

Opinion

— GUEST OPINION —

5 biggest regrets of dying people

By Susie Moore

Susie Moore is a life coach whose teachings span a global client base and are regularly featured in leading media outlets. Through in-person coaching, online classes and newsletters, she gives clients the tools they need to lead more fulfilling lives and careers.

Want to hear the strangest thing on earth?

Death is perhaps the most constructive fact of our existence. Being aware of death throughout your life can beget the healthiest attitude: One of perspective.

Countless people throughout history knew this, too.

The ancient Greeks used to “practice death every day,” and the Toltecs would use death as “fuel to live and to love.”

The constant reminder ensured they would live more boldly, more kindly, and with less fear.

The Good News About Death

Here’s how the morbid subject can actually benefit us: Our limited days on earth are the ultimate impetus to live with less fear and more intention.

The majority of the time, many of us live as if there will be no end to our days.

We stay in unfulfilling careers.

We remain in unhappy relationships.

We will travel the world “one day.”

We fail to tell people how much they matter to us.

We hide our real truth, gifts, or talents from the world because we are scared of being judged and criticized.

Losing a parent when I was young made this much more real for me. I felt blessed to come to the realization of how precarious and precious life is while still in my younger years.

But you don’t need a loss early in your life to take advantage of the wisdom that awaits you. Learn from people who know.

One of my favorite books is Bonnie Ware’s international best-seller “The Top Five Regrets of the Dying.”

Ware was a hospice nurse in Australia for several years and cared for patients in the last few weeks of their lives. She writes with incredible clarity how similar regrets surfaced again and again.

Surprise, surprise: There was no mention of insufficient status; undelivered revenge; or sadness over not being the thinnest, prettiest, or most famous.

These were the most common regrets. (Numbers one and five could make me weep.)

The 5 Biggest Regrets

1. I wish I’d had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

“This was the most common regret of all,” Ware writes. “When people realize that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honored even a

half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made.”

2. I wish I hadn’t worked so hard.

“All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence.”

3. I wish I’d had the courage to express my feelings.

“Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result.”

4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

“Often they would not truly realize the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks, and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved.”

5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

“This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realize until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called ‘comfort’ of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content.”

Get Clear on What You Want

Here’s an exercise I perform with my clients, which you can do at home to figure out what you want to do, have, and be during your precious days on planet earth.

Take an hour to be quiet with yourself, a time without distractions when you will not be interrupted.

Picture yourself in your elderly years. Attempt to see your life through the lens of your 80- or even 90-year-old self.

Start a conversation with this wiser, older version of you. Be blatantly honest. Ask yourself:

What do I really, really, really want?

Where am I holding back?

What will I congratulate myself for having the courage to do, right now?

What part of myself do I really need to honor and be true to (even if this goes against others’ expectations of me)?

What really makes me feel happy and alive?

How can I make my happiness and my truth my number one priority?

It’s up to you to get the highest possible return on every day of your limited life. You can eradicate these potential regrets, starting now.

Whenever you think upon these questions, keep that older version of yourself in mind constantly. And every day, with every small action you take in the direction of your personal truth and happiness, he or she will be there, encouraging you.

And he or she will be smiling.

— EDITORIAL —

Embracing change

As we watched the inauguration of President Donald J. Trump last Friday, we couldn’t help but think about the idea of change.

It has been said that nothing in life is ever constant—except change.

Whether it’s a change in the leadership of a nation, introduction of a new technology onto the market, or entering a new relationship, change, we think, is deliberately built into life to keep growth in motion. That growth could be spiritual, mental, physical or emotional.

If you look around at nature the way God built it, you’ll see the cycle through the seasons—a pattern of constant, irrepressible change that keeps life on the planet flowing. Every day has been designed to bring change, even if it’s just becoming one day older than we ever were before.

Whether change is unexpectedly thrust upon us or precisely planned, one’s ability to adapt to newness or even embrace it is a key factor to creating life successes. Resistance to evil is one thing, but resistance to healthy developments as life moves on is quite another. The latter creates delay, strife, anger, stagnation and a host of other negatives; it creates the pain of lost possibilities for improvement.

