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SELF-UNDERSTANDING Despite our best efforts at self-awareness, we're all too often partial or complete mysteries to ourselves. Therein, they argue, lies one of art's greatest gifts: Art can offer a grand and serious vantage point from which to survey the travails of our condition. We have intuitions, suspicions, hunches, vague musings, and strangely mixed emotions, all of which resist simple definition. We might be doomed, not by a lack of skill, but by an absence of hope. It is in the mirror that we see her as she wants to be seen: striking and stylish, her hand suave and eloquent.' Sublimation: the transformation of suffering into beauty.' Nan Goldin, 'Siobhan in My Mirror' (1992). The best kind of cautionary art — art that is moral without being "moralistic"— understands how easy it is to be attracted to the wrong things. For Tolstoy, the purpose of art was to provide a bridge of empathy between us and others, and for Anais Nin, a way to exorcise our emotional excess. HOPE Our conflicted relationship with beauty presents a peculiar paradox: The most universally admired art is of the "pretty" kind — depictions of cheerful and pleasant scenes, faces, objects, and situations — yet "serious" art critics and connoisseurs see it as a failure of taste and of intelligence. The pretty picture seems to suggest that in order to make life nice, one merely has to brighten up the apartment with a depiction of some flowers. Sentimentality is a symptom of insufficient engagement with complexity, by which one really means problems. Secondly, there is the related fear that prettiness will numb us and leave us insufficiently critical and alert to the injustices surrounding us. If we were to ask the picture what is wrong with the world, it might be taken as saying 'you don't have enough Japanese water gardens' — a response that appears to ignore all the more urgent problems that confront humanity. We want to make more of ourselves, but lose motivation at a critical juncture. The very innocence and simplicity of the picture seems to militate against any attempt to improve life as a whole. The rest of Art as Therapy goes on to examine such eternal questions as what makes good art, what kind of art one should make, how art should be displayed, studied, bought and sold, and a heartening wealth more. They offer an example: The dancers in Matisse's painting are not in denial of the troubles of this planet, but from the standpoint of our imperfect and conflicted — but ordinary — relationship with reality, we can look to their attitude for encouragement. The picture does not suggest that all is well, any more than it suggests that women always delight in each other's existence and bond together in mutually supportive networks. Our psychological histories, relationships and working routines mean that our emotions can incline grievously in one direction or another. However, in reality, when we are calm and not under fire, most of us long to be good and wouldn't mind the odd reminder to be so; we simply can't find the motivation day to day. While habit can be a remarkable life-centering force, it is also a double-edged sword that can slice off a whole range of experiences as we fall into autopilot mode. One example they offer comes from Jasper Johns's famous bronze-cast beer cans, which nudge us to look at a mundane and familiar object with new eyes: The heavy, costly material they are made of makes us newly aware of their separateness and oddity; we see them as though we had never laid eyes on cans before, acknowledging their intriguing identities as a child or a Martian, both free of habit in this area, might naturally do. 6. APPRECIATION Our attention, as we know, is "an intentional, unapologetic discriminator" that blinds us to so much of what is around us and to the magic in our familiar surroundings. 3. In relation to our aspirations to goodness, we suffer from what Aristotle called *akrasia*, or weakness of will. [...] The task for artists, therefore, is to find new ways of prying open our eyes to tiresomely familiar, but critically important, ideas about how to lead a balanced and good life. ... We can see a great deal of artistic achievement as "sublimated" sorrow on the part of the artist, and in turn, in its reception, on the part of the audience. Their basic proposition is that, far more than mere aesthetic indulgence, art is a tool — a tool that serves a rather complex yet straightforwardly important purpose in our existence: Like other tools, art has the power to extend our capacities beyond those that nature has originally endowed us with. Através de uma reunião clara e objetiva, buscamos entender o briefing inicial do cliente para melhor andamento inicial do nosso projeto. In Art as Therapy (public library), philosopher Alain de Botton — who has previously examined such diverse and provocative subjects as why work doesn't work, what education and the arts can learn from religion, and how to think more about sex — teams up with art historian John Armstrong to examine art's most intimate purpose: its ability to mediate our psychological shortcomings and assuage our anxieties about imperfection. De Botton and Armstrong go on to outline the seven core psychological functions of art: 1. Although we might not be conscious of it at first, her photograph of a young and, as we discern, lesbian woman examining herself in the mirror is composed with utmost care. We call a work beautiful when it supplies the virtues we are missing, and we dismiss as ugly one that forces on us moods or motifs that we feel either threatened or already overwhelmed by. In Nan Goldin's work, it is, redemptively, one of its central themes. Art can decondition our habituation to what is wonderful and worthy of rejoicing: Art is one resource that can lead us back to a more accurate assessment of what is valuable by working against habit and inviting us to recalibrate what we admire or love. Above all, de Botton and Armstrong argue, art helps us feel less alone in our suffering, to which the social expression of our private sorrows lends a kind of affirmative dignity. Art compensates us for certain inborn weaknesses, in this case of the mind rather than the body, weaknesses that we can refer to as psychological frailties. The tears — if they come — are in response not to how sad the image is, but how pretty. It names the process by which a solid substance is directly transformed into a gas, without first becoming liquid. Our tastes will depend on what spectrum of our emotional make-up lies in shadow and is hence in need of stimulation and emphasis. In art, sublimation refers to the psychological processes of transformation, in which base and unimpressive experiences are converted into something noble and fine — exactly what may happen when sorrow meets art. Put simply and poignantly, it pays to "imagine immensities." 