

A TREADMILL FOR THE SOUL

After a 10-hour flight.

An hour in a Cessna to land precariously here.

Along the road, in a hollow, a girl dressed in the colors of the Imba (a people of southern Africa) bends down and fills her tank without paying any attention to us.

I breathe in dust and heat.

We are 10 km from her village, but I don't know it yet.

Why build a village so far from WATER?

Why carry a tank 10 km every day?

Westerners, think about it: there is always a reason behind one of the many ancient forms of knowledge that our science erases every day.

The spring is not HOME, it belongs to everyone.

Men, lions, snakes, oryx, soldiers, and bandits come here.

We arrive at the village, fortified by a pointed palisade: life flows peacefully, and I understand.

10 km a day is medicine.

The legs move, the lungs open, the brain processes.

If she had a tap in her house, she too would need a treadmill, blood pressure and cholesterol pills, a psychologist and drastic diets.

I, a Westerner, live on progress.

The car took away my muscles, the calculator took away the numbers in my head, the navigator took away my inner map. Now AI will shut down the rest of my surviving muscles.

I don't despise my West; on the contrary, I adore it when it expresses its powerful philosophy and when it respects the values of other cultures.

But hard work was also our teacher.

I know this well: in commercial photography, I spent 40 years doing many boring hours and repetitive tasks. It was there, in 90% discipline, that 10% of true expressive freedom was born. It is that training that made me an artist. ART = knowing how to do, transforming thought into WORK.

So today I say: AI should be used, but not to escape the long and generous road, the time of non-thinking and observation, of surprise and danger.

We need a treadmill for the soul: going back to writing by hand, taking care of our calligraphy, developing photographs in the darkroom, looking at a paper map, repeating gestures that educate.

Small exercises that keep the synapses alive, dedicating SPACE and TIME.

Because without effort, even water turns to mud.

To learn AI, I invested an hour a day for a year; to compensate for the collateral damage, I will need an hour a day for the rest of my life.

But then, deep down, everything turns into a GAME.



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