will ever make, so be deliberate and conscious with who you are allowing in your life.