

Between Miles and Mountains

A MOTORCYCLIST'S HYGGE







The combination of aging and the weight of winter blues can slow down even the most ambitious men. However, it's the knowledge gifted to us by Father Time, that we learn to enjoy and thrive in the slowness. Many of us spend our 20s socializing and finding our place in the world, while our 30s are spent growing, planting roots, and learning to define what we need/want for the second half of our lives. No matter the successes and failures we have been part of, there comes a time when slowing down means more to us and the idea that we are being less productive fades into the past where it should live.

The Oxford Dictionary defines Hygge as '*a quality of coziness and comfortable conviviality that engenders a feeling of contentment or well-being*'. I noticed the practice and awareness of Hygge becoming more mainstream toward the end of the Covid pandemic and thought to myself, why now? Why

does this seem to have cracked into the algorithm of my life? Perhaps it was because after being told to stay home and live through a global lockdown, I started to look for new ways to live and appreciate what life I did have, or it could have been living through the tail end of a classic midlife crisis. It was during this time that I began to understand the importance of slowing down and recharging.







It might seem that only with the privilege of living in the modern age, in western wealthy countries, we are able to afford the slowness we seek. But this couldn't be more wrong, in actuality this practice has been around for generations. Its first origins in print are in the 19th century, back before the masses were fully brainwashed by capital and materialism, and people were able to appreciate and have contentment in what they had. Since the dawn of time, wealth has been accumulated off the backs of overworked and undervalued humans - but nothing like what we have seen over the last two centuries. So, for me, this is where *hygge* had to be born.

It was only after I spent 20+ years working hour after hour, day after day, only to continue to make others 5-10 times more wealthy than I might ever be, that I stopped to ask what I was doing this for. More importantly, *who* am I doing this for? Once we ask these questions we begin to realize that our psyche, our souls, the real us, have been beaten down without even knowing. Throughout my younger years, as I gained a footing in my career, I spent day after day looking to improve someone else's business for monetary gain only - It was here that I found the need for an outlet to feed and soothe a weary soul. Giving your all to others, inevitably takes a toll, and you must choose to make time for yourself because at the end of the day, they are not prioritizing you either, and you're the only one being hurt.







Motorcycles have brought me to places I would never have gone without them, both physically and mentally. They become more than just a hobby, they are the outlet I need to burn off stress. The activity that charges my batteries and inspires me to pursue another day. Being a dreamer and deep thinker, long rides to nowhere always drew me in, in other words, the unspoken connection I have with motorcycles is almost spiritual. The chance to work through an internal dialogue until I find a solution is invaluable, doing it on two wheels makes me wealthy. Having the freedom to ride wherever I choose with my favorite album playing like the soundtrack to my life, allows me to escape to the fondest memories and floods me with joy. It's moments like these that motorcyclists find their Hygge.

Alas, the duality of work and play becomes undeniable when one of them is taken from you. This past year brought significant changes for me; leaving a long-time employer to join a new team gave me the opportunity to learn a great deal about myself and others. I spent countless hours riding through the Northeast and Midwest, working through betrayal and loss in the only way I know how—retreating to my bike in search of winding roads and losing myself in the depths of my mind. Like a manic episode, it's on the other side of the mountain where our truths are revealed—the Hygge we need to reboot and recharge.





As I began to settle into a new career groove, motorcycling was there for me day in and day out. Even if the only ride I got was the commute to work, my silver lining was being able to bookend the day with two short bursts of Hygge. Now at the start of another winter, the duality of my existence peeks out at me by way of snow drifts against the garage and my motos tucked away in the garage with a trickle charger plugged in feeding them like a slow IV drip keeping them alive in their deepest slumber. As winter clambers along, my hygge fix comes from the adjacent moto activities that keep my mind and hands active. Meanwhile, my focus and drive are fueled by self-awareness and the deliberate choice to invest my time and energy in the people and things that truly matter.

Each winter we're pulled closer to an awakening - not just with our motorcycles but with ourselves. The duality of our ambitions and rest, and the cadence in which we live, work and play, remind me that Hygge isn't found in how much we do, but in being present with what we have done. As winter drags on, I'll continue to work on projects around the shop waiting for saltless roads and warmer weather. True hygge isn't about what we do; it's embracing what we have done and appreciating the person we have become along the way.

Monday 6 January 2025