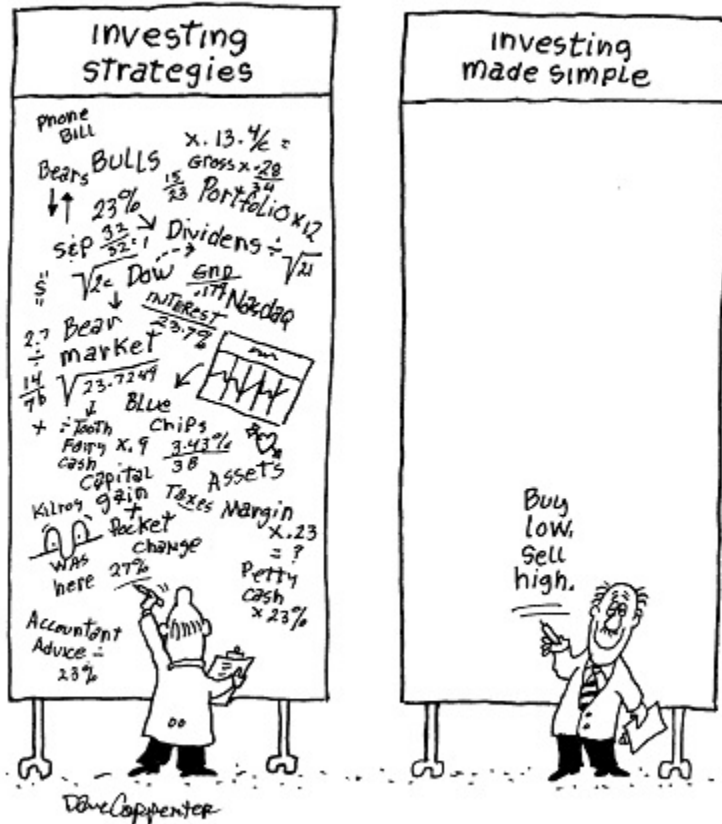


Have you ever felt like you had too many decisions to make?
Have you ever wondered why some people seem so driven, and others fatalistic?
Have you thought about buying a course from a guru who sounds like they know a lot?

If you said YES to any of these, read Benjamin Returns' take on your locus of control!

I. The Statistics of Loss

12,069



[\[Image via Dave Carpenter. carptoons.com\]](http://carptoons.com)

If you were to ask any real world venture capitalist, speculator, or investment banker: "how are you doing so well when the rest of the economy is not," you might get some long-winded answers about trading strategy, algorithms, technical analysis, pattern, formula and canaries in the fiscal coal mine.

What that man may not tell you is the dirty truth: *he probably isn't making any money*. At least, not off the **trading floor**. He's probably making money because you wrote him a check for a course on TA.

Statistically speaking across the financial world, in terms of speculative trading and retail investment in **stocks**, 9.9 out of 10 people will **lose money**. This is an unfortunate truth to grasp for many of us seeking our moonshot. Some would say that the number's closer to 90% rather than 99%, but others counter that number reflects the day trader's dilemmas, not the investor's. Either way, this is a digression.

This statistic can be logically extended to the wide, wild world of technology startups, which itself saw a massive boom in the bull market over the past five years. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 2 in 5 tech startups fail in their first year, and that 3 in 4 venture-capital-backed startups will additionally fail. Projects within the "information industry" fail at a rate of 63%. That's nearly two in every three projects that go from valued to valueless. [\[1\]](#)

Considering we're all speculating, trading, swapping, and tipping within the techno-universe of the blockchain[s], I'd venture the speculative guess that within the CryptoVerse, we see failure rates even higher than that.

This is not to FUD the entire space, even if it might *read like it... at first*. This is a PSA, among my many others, intended to clear up some of "the fog" surrounding finance: if your strategy is generating you profits, you're already ahead of 99% of retail traders in the world of stocks, to say nothing about the virulently volatile state of crypto.

In a free market trade environment, in order to win, someone else *must lose*. The "crypto first movers" advantage, alluded to by me previously as the "first buyer whales," remains true. If you got the asset at a lower price, and sold it at a higher one, you're playing the game correctly. Does this make crypto a scam or a ponzi? No; a **bubble**, perhaps, but not a scam.

At least, not if you aren't sending crypto to strangers in exchange for trade advice crafted using a horoscope.