We suspect sometimes our brains equate change with danger, when that isn’t really the case.

The opportunity for change is, well—just an opportunity presenting itself.

Have you ever noticed that when something in your life is broken, some blessed chance for change usually presents itself if you’re paying attention?

To quote another American president with whom we usually agree on very little, Bill Clinton once said, “The price of doing the same old thing is far higher than the price of change.”

Einstein said the definition of insanity is to keep doing the same

thing again and again, knowing it doesn’t work. Life seems to us to have two big purposes: To learn lessons that grow your soul and to love. If your situation isn’t doing at least one of those two things, it fails to serve either you, your higher power, or anyone else. We’ll never understand clinging to anything that’s broken and stunted.

Winston Churchill once said, “A pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.”

We suppose reality really is how one perceives it sometimes. Trump’s inauguration was factually the same event for everyone—and yet it wasn’t. For protestors, you’d think it was the end of the world. For supporters, it looked like a new beginning.

For nations, change can move a society forward. Other change can also come into the picture to help correct whatever might have gone off course. Life is like that.

Change forces a new building of strength. Change creates excitement and innovation instead of boredom.

Here are some more change quotes we enjoyed:

“Change is hard at first, messy in the middle and gorgeous in the end.” —Robin Sharma.

“The secret to change is to focus all your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” —Socrates.

“May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.” —Nelson Mandela.

And a few anonymous ones:

“If you don’t have the courage to lose sight of the shore, you’ll never travel the ocean.”

“It’s okay to be scared. Being scared just means you’re about to do something very, very brave.”

Like most things, maybe the acceptance of change is all about faith. After all, fear and faith can’t occupy the same space.

Some changes are small. Some big. It’s a risk/reward world, and you get out of it what you put into it.

We wish you the courage to bloom with your life changes—and best of luck to you, Mr. President. We’re excited to see what further changes may come.

—The Baker County Press Editorial Board

Letter to the Editor Policy: The Baker County Press reserves the right not to publish letters containing factual falsehoods or incoherent narrative. Letters promoting or detracting from specific for-profit businesses will not be published. Word limit is 375 words per letter. Letters are limited to one every other week per author. Letters should be submitted to Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com.

Advertising and Opinion Page Disclaimer: Opinions submitted as Guest Opinions or Letters to

the Editor express the opinions of their authors, and have not been authored by and are not necessarily the opinions of The Baker County Press, any of our staff, management, independent contractors or affiliates. Advertisements placed by political groups, candidates, businesses, etc., are printed as a paid service, which does not constitute an endorsement of or fulfillment obligation by this newspaper for the products or services advertised.

— CONTACT US —

The Baker County Press

PO Box 567
Baker City, Ore. 97814

Open Monday-Thursday for calls
9 AM - 4 PM
Open 24/7 for emails

Phone: 541.519.0572

TheBakerCountyPress.com

Kerry McQuisten, Publisher
Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Wendee Morrissey, Advertising and Sales
Wendee@TheBakerCountyPress.com

David Conn, Advertising and Sales
David@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Published weekly every Friday.
Subscription rates per year are \$29.95 all areas, e-mail delivery. \$39.95 print issue, home delivery, Baker City city limits only. \$49.95 print issue, mail delivery, outside Baker City city limits only.
Payment in advance.

A division of
Black Lyon Publishing, LLC

Copyright © 2014 -2017

YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

President Donald Trump

202.456.1414

202.456.2461 fax

Whitehouse.gov/contact

US Sen. Jeff Merkley

503.326.3386

503.326.2900 fax

Merkley.Senate.gov

US Sen. Ron Wyden

541.962.7691

Wyden.Senate.gov

US Rep. Greg Walden

541.624.2400

541.624.2402 fax

Walden.House.gov

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown

503.378.3111

Governor.Oregon.gov

State Rep. Cliff Bentz

503.986.1460

State Sen. Ted Ferrioli

541.490.6528

Baker County Commissioners Bill Harvey; Mark Bennett; Bruce Nichols

541.523.8200

541.523.8201