

August 11, 2025

Focusing on the real thing — the thing that matters the most for ourselves, our community, the task at hand, our work in the long and short run — is not always easy. Here is a why :



→ This is what we call "self-prove".

QUESTION : IS THERE A BETTER, HEALTHIER WAY TO REACT?

Which "you"?

How?

They don't seem open & is this what you want to spend your time & energy on?

Who are "they" again?

Some authority figure you don't respect?

Will you remember their name 2 years from now?

During a ~~business workshop~~ business workshop (April 25th) ~~made~~ made a great point. She said "when we listen or perform to self-prove sometimes we start to do things only to satisfy our boss, clients, authorities, etc. We lose sight of what's important."

This is such a great point!!! But I keep wondering why is it so easy to fall into that trap? Or why do many of us start thinking that's actually necessary? Do we really lose sight of what's important?



→ Let's say this four leaf clover is what's important. I know it's and I am trying to tell other people that it's the important thing:



You see... Four leaf clover is what we and you need. Here is the research... Here are other reasons... Here is my experience... Here is my education...

Here is the wall I hit :

Where is your accent from?

You steal jobs and husbands.

Let me mansplain you!

You're very cute.

I can't take you seriously

You look different.

Did you really go to Columbia?

Why should I trust a foreigner?!

I don't give you any credit.

I've never heard of it before.

I don't even know where Turkey is.

I choose to believe someone that looks more familiar.

You're a threat

Initially, it's easy to take this wall as a rare happening. One can easily frame it as "no, not everyone can be racist, sexist, xenophobic, mono-cultural, narrow minded, etc." And we can even try to learn some lessons from this wall-hitting experience:



... If I smile less, put more make up on, wear high heels, mention my american experiences more and squeeze in a few successful project stories...

And all these little changes we can ~~make~~ might even feel empowering and we might feel more confident in our skin. Sort of like being more knowledgeable about the rules of the game.



I got this!
I can do it. I am not afraid of a little bit of a prejudice...

And four-leaf clover is what matters the most

But, if we keep hitting the wall :

We forgot to
tell you!

Sorry, we didn't mention
your work in the newsletter.
It's an oversight.

This is my office!

Move out.

You stole my students.

You stole my job.

Is this your idea?

Did you take my expensive necklace?

