

EXCERPT of

lifehacked

HOW ONE FAMILY FROM THE SLUMS
MADE **MILLIONS** SELLING APPS



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WHAT OTHER THINGS DID YOUR FATHER TEACH YOU BESIDES CHESS?

My father loved to teach me things. He taught me how to draw, fish, fly a kite, and ride a bike. He told me his stories about his poor background and how he came to the United States. He encouraged me to study harder, because the one thing he regretted in life was not being able to attend more schools when he was younger. Those were all the normal stuff.

He also taught me obscure things. He taught me about racism when I didn't even know what racism was. He taught me how to fix things around the house. He even taught me to stay at least one bathroom stall away from the next guy in a public bathroom.

Probably the most interesting thing that he taught me was how to think outside of the box and to be aware of people's ulterior motives. He did it by telling me a fable that he came up with when he was in prison for trying to escape from Communist China. The fable went like this:

In ancient China, there once lived a poor farmer with three sons. They all lived in a house that fitted only one family. One day, that farmer was diagnosed with a terminal illness. He decided that it was time to write his will before he passed away. He divided up his money and farmland evenly, but he did not want to divide up his house. He wanted just one of his sons to have it so that there wouldn't be any disputes later on when the sons get married and the house gets too crowded. The problem was that he didn't know which son to give the house to, and he did not have the luxury of time to find out. So, he decided to set up a week-long challenge to settle the matter once and for all.

He brought all of his children to his bedroom and told them about his dilemma. He then told them that he decided to give the house away to whoever was the first one to get him out of the house without physically moving him or physically hurting him in any way.

The eldest son said, "That's easy. I'll just set fire to the house, and then you'll be forced to leave the house." He then started to go look for a torch to set his father's bedroom on fire.

The father was disappointed with his eldest son's solution. "Please stop! If you set fire to the house, then there wouldn't even be a house left for you to inherit," he replied.

The second eldest son said, "I can make a lot of noise to annoy you so that you'll want to leave the house."

"I can always cover my ears to block out the noise," the father replied. "Plus, after being scolded by your mother's nagging voice every night, I've developed immunity to noise."

The eldest son then said, "I came up with a better solution. I'll take away all of the food in the house. And then, when you're starving, you'll be forced to leave the house to find food." He then went to the food pantry and threw out all of the food that was in there.

The father was slightly less disappointed with the response. "I like your solution, but I'm used to going on for days without food and water," he said. "So, is that the fastest way to get me out of the house? If so, then it looks like my eldest son will get the house."

The three sons looked at each other and didn't say anything. It looked as though nobody had a better solution. It looked like the eldest son was going to get the house.

The youngest son then spoke. "This challenge is too easy. Since you're confined to this house, we can all just keep taking away the things you need until you're forced to leave the house," he said. "I have a better challenge. Why not challenge us to force you to go back into the house?"

The father agreed that the challenge his youngest son proposed was a much more difficult challenge. Since he had access to all the things he needed in the outside world, it would be much more challenging for his sons to get him back into the house. He also didn't like the idea of starving for several days.

So, he brought all of his sons outside of the house. "Okay," he said.

But before he could propose his new challenge, his youngest son said, "I already won." His brothers looked at each other baffled.

"What do you mean you won? You didn't even get me back into the house yet," his father asked.

"That wasn't the challenge," the son said. "The challenge was to get you out of the house as soon as possible without physically forcing you to leave the house."

The father was stunned at the realization that he was now standing outside of his house just a few minutes after he had made his challenge. He decided to give his house to his youngest son.

After his father passed away, the youngest son sold the house and bought three smaller houses with the money. He then gave two of those houses away to his brothers.

“PRIDE, DISAPPOINTMENT, AND FEAR ALL GO AWAY
WHEN YOU DON'T EXPECT TO LIVE ANOTHER DAY.
WHAT'S LEFT IS WHAT'S IMPORTANT. OUR TIME ON
THIS EARTH IS SHORT. MAKE IT COUNT, SON.”

- MY FATHER

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