

Exercise: Your 80th Birthday

Imagine that it is your 80th birthday and on this day you are looking back on your life, the choices you have made and what they were about. Your memories, the people around you, the way your body feels, and the place where you are all reflect these choices.

Take a moment to connect with your desires in the here and now: who and what would you really hope would be there, as you look back on your life?

For example, there may be memories of acting in a loving way, or connecting with others, or making a contribution with work. You might have memories of consistently striving toward something, courageous moments where you took some bold actions, or simply taking the time to switch from being on autopilot to living your life more deliberately and purposefully. If you could imagine that you had acted boldly, and made your actions be about something important in your life, then what would you be able to look back on as an older person? For a few moments stay with that...

Let that scene dissolve in your mind. Now let's imagine that instead, on your 80th birthday, that you have lived a life where you did not act on what's important to you, that instead you were guided by avoiding feeling uncomfortable, trying very hard not to have unwanted feelings or doubts. From this honest perspective, now that you have lived a long life, what would do you **fear** has made up your life, if you did not act on your values?

Now let that scene dissolve, and come back to here and now. From these perspectives - imagining a life of purpose and a life ruled by your fear, what would your choices be now? What would you use to guide your choices and actions?
