

TED Talk

Lux Narayan: *What Do Obituaries Teach Us About Lives Well-Lived?*



End in Mind

1. A lot of data was discussed in this short TED Talk. What were some of the most thought-provoking pieces of data to you?
2. Lux Narayan's research found that 40% of the 2,000 obituaries his group analyzed had statements about contributions to music, art and theater, yet he contrasts this with the disciplines most parents push their children into, such as medicine, law, or engineering. How does this apply to your own life?
3. The other big statistic Narayan discusses is the average age of success. 37 years. Stating that it takes, on average, 37 years to have your big success, but then another 44 years on average before it is acknowledged in your obituary. Depending on your age, what has been or will be your big success? What will you or have you filled the remaining 44 years with?
4. Whether or not these obituaries were written about famous or non-famous people, the most striking word was "Help." These people did seemingly extraordinary things. Narayan challenges you to think about how you are using your talents to help society. What are you doing now, or what could you do in the near future to help society?
5. The final sentences of his TED Talk, Narayan discusses how if more people were trying to be famous in death, rather than in life, the world would be a much better place. What are some things you can start doing today, in the next week, or year that will make you more famous in death?