Lion Kimbro - How to Make a Complete Map of Every Thought - 2003

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0.1 Context

0.2 Learned in this study

0.3 Things to explore

- How to speed up note taking?
- A notebook system where things gradually fade away, as a way to force you to reconsider them
- Is it worth doing? Taking the time to do so has an opportunity cost
- Where should things go? Is there an easy way to determine where something should go?

1 Overview

2 Notes

2.1 Introduction

- Recording of all my thoughts
- Helps with clarity of mind
- It makes it difficult to think about other positions as it helps to crystallize your thoughts
- The author doesn't know whether this method is useful/valuable yet
- Two types of note keeping:
  - The diary
  - The category bins
- Use concept maps instead of table of content
- Two speed lists:
  - Pan-subject: A list where you keep all your unprocessed thoughts
  - Subject: A list of thoughts on a specific topic

2.2 System Overview

- Thoughts are separated into subjects
- Intra-subject
  - Thoughts on the subject
  - Maps
  - Dissertations/Points of interest
  - Abbreviations/shorthands
- Extra-subject
  - List of all subjects: The list of everything you think about
- Intelligence is having good information available at the right time at the right place

2.3 1 Materials

- He describes a complex system based on binders and paper sheets
- I'd rather depend on my phone and some simple note taking software for "on the go" notes, and a text editor for note management on the computer (notes are transferred from the phone to the computer)

2.4 2 General Principles

- Divide subjects when they become too big (up to your own decision)
- Don't spend too much time aimlessly adding content to your notebook

2.5 3 Intra-Subject Architecture

- There seems to be a lot of structure in place in order to save space at the cost of simplicity/ease of reading
- There are various things that cannot be done because they would require a lot of time to maintain (e.g., an index)
- He suggests to use a lot of abbreviations, but I'm against that
  - It makes it harder for newcomers to get used to the text
  - It does not really provide any direct benefit to anyone using the notes
    - I don't have space scarcity
    - I don't waste much time writing a word completely/using autocomplete
    - I want to avoid having to do any sort of lookup (or search around for what an icon means)
- There appears to be a lot of work related to maintaining content "up to date", that is, when things get deprecated, if they were referred to in many other places, those places may not get updated at that point (similar to how you might have code duplication and would not change all the other places when making a modification to one of those functions with duplicate code)

2.6 4 Extra-Subject Architecture

- The Grand Subject Map of Contents is a map of all of your subjects
- The Grand Subject Registry is a list of all your subjects
- Start with general content in the beginning, then extract subjects as you discover differences/orthogonality
- At some point when you are happy with the content of a subject and you think it has reached its "fullness", it is time to write a book about it
  - Doing so creates strong foundations on which to further progress
- The goal of book writing is to integrate your thoughts not only within your mind, but between you and other people as well
- Was it useful for Indians to invent bows and arrows, when people across the globe had guns? I think it was useful for them. Because, locally, within their sphere, it was better than anything they had before.

2.7 5 Theory of Notebooks

- Repeated thinking is when we think the same thoughts, over and over again, without really getting anywhere
- Lost progress is when we have solved a situation before, but we go back and return to it
- If we kept records and mapped our thoughts, we could keep a map in mind, and identify our position on the map and the transitions to solved states
- Michael Ende wrote that we learn things and forget them, learn things and forget them. His idea was that these build layers in our mind that, though we can't see them, are still there, and support us.
  - Similar to the idea of On Intelligence where idea start at a low level and are (re-)constructed at higher levels where they serve as new foundations for future layers
- If you are habitually throwing out good ideas, over time, it seems to me, your mind stops giving you solutions.

- Information is little pieces of idea that you have
- Knowledge is the integration of ideas, patterns and relationships amongst the information you collect
- Wisdom is knowledge that has been integrated with your life (doing something with the knowledge you have)

2.8 6 The Question of Computers

- It is so easy to alt-tab and write down your thoughts
- The problem is that you can't make diagrams and stuff, and there's no way to map (in text format that is)

3 See also

4 References

- How to Make a Complete Map of Every Thought You Think
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dymaxion_Chronofile
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memex
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto_Frigo