

The Power of Accepting & Leveraging Death to Live Fully

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You probably heard this James Dean quote.

Well, most people only need half of that quote, though.

Most people *do* dream as if they'd live forever.

The problem is that they do little to make those dreams into a reality in the short time they have available on earth.

And they also live day by day, as if they'd live for ever.

Which is not really healthy because, well... We don't live forever.

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The Curse of Avoiding Death

A whole book has been written on [people's regrets as they approach their last hours](#).

And it seems obvious to me that those people probably never reflected on their mortality.

Why?

Because they mostly regretted they'd been [more true to themselves](#) and spent more time with their social ties.

Those people, like pretty much everyone else, thought they were going to live forever and they'd find the time for the things they truly loved... Sometimes in the future.

Failing to reflect on our mortality not only affects us in the wee hours of our existence, but it conditions our whole existence.

Here's how neglecting death clips the wings of our life.

We:

- Play it too safe
- Yield to society and others to fit in
- Postpone what really matters to us
- Waste time

Socially speaking, hiding our real self and biding our time for an elusive “tomorrow” are huge roadblocks in your [road to social mastery](#).

[Brene Brown](#) says that to really build social connections we need to [remove the masks](#) and be our real selves.

And of course to even start those social relationships in the first we need to stop postponing and act now instead.

So let's get down to it:

Benefits Of Reflecting Upon Death

Death is not sad.

It's just a fact of life.

It is what it is, as they say.

And reflecting on our mortality instead of sweeping it under the carpet will allow us to get the most out of life.

The two major benefits of engaging with mortality are:

1. Realizing what you need to focus on
2. Giving you the courage to go for it

To know what you focus on, look a few times at your life not going forward, but going backward.

Ask yourself:

- What type of life will make serene and peaceful about my departure when my time comes?
- What experiences, emotions, accomplishments and human connections will put a smile on my face, when I'll look back on my life?

Once you know the answers, you will know what you need to work on.

Now let's move to using our mortality as a source of courage.

Death As A Force For Life

Death can be your best friend when you need that proverbial kick in the butt to go for it.

Here's how:

#1. Everything Must Happen Today

[The movie Blow has a great citation in it:](#)

| Life passes most people by while they're making big plans for it.

That's so true.

I think it's mainly for two reasons that we fail to act in a timely fashion:

1. We don't take time as gravely as we should (failing to account for mortality)
2. To protect our ego in case of failure ([read more on solving ego issues](#))

People who get things done though have a different attitude. They attack their goals and tasks with a sense of urgency.

I particularly like [Tom Bylieu](#)'s mindset here: work on your thing, every day, as if everything had to happen in that single day.

#2. Overcome Fear Of Judgement

[Seth Godin](#) says we all have a [resistance](#) from our reptilian brain.

Our resistance uses fear to keep us safe and steer clear of any social risk and criticism.

The resistance is particularly strong when we work on any emotional product.

And social relations are all emotional products.

Whenever we feel fear in the presence of social judgement and criticism, think again of death.

Death is a fantastic antidote to fear.

Think of future you in his deathbed.

Will you feel any better that you didn't do what you *wanted* to do to avoid judgement?

Or do you think you'll be proud you took your chances?

It's a rhetorical question of course, you know the answer already...

#3. Remove Social Fear, Get Bolder

Someone might reject you to,Â someone might use you to [social climb](#).

You might mock up your first attempts at [group conversation](#) and someone might not welcome you in their social groups.

Big fuck*ng deal.

As [Ryan Holiday](#) says, someone before you has been in your exact same position having no idea you'd even exist.

Long after you're gone someone will be in your exact same position, making a big fuck*ng deal out of saying hi to some skanky girl, joining a club of drunk idiots or speaking up to a meeting nobody really gives a fu*k about.

Again, the grim reaper comes to your rescue.

Imagine watching yourself as you crow about social settings.

You're watching yourself from the afterlife.

Knowing what you will then know -that life is short and that will you regret not taking your chances- what would you tell yourself?

You'd tell yourself to "get a fu**ing grip, and that you'll be gone before you realize".

Think about it.Â Whenever you're fearful, make afterlife you the angel on your shoulder.

#4. Ruthless Prioritization

Once you know what's important to you by looking backward, look at your present life.

Are you by any chance doing something that's not moving towards your goals?

Or are you doing something that doesn't satisfy you?

While delaying gratification is a cornerstone in achieving your goals, it must not be confused with not having a road-map or making excuses.

- Cubicle doesn't satisfy you? Don't pretend it's OK,Â [DeMarco](#)Â says you're wasting your best years
- Not going out because of... "something"? You're making excuses
- No time for family? Or you need to grow a set to say no to yourÂ [bad boss](#)?

Make what really matters to you your top priority.

And make plans around it that you will put into execution ASAP

#5. Despise Time Wasting

Once you know you won't forever ever, you want to cram in your life as much of your top priorities as possible.

That means you maximize your time spent to [grow and develop](#), experience, connect and do your art.

And that also means you start despising and rejecting time wasting.

The next time you're being lazy, think you're losing time for what really matters.

And time is the only resource you can never buy back.

#6. Ultimate Source of Strength

They say that people who faced death acquire a certain "edge" in life.

That "edge" is the calmness, coolness of those who take life without as many fears and worries.

You don't need to risk your life to achieve that same level of coolness and calm.

By taking some time to reflect and realize our own mortality, you will acquire that same "edge".

Once you come to accept death, you acquire the final trump card of life

Accepting death is the ultimate mental strength.

What's left to fear?

What's left to worry about?

What's stopping you from having those experiences and human connections that will make your life a worthy and meaningful life?

Again, death becomes the enabler of life.

The Immortal Mindset

Yes, we are mortal.

But the moment we engage with our own mortality, that's when we can fully leverage the time we have to do something beautiful *and* immortal.

I like the mindset that the best time of our lives, the best experiences and the moments of peak human connections, those are forever.

Think about it.

No matter how short our existence or [how small we are in this universe](#), nothing can change the fact that in a certain time, in a certain place, you were great.

And that's an eternal truth.

Now it's up to you to fill your life with memorable, immortal moments.

Summary

We only have one life, someone who doesn't believe in reincarnation said.

But if we spend our time wisely and go for what we want, that's more than enough.

One of the keys to a meaningful life, as [Viktor Frankl](#) explains and as dying patients confirm, are human relations.

Now that you reflected upon death, you know that taking charge of your social life is a priority for you.

Read the full [Social Mastery Guide](#) on how to do just that.

We only have one life. And if you live it well, it's more than enough

Note:

this article is part of the series [Social Mastery Guide](#).

Note 2: I put that project in mothballs to later work on "Social Power", this website's flagship course.

I will eventually resume "Social Mastery" as a free resource on social skills and inner power, but it will take a while.

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