



Meaningful Minute



New Meaning



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How to benefit from an amazing gift from Life

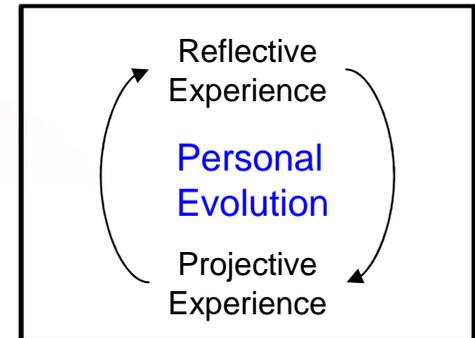
Imagine yourself sitting down with friend when you are 75 years old with a fine wine and reflecting on the many adventures you have both had over your life. Really place yourself in the scene, put a seat opposite where you are now and imagine your closest friend is sitting in it. You are both in a pub that you often met in and one that bubbles with warmth and rich history.

How easily can you get into the scene itself? Don't worry if you are finding it difficult, be persistent because it takes practice. How does the discussion make you feel? What feelings would you hope to have as you sit there reflecting on the glory of the adventures that have past – the glory of your life?

Take a minute or two to think of your life as an unfolding story or narrative. You are both the writer and the narrator of your own unique story – describing your own way or journey. You are incredibly lucky because life gave you a fantastic gift – your memory. As you experience the wonders of living you get to retain the experience and take it with you through life. You can then use your memories to learn and grow – to prepare yourself and those you love for future challenges and wondrous mysteries.

To describe your life is to describe a series of chapters, each with their own meaning and even purpose. Some joyous, some tough, some you would love to have again and others avoid.

What is so amazing about this Life gift is that it you can use it reflectively and protectively. The first is obvious you simply reflect on experiences that have past. The second less so and not so commonly used. You have the ability to stand outside of your life, project yourself into the future and imagine what experiences you could shape. What you would seek out and actively work towards creating. As you strengthen this skill the depth and clarity of what you imagine becomes sharper in focus, clearer in tone and open to all your senses. You can then step back into you current world and begin to experience what you vividly imagined.





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Harness an amazing gift from Life

If you invested the time in practicing memory projection where do you think it would lead you? Could it help you shape memories you would dearly love to have? Could it help you prepare for future experiences that you would like to avoid but know you can't?

Life is fundamentally about what you have experienced, what you will experience and what you choose to experience.

The following exercise focuses on the third category. The aim of the exercise is to outline a simple technique that you can use to start shaping or influencing the future experiences you want and, therefore, the memories you want to collect.

Exercise (designed to be a minimum of 15 minutes of reflective time)

- Imagine yourself x years in the future and at home sitting in your living room with a student who is completing a school project on the experiences older people have had throughout their rich life (you choose your future age if that helps)
- The student asks you a number of questions and you respond by drawing on your memories:
 - What experiences have you valued the most?
 - What experiences really tested you and how did you get through them?
 - What experiences would you love to relive and why?
 - What experiences would you say represent what you stand for – you living your values?
 - What advice you would give to the young people of today?
 - What would you say was your enduring contribution – something you set out to do and achieved?

“When nothing is sure, anything is possible. ... when life looks unclear and we can't see what lies ahead. It is easy to be discouraged ... but if we think for a moment we can see that uncertainties, in fact, present us with a wealth of possibilities. We can then, like an author, begin to aim for a story with a happy ending.”

The Friendship Book (Francis Gay)