



diversity + serendipity



DOUGLAS CAMPBELL

social cross pollinator. tuxedo adventurer. mindsharer.

Doug Campbell, co-founder of Mindshare LA and Syyn Labs, is a community builder, experience engineer, and charitable adventurer who uses the power of technology to augment social interaction. www.projectfresh.com



My childhood was very diverse. I was raised in the United States, England, and Italy. Those different cultures and my interactions with diverse people planted a seed of great appreciation for diversity. I would hang out with the rugby team, the science nerds, the theater crowd, and everyone in between. In some ways, that made it complicated for me to find my own identity. Now I find great comfort in being a little bit outside my comfort zone and I love to seek out connections with diverse people. I find great value in them.

In 2005, I attended the TED Conference as a volunteer and my mind was completely blown by the diversity and unique qualities of the attendees.

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today's poll

How close is your current life to the life you imagined as a child?

- I'm living it
- Somewhat close
- I'm no where near it
- I no longer want to live that life

When I shared a large loft in Los Angeles with a friend who'd also attended TED, our boredom of the typical bar scene prompted us to create our own forum of diverse friends in an informal party environment.

To add value to those events and to cover our costs, we sold tickets. We started attracting very interesting characters through the diversity of our networks. We called these events Mindshare. We never knew what was going to transpire. Nothing was planned, but the fertile structure created serendipity, a rich synergy of connections and interactions. Suddenly, scientists were talking with artists, artists were talking with spiritual gurus, gurus were talking with musicians ... and back and forth. Engineers became convinced they were artsy. Designers became convinced they could do anything technical.

I loved those connections and wanted to pursue them even more. As a result, we've developed a company, Synn Labs. We do crazy, creative, techy projects that people aren't expecting, showing people that science and technology can be fun.

Because of the incredible energy I have for connecting and being social, I can stretch myself thin sometimes. To keep my energy sustainable, I've worked out the well-defined art of how to keep myself productive. I take at least a week off every month. Sometimes I do a silent meditation retreat to quiet my mind and re-center myself, but most often I go to a cottage on an organic farm hours away from Los Angeles. I'm still connected by email there, but being that far away gives me the distance I need to heal and re-energize.

By taking good care of myself, I can continue to explore what I love – the synergy and serendipity that happens when diverse people are brought together.

- Douglas Campbell

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our take

diversity + serendipity • An eclectic aligning that feels familiar and so surprising. At the same time.

your turn

- ? When was the last time you put yourself in a situation that was different than your usual?
- ? What feelings did you experience?
- ? Go outside your box. Push yourself to experience something different.

connection

contributors

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