



TOPIC 5 LIFE STORY AND MEMORIES

A legacy is something transmitted by or inherited from your forebearers. A person's legacy is the total of their life's experiences, beliefs, values, and traditions. It is passed down from generation to generation. It is the good, the bad and everything in between that you leave behind.

The idea of leaving a legacy is rooted in the almost universal human desire to be remembered for what we contributed to the world, or at least for what we contributed to the lives of those closest to us.

Leaving a legacy can serve as an example for future generations, preserving memories and teaching valuable life lessons. It can also be a source of pride, motivation, and inspiration for others. It can help you in coming to terms with and find meaning in life. This might be especially helpful if it leads to make meaningful amends, resolve outstanding issues or reconciliation with important people in your life.

Ways in which life stories and memories can be collected.

- Keep a journal with you to write down memories whenever something comes to mind.
- Fill a box with memories and objects important to you, such as messages, photographs, and meaningful items.
- Record a video or voice messages so those important to you can watch or listen after you have died.
- Write letters to those close or important to you.
- Create a photo album: along with photos and documents, you can add longer explanations of people in photos, what they were doing and what they were like, or life lessons or thoughts.
- Attending meaning-directed life-review therapy sessions, where individuals undergo life review therapy work with counsellors who encourage them to look back on their lives and share stories of their pasts.
- Create a family tree, with photos and information about those in the tree that perhaps only you know. You could also do this via an online family research service such as Ancestry.com, Myheritage.com

Module 2:

Planning for death (medium and long-term)



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...at the end of life



Who to share life stories and memories with and how.

- Yourself: the stories we collect and about ourselves can help with to our own wellbeing. Being able to give meaning and maybe find conciliation in our life-story can improve our sense of agency and self-esteem.
- Family and friends: sharing life stories is a way to leave a legacy, but also to help them manage their grief. One of the best ways to cope with grief is to remember their life, the good times we had with them and their stories.
- Professionals: Many medical carers consider the whole person, from a physical, spiritual, and emotional standpoint. Having the opportunity to tell our story to professionals, for example through structured, narrative medicinal practices, might improve the quality of relationships and ultimately the care we can receive in our end-of-life.
- Archives and museums: many museums and archives have oral history projects, where they collect testimonies and memories of people from the community. Sharing your life-story in the framework of these projects can be satisfying for you but also helpful for historian and researchers that can get a more accurate picture of the past by augmenting the information provided by public records. These include oral histories, statistical data, photographs, maps, letters, diaries, etc.

How to use the flashcard

- This flashcard intends to stimulate thinking about the importance of leaving life memories and suggesting practical ways to do so.
- In the resource section there are examples of life stories and references to tools that can support this process.

Tips for trainers

- This flashcard can be used as a resource to start a workshop about life-stories, collect oral histories and memories, where participants can be guided into the process of writing (or recording) their life-story.



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