'What hope might look like.' Henry Matisse, 'Dance' (II), 1909. In the room itself the woman is out of focus; we don't see her directly, just the side of her face and the blur or a hand. But the highest achievement of art might be something that reconciles the two: a channel of empathy into our own psychology that lets us both exorcise and better understand our emotions — in other words, a form of therapy. That's precisely what art can offer: Few of us are entirely well balanced. And so we return to why prettiness sings to us: The more difficult our lives, the more a graceful depiction of a flower might move us. Nossa equipe se une para buscar melhores ideias mediante ao perfil do cliente. Firstly, pretty pictures are alleged to feed sentimentality. [...] We should be able to enjoy an ideal image without regarding it as a false picture of how things usually are. Goldin's art is filled with a generous attentiveness towards the lives of its subjects. We hunger for artworks that will compensate for our inner fragilities and help return us to a viable mean. But such reactions miss the bigger point: We might think of works of art that exhort as both bossy and unnecessary, but this would assume an encouragement of virtue would always be contrary to our own desires. It isn't just anything about a person or scene that's at stake; we want to remember what really matters, and the people we call good artists are, in part, the ones who appear to have made the right choices about what to communicate and what to leave out. In this respect, art is also a tuning — and atoning — mechanism for our moral virtues. Reparando nos últimos detalhes. 'Paying attention to ordinary life.' Jasper Johns, 'Painted Bronze' (1960). The work of art functions like a kindly voice that says, "I see you as you hope to be seen, I see you as worthy of love." The photograph understands the longing to become a more polished and elegant version of oneself. This flies in the face of the elite view that talent is the primary requirement of a good life, but in many cases the difference between success and failure is determined by nothing more than our sense of what is possible and the energy we can muster to convince others of our due. Optimism, rather than a failure of intelligence, is a critical cognitive and psychoemotional skill in our quest to live well — something even neuroscience has indicated — and hope, its chariot, is something to cherish, not condemn: Cheerfulness is an achievement, and hope is something to celebrate. We want to behave well in our relationships, but slip up under pressure. REBALANCING With our fluid selves, clusters of tormenting contradictions, and culture of prioritizing productivity over presence, no wonder we find ourselves in need of recentering. While the cynic might interpret this as mere showing off, however, de Botton and Armstrong peel away this superficial interpretation to reveal the deeper psychological motive — our desire to communicate to others the subtleties of who we are and what we believe in a way that words might never fully capture. 'A reason to say sorry.' Eve Arnold, 'Divorce in Moscow' (1966). 7. The term sublimation derives from chemistry. Complement it with 100 ideas that changed art. Why are some people excited by bare concrete walls and others by William Morris's floral patterns? Being able to recognize what someone lacks in order to find an artwork beautiful allows us to embody that essential practice of prioritizing understanding over self-righteousness. They summarize this function of art beautifully: Art can save us time — and save our lives — through opportune and visceral reminders of balance and goodness that we should never presume we know enough about already. ... The worries about prettiness are twofold. Art, de Botton and Armstrong argue, can lift these blinders so we can truly absorb not only just what we're expecting to see, but also what we aren't: One of our major flaws, and causes of unhappiness, is that we find it hard to take note of what is always around us. Art can do the opposite of glamorizing the unattainable; it can reawaken us to the genuine merit of life as we're forced to lead it. 'We don't just observe her, we get to know what is important about her.' Johannes Vermeer, 'Woman in Blue Reading a Letter' (1663). We have moods, but we don't really know them. If optimism is important, it's because many outcomes are determined by how much of it we bring to the task. Assim nasce a personalização do evento. 5. The accent is on the make-up she has just been using. They put us in touch with a blithe, carefree part of ourselves that can help us cope with inevitable rejections and humiliations. . Art, de Botton and Armstrong suggest, can help shed light on those least explored nooks of our psyche and make palpable the hunches of intuition we can only sense but not articulate: We are not transparent to ourselves. An important first step in overcoming defensiveness around art is to become more open about the strangeness that we feel in certain contexts. REMEMBERING Given the profound flaws of our memory and the unreliability of its self-revision, it's unsurprising that the fear of forgetting — forgetting specific details about people and places, but also forgetting all the minute, mundane building blocks that fuse together into the general wholeness of who we are — would be an enormous source of distress for us. They offer an example in the work of photographer Nan Goldin, who explored the lives of the queer community with equal parts curiosity and respect long before champions like Andrew Sullivan first pulled the politics of homosexuality into the limelight of mainstream cultural discourse: Until far too recently, homosexuality lay largely outside the province of art. Such is the power of art. It is both witness to and celebrator of the value of the ordinary, which we so