II. "... But What If I Don't Want to Lose? Is there Anything That Can Help Me?"



[\[Bill Watterson\]](#)

To many of your surprise, including myself, I can happily announce that, YES, there *are some things* that can help you, and they don't even cost any money! Just a few more minutes of your time, and a consciously self-aware effort on your part.

Modern scholars working in the business environment have indicated two specific internal "states," or temporary feelings/attitudes that contextually change based on scenarios, working environments and social engagement with one's coworkers, as having a **massive predictive capacity** with regards to personal success. A number of researchers have highlighted two internal states/traits that can help anyone in any working environment to be successful, be it a self-starter entrepreneur, a speculative trader, or a working person in general.

The first of these is **conscientiousness**. Defined as the desire to do one's job wholly and completely, conscientiousness can be more aptly understood through the lens of personal attention to detail. A trait developed in our youth, conscientiousness is a wildly positive predictor of one's future success in their career. Attention to detail carries weight in almost every possible job in some way, so this is kind of a "gimme" when it comes to career success. If you understand more of how you fit naturally into a bigger picture, you'll have the first set of tools necessary to innovate on your place in it.

The second element of personal success, however, is less concrete and easy to understand: **the internal locus of control**. A locus of control is the degree to which you, as an individual, feel that you have control over the outcome of your own life. Do you feel **fatalistic about existence**: that luck of the draw rules the stage of life, and that you simply drift through your own existence with life throwing at you whatever it may? If you do, you have an **external** locus of control. You have ceded control of your own fate to the universe.

This is **bad**. I beg you, dear reader: don't do this! You do not WANT to do this, if you want to also be successful.

Locus of control is not just about one's personal feelings about how "in control of one's life" they actually are. Locus of control is the feeling you have when you step into an upscale grocery store, only to be *completely overwhelmed by the paradox of too many choices*: for instance, you have one need for mayonnaise, but there's 16 brands with subtle differences between them. In your own mind, you only need regular mayonnaise, but of the regular options, there are no less than eight possible choices that would equally serve your needs. Do you choose the highest quality option because you can afford to? Do you choose the lowest quality option to save money? Do you seek a middle ground between them?

How many of us would stand, blindly, minutes worth of time passing by, unable to settle on a product choice? How many *more* of us would simply buy the closest one, hope for the best, and call it a shopping trip? Finally, how many of *you, dear readers*, would simply go with your personal favorite and think no more about the choice?

The human mind is a fragile computer that we do not take proper care of. If society tells an entire generation of people as children, "you have *no limits*. *You can do whatever you want*. *Your career will take you TO THE MOON!*" it's all too easy to see how that sentiment could overwhelm and cripple a generation. Sure, the impassioned will have vocational paths that call them like Oddyssian sirens, but *the rest of us*? We'll be oddballs, working whatever jobs we can get and hold, while all the time hoping the *universe* will deal us a better hand.

I would charge every reader, no matter your economic situation: you have a locus of control. It exists, and it's on a continuum; chances are, you feel some things that happen are fatal in nature while others are entirely your volition, ambition, and decision. You also have control over one thing above all else: that thing is **your own mind**.

III. The Winner's Mentality: "There Is No Fate, But What I Make"



[\[image via the Terminator wiki\]](#)

[Spoiler Warning for a 30 year old movie series. If you haven't seen it, it's very entertaining and comes highly recommended for drama, action, well-aged CGI and practical effects as well as stunt work.]

In the first film of James Cameron's sci-fi magnum opus *The Terminator*, Arnold the killer robot relentlessly pursues the mother of humanity's future savior, Sarah Connor, as she flees throughout the state of California from the literal future wrath of a rogue AI. In the second film, Arnold is loyalty-flipped by Connor's son, who sought to protect himself and his mother thirty years in his past from the same vitriolic intelligence.

Adolescent John and gud Army extricate Sarah from the cold grip of a callous mental institution (a portrayal that has not aged particularly well. Mental healthcare has come a long way since the 1990's). Sarah, the same lady who spent her hospitalization exercising and resisting the staffs' attempts to force medication on her, finds herself freed from captivity and shacks up in the desert, wrestling with the concept of fate.

In her universe, time-traveling killer robots notwithstanding, her entire nominal existence was upset and disrupted by violence and the inescapable reality that this future enemy will continue sending stuff back in time to try and kill her, even as current day society-at-large brands her a schizophrenic maniac.

