**The itch that will not go away**

By Garth E. Beyer

Some live their lives without ever having an itch. Even more so, some live their lives never scratching it. Nick Dmytrenko\* lives neither.

Dmytrenko was born in England, but raised in Richfield, Minnesota, a small city just outside the Twin Cities known for its multi-day Fourth of July celebration, concerts in the park and home of Best Buy Headquarters. Most who graduate Richfield High apply to and attend the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. Dmytrenko wasn’t one of them to do so.

“I’m not sure if you’ve applied to U. of M., but the application process is just – you fill out your information and send it back,” Dmytrenko said. “They had low standards.”

After applying to Northwestern University and a few other places, the University of Wisconsin became his number one school. He had an itch. Without knowing anyone in Madison, he applied, got accepted and moved to Madison. Itch scratched.

While at the University of Wisconsin, Dmytrenko contributed opinion columns and soon became the Opinion Editor at the Daily Cardinal, one of two campus newspapers. †

Dmytrenko knew he wanted to go into hard journalism. That is, until he took a class with Kathleen Culver, assistant professor and associate director of the Center for Journalism Ethics. Dmytrenko reenacted a part of Culver’s introduction speech to the class of aspiring journalists.

“Hey, you know what? The newspaper industry is dying, doesn’t pay you much, hours are long, we’re underappreciated; but if you love it, you should do it.” Dmytrenko was a junior at the time and was all of a sudden convinced that he had to do something different with journalism. Like newspapers, that itch will never go away.

It was around that time in college when he started blogging. “I just wanted some sort of feedback mechanism for my creative writing,” he said. “Trying different writing experiences helped me hone my craft, but also allowed the flexibility to always change and evolve my writing.” You can tell by reading through any of his three blogs that were written in college that he had an itch to travel. Routine wasn’t something that he was comfortable with. In his May 11th, 2010 entry, in his *Semestre en Sevilla* blog, he wrote, “As much as I love it here [in Seville, Spain], I think I'm ready to move on to something different. The trips have winded down, classes are lurching, and I'm beginning to get into a routine here.”

\* Pronounced dim-a-tren-co

† At the same time that Dmytrenko had submitted an opinion article to the Daily Cardinal, he also began writing news column for the other campus newspaper, the Badger Herald. Soon after submitting his first articles he received a call from the Badger Herald saying, ‘You can’t work here anymore.’ Fortunately, the Daily Cardinal didn’t know about his dual partnership. There’s a strict (non-written) requirement on campus that you can only write for one of the two school newspapers.

It’s no surprise that along with the itch, there was no desire to work after graduation. To work meant to have a routine. “I knew I wanted to do something different,” Dmytrenko said. His itch was scratched when his dad’s friend, who is British, urged him to get in touch with a pair of brothers who owned a travelling company in India.

The United Kingdom and India have long-standing ties with each other. Aside from both nations having English as an official language and Cricket as their most popular sport, their economies and foreign relations rely heavily on one another. India is the third largest investor in the British economy. Dmytrenko would also say that the cuisine in India is something worth travelling for.

“About a year before graduating I decided this is what I wanted to do because I didn’t want to work. I linked up with them and moved to India,” he said. Itch scratched.

Dmytrenko did a little of everything for the brothers who owned *Discovery Journeys India*, from web design to basic brochure creation. All the while traveling on the weekends, staying in different resorts, and getting people to drive him around and eating out. The few words that Dmytrenko shared about India were; “there are a lot of sketchy things going on in that country, which made it an equally frustrating and thrilling place to live.”

To recover from India\*, Dmytrenko travelled throughout Eastern Europe visiting family and pondering the idea of working there. After much deliberation, small transitions from one workplace to another and friends who put in good words, Dmytrenko landed an internship with Hiebing, an integrated marketing and advertising agency in Downtown Madison.

\*Dmytrenko also said, “India kinda messes with you on so many levels.”

Within the first month of settling down at Hiebing, Dmytrenko’s itch was speaking up again. “I almost got let go,” Dmytrenko said. “I was called into the boss’s office and asked, ‘Do you really want to work here? It doesn’t seem like you do.’”

“At first, she was right. I just had an itch inside of me that I couldn’t scratch. It was all about moving places,” Dmytrenko said. Fortunately, Dmytrenko does his best when he has something to prove. “This is totally where I want to be,” he had responded to his boss, convincing himself more than his boss.

Since starting at Hiebing, Dmytrenko has found one passion after another. From standup comedy to dodgeball to clever (and successful!) advertising. However, Dmytrenko said he never feels fully confident. “When I see someone head over heels about something. I don’t feel that deep. I’ve found different passions, but now it’s about purpose.” Another itch.

Life, after all, may be lived better with an itch that will never go away. You can follow Dmytrenko’s scratching pursuits by following him on Twitter @NickDmytrenko