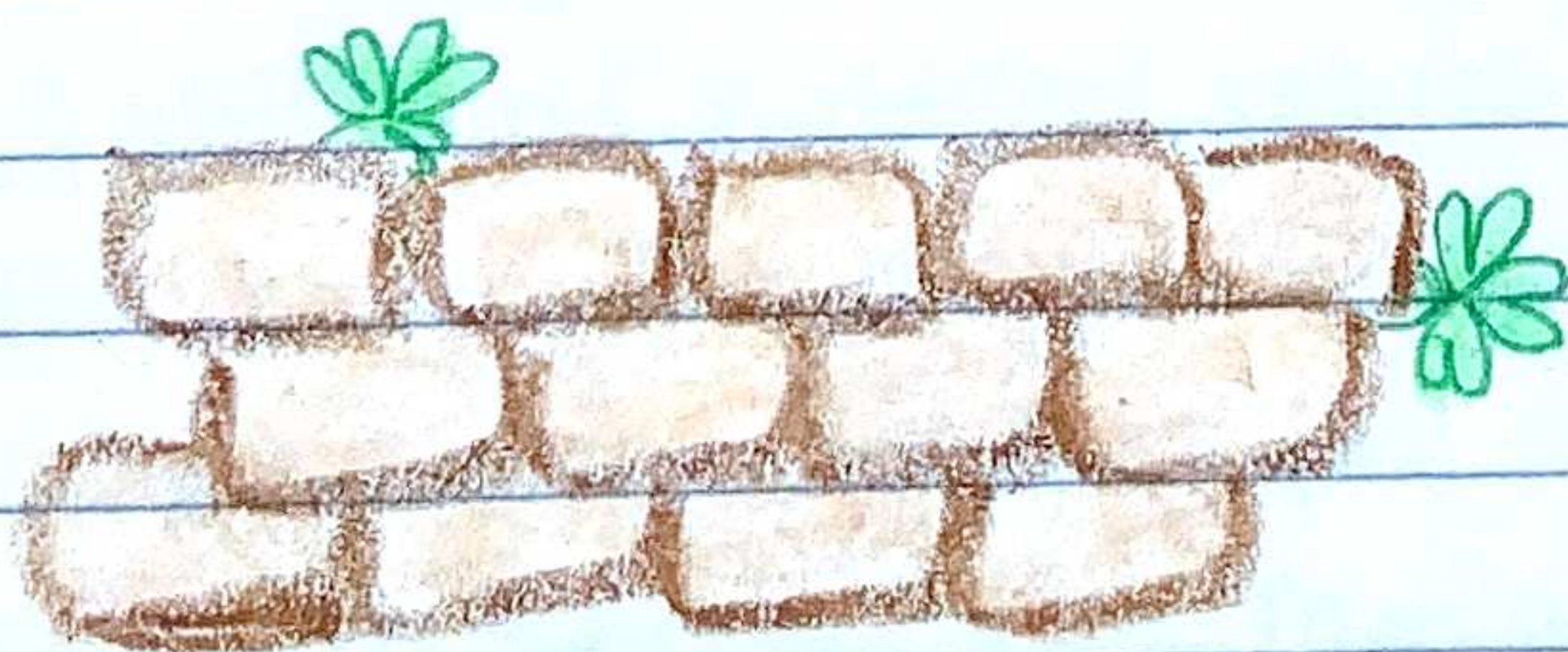
But, you must be used
to bad circumstances
because you're from Tr.

Are you Chinese?

At least you speak English.

... It becomes inevitable to listen to hear and detect discrimination, negative judgement, doubt or even racism and prejudice.

So... I believe - at least at times - listening or performing to self-prove can be a reaction to the walls we hit, because it hurts to feel as if "we" stand between what's important (four-leaf clover) and our audience. So, in the end of the day, self-proving is not and does not serve for satisfying customers or some authority. Unfortunately it may easily become a tool to self comfort if not a defense shield.



Clovers can and do sprout through the walls. But, why the wall? Aren't there better things to build? Yes, of course there are! Then, what is the benefit of those walls

to those who create them? I am sure you've already come up with a list in a few seconds. But this is not where I want my thoughts to dwell on.

I would like to bring up the question I asked at the beginning of my sharing. Remember the pink cloud: Is there a better, healthier way to react (to the walls)?

I know when one is hurt, angry and frustrated this question sounds irrelevant or to be coming from a very privileged place — a place where "better knowing" people gather and judge and blame you for your anger, frustration and hurt.

Still, it is a good question to contemplate on. Here is my own attempt to answer it:

The obstacles, walls, prejudices, silly hurdles etc. that we encounter, sometimes, lead us - wrongfully - to believe, assume or feel that the path we are on is the only way to be able to focus on "the real thing" and achieve our goals. There are however, many different ways to take or invent to get where we want to go. People or institutions or habits and outdated values that seem to put these obstacles on our ways may seem like the gatekeepers to our destinations. We may feel like we have to negotiate an entry with them because that's the only way. The truth is accepting the rules of such gatekeepers is responding positively to oppression - which actually is not a natural process of reaching your destination. Instead of developing

shields and wall-climbing techniques, we can surround ourselves with people who care about and value us and the work we are doing no matter who we or our ancestors are. We can choose to create or become part of communities that would accept what we have to offer instead of putting us through tests to be convinced of our worth — It's healthy, valuable, and respectable to be on both sides of giving & taking. Such supportive people or communities are not gatekeepers. We form bridges with them and pave new paths.



If all you're seeing
is gates and walls, it does
NOT mean you're not allowed
to build paths and bridges.
Don't wait for external permission.

Let's make
more bridges!

I made a
boat too!