I ramble about this dated film series because, like Sarah in the desert, crypto traders and speculators will inevitably wrestle with their inner demons. They will doubt the efficacy of anything they have done, of their ambitions with regard to their wealth, of their ability to perform... and, naturally, their own self-efficacy regarding the responsible management of money.

The grindset-mindset people, often referred to as "the Manosphere," talk about CEO's working 80 hours weeks, and famously laud the inglorious builders, who will sweat and toil unnoticed

today only to cash in their fantastical successes tomorrow. Throughout all of the egotistical bloviating and strangely seductive rhetoric (performative, and all by design), the Gary Vees of the world do offer one clear common element that they'd charge you a king's ransom to tell you. I'll tell you, right now: **all of these guys have an internal locus of control.**

You, and you alone, dear reader, are the one in control of your actions: your attitude and state of being, moment-to-moment, are perhaps the one thing that we have the MOST control over. What takes more **work**: moving a couch, or moving a thought around inside your noggin? Depending on the person, **both** might be outside the scope of their abilities.

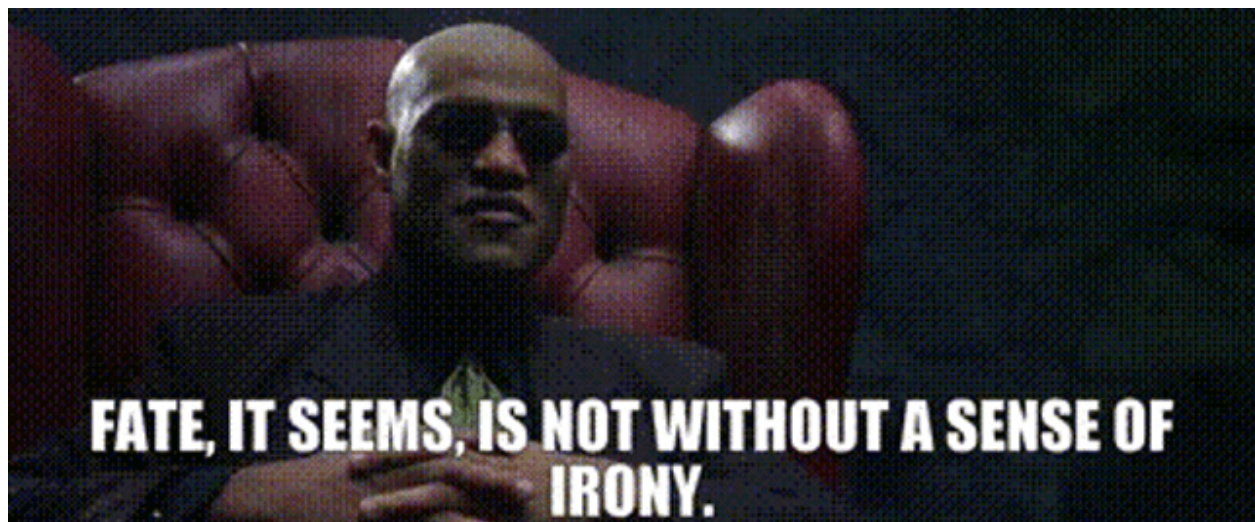
At some point while chilling in the desert, Sarah took a knife and carved "NO FATE" into an old picnic table. This causes expository plot revelations from the son, who immediately realizes his mother's fatalistic streak has died a bloody death that day. Her locus of control, as all of ours does, exists on a spectral continuum. Determined by sheer grit to survive her incarceration, she'd fallen into an existential depression following her flight, and now, it was over. She had become resolute: determined to change her fate, and the future of all mankind.

None of us have stakes so dramatic as "the fate of the world" resting on our loci of control. We all have stakes, though, and some of us feel their weight immensely. It could be family; it could be obligations to work and provide, or a weaksauce boss weighing down your ambitions.

If you, too, feel that you are trapped in a fate undeserving for whatever reason, perhaps you can benefit from a "trip to the desert" to consider your locus of control.

Can your personal decisions impact your life, change your direction, and override fate itself? We shall all wrestle with this each day. However, the degree to which we answer the call to adjust our affective place on the continuum of locus of control?

That shall be determined by history. The question is, will you be writing it, or allowing someone (or **something**) else to write it for you?



[\[tenor.com\]](https://tenor.com)

Thank you so much for reading, dear friends, and as always, stay curious!