frequently forsake in our quests for artificial greatness, a kind of reensitization tool that awakens us to the richness of our daily lives: [Art] can teach us to be more just towards ourselves as we endeavor to make the best of our circumstances: a job we do not always love, the imperfections of middle age, our frustrated ambitions and our attempts to stay loyal to irritable but loved spouses. Feita toda a revisão, vamos rumo ao evento. Viewing art from this perspective, de Botton and Armstrong argue, also affords us the necessary self-awareness to understand why we might respond negatively to a piece of art — an insight that might prevent us from reactive disparagement. It is an empty souvenir. We may, for example, have a tendency to be too complacent, or too insecure; too trusting, or too suspicious; too serious, or too light-hearted. Art, then, is not only what rests in the frame, but is itself a frame for experience: Art is a way of preserving experiences, of which there are many transient and beautiful examples, and that we need help containing. But these worries, they argue, are misguided. Since both memory and art are as much about what is being left out as about what is being spotlighted, de Botton and Armstrong argue that art offers an antidote to this unease: What we're worried about forgetting ... tends to be quite particular. 4. More than that, they argue, the self-knowledge art bequeaths gives us a language for communicating that to others — something that explains why we are so particular about the kinds of art with which we surround ourselves publicly, a sort of self-packaging we all practice as much on the walls of our homes as we do on our Facebook walls and art Tumblrs. Art can put us in touch with concentrated doses of our missing dispositions, and thereby restore a measure of equilibrium to our listing inner selves. SORROW Since we're creatures of infinite inner contradiction, art can help us be more whole not only by expanding our capacity for positive emotions but also by helping us to fully inhabit and metabolize the negative — and by doing so with dignity and by reminding us "of the legitimate place of sorrow in a good life": One of the unexpectedly important things that art can do for us is teach us how to suffer more successfully. The question of what art is has occupied humanity since the dawn of recorded history. The device of reflection is key. Feedback do cliente e avaliação da prospecção do evento. Art holds out the promise of inner wholeness. In fact, some of history's most celebrated art is anchored on moralistic missions — what de Botton and Armstrong call "an attempt to encourage our better selves through coded messages of exhortation and admonition" — to which we often respond with resistance and indignation. Then, from time to time, we encounter works of art that seem to latch on to something we have felt but never recognized clearly before. 2. De Botton and Armstrong propose three critical steps to overcoming our defensiveness around art: First, acknowledging the strangeness we feel and being gentle on ourselves for feeling it, recognizing that it's completely natural — after all, so much art comes from people with worldviews radically different from, and often contradictory to, our own; second, making ourselves familiar and thus more at home with the very minds who created that alien art; finally, looking for points of connection with the artist, "however fragile and initially tenuous," so we can relate to the work that sprang from the context of their life with the personal reality of our own context. Johns is teaching us a lesson: how to look with kinder and more alert eyes at the world around us. GROWTH Besides inviting deeper knowledge of our own selves, art also allows us to expand the boundaries of who we are by helping us overcome our chronic fear of the unfamiliar and living more richly by inviting the unknown: Engagement with art is useful because it presents us with powerful examples of the kind of alien material that provokes defensive boredom and fear, and allows us time and privacy to learn to deal more strategically with it. It sounds, of course, an entirely obvious wish; but for centuries, partly because there were no Goldins, it was anything but. We suffer because we lose sight of the value of what is before us and yearn, often unfairly, for the imagined attraction elsewhere. A beautiful, though partial, vision can be all the more precious to us because we are so aware of how rarely life satisfies our desires. (Per Susan Sontag's memorable definition, the two are inextricably intertwined anyway: "Intelligence ... is really a kind of taste; taste in ideas.") De Botton and Armstrong consider the implications: The love of prettiness is often deemed a low, even a "bad" response, but because it is so dominant and widespread it deserves attention, and may hold important clues about a key function of art. In these circumstances, we can derive enormous benefit from works of art that encourage us to be the best versions of ourselves, something that we would only resent if we had a manic fear of outside intervention, or thought of ourselves as perfect already. Every work of art is imbued with a particular psychological and moral atmosphere: a painting may be either serene or restless, courageous or careful, modest or confident, masculine or feminine, bourgeois or aristocratic, and our preferences for one kind over another reflect our varied psychological gaps. This function of art also helps explain the vast diversity of our aesthetic preferences — because our individual imbalances differ, so do the artworks we seek out to soothe them: Why are some people drawn to minimalist architecture and others to Baroque? Alexander Pope identified a central function of poetry as taking thoughts we experience half-formed and giving them clear expression: "what was often thought, but ne'er so well expressed." In other words, a fugitive and elusive part of our own thinking, our own experience, is taken up, edited, and returned to us better than it was before, so that we feel, at last, that we know ourselves more clearly. It is an important ingredient of success. ... We might say that good artwork pins down the core of significance, while its bad counterpart, although undeniably reminding us of something, lets an essence slip away.

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