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Purpose Paper

When discussing the difference between a resume life and a eulogy life we reach a point of pointlessness. Although we are told to like a eulogy life, which directs focus to the deeper aspects of existence, such as the nature of one's strong connections, true passions, or how one views the world. In an overarching sense a eulogy is one's virtues and natures, and to live such a life one must focus on instincts and feeling to guide them. On the contrary, living a resume life is a measure of accomplishments, when one lives to add more on paper, lives to satisfy others, or has some internal need to “succeed” in the way that has been defined by our society. Although the idea of separate lifestyles gives an effective guide to people who wish to start living more genuinely, in a literal sense the distinction is pointless. Having a eulogy in itself is a step back into a resume lifestyle, it is the compounded summary of a person's accomplishments. When I die I wish for my eulogy to be left blank, when a eulogy is presented it clouds perceptions. I do not wish to limit myself to a single interpretation of who I was and how I lived. Everyone I know has a different picture of me in their minds, my perception is not how people perceive me, I believe that is one of the beautiful aspects of humanity, how everyone's perceptions are unique. Creating a eulogy only creates a more uniform outlook on people.

I see no spectacle in dying, the only experiences that matter are the ones that happen to me. Currently, I have no specific goal to grasp hold of, however in a more existential sense, Before I die I wish to feel as if I have lived, and not simply existed. Many people wander through their lives looking for a clear path to lead them to happiness, fulfillment, and purpose. But such paths only lead to what happiness and purpose are believed to be, so they end up trudging along, whilst not moving an inch, stuck in a cycle of existence as time races past. Life can be contradictory “In order to fulfill yourself, you have to forget yourself. In order to find yourself, you have to lose yourself.” (David Brooks) I find a similarity between Brooks's statements about the dichotomy of self and my personal outlook. Every aspect of human nature contradicts itself. But despite the differences, the natures within each of us find a way to work cohesively.

I try to remove opinions of other people's lives since my outlook on people should have no place in labeling others. My perception of others could be unfavorable to their perceptions, so I prefer to keep my thoughts private unless requested otherwise. There are people who I greatly value, despite my incomplete outlook on them. One of these people is my long-time Aerial teacher, surfing teacher, and friend. Although we are in very different stages of life I admire her actions and personality. A prominent feature that has always awed me was her ability to find beauty and incredible insight into nature. At times she seems to speak to and understand the environment surrounding her. She has an apparent understanding of what she cares about and what she doesn't, her capacity for empathy is immaculate. It is a quality I struggle with, but find it admirable and fascinating to witness in her.

Another person whose life I admire is my brother. My brother and I differ significantly, almost opposite images of each other. Despite our differences and my dislike at times, I admire his courage and passion. He was able to abandon any expectations or chosen path to follow his dream. I'm very envious that he has something clear he is passionate about and has the capacity for courage and determination to jump right in. I am a logical, rational person and I accept that quality, it will be ingrained in me no matter how hard I try to change. So when I see impressive impulsiveness in others, I admire the difference in mindset.

Although I often stick to a more logical perspective of life, I am not without creativity or passion. In the impulsive part of my mind, if I abandoned my path and lived on sheer instinct, I would love to be an aerialist, maybe try to join a circus or traveling show of some kind. In retrospect, I would need to dedicate more of my life to art to qualify for that type of career. Despite the fact, aerial dance has genuinely been one of the only things that has given me a sense of life. It gives me a chance to escape some of the realities of life and is at the top of my list of reasons to continue living. I often find myself falling into my mind more than most, so when asked what my reason to live is there would never be a clear answer. I don't believe that any person can have a single reason for existing. On a broader scope, I genuinely believe there is no reason for existence, that life is pliable, and that is what makes it precious. I dread a stagnant existence, where everyone has a confirmed “purpose” leading their actions. My reluctance to define reasons does not allude me to my ideas and biases. I know that I am a very individualistic person, I am selfish in the realm of thought, holding my thoughts in a higher value than others at times. I prefer to stay within my head since it is the only mind I can truly trust, and examine honestly. I believe I am an observant and self-aware person, so much so that I can become trapped in my head and ignore the scope of the world around me. While recognizing these qualities, I know that my individual view of my existence is tainted with subjectivity. As I move onto my next steps in life, wherever that may be I want to keep my existentialism, central in my decision-making.

Although I prefer to reject the conformity in singularity regarding the concept of purpose, I have an understanding of what path I am directed towards at this moment in my life. In a basic sense, I know what I like and what I don’t. If I were to ask most of my friends what I always talk about, they would come up with a blank. I have some preferred interests, but I prefer to move with conversation and incorporate ideas, opinions, and some personal anecdotes into previously generated topics. If money was not a concern in my life I would spend my time creating. I don't wish to limit the scope of possibility about the object of my creation but I have always enjoyed making things, whether it be dance performances, engineering and computing projects, or art and design. I also love to learn about humanity and the work around me. The human mind is so complex and individualistic that every single person essentially lives in a different world. It is fascinating to examine different individual experiences as well as the way they all work together to thrive or destroy. I have a bias for my mind, I know I am no genius but my thoughts are the only ones I can come close to trusting or understanding. I believe my self-awareness is one of my most advanced attributes. I am able to be observant and remove myself from my own where to see a deeper world, at times losing any scope of self. One of the few things that have always made me feel unique as an individual is aerial dance. It ties in with my desire to create, with both mind and body. My expression is typically contained internally but will be aerial, I have the freedom and desire to move out of my mind into the physical world.

I hold a pessimistic outlook towards the future of the world, there are a multitude of issues that currently seem unsolvable and make people feel hopeless. Despite my relative pessimism, I do believe that most of the environmental and other physical issues can be resolved with effort. But I fear the current nature of humanity is preventing that change from being possible. Before we can start fixing the obvious issues we need to address the invisible, mental ones held within our societies and basic human nature. We need collaboration to start change, and currently, our society is divided, and manipulated by those in power to fall into a us vs. them mentality. I don’t believe I have the qualities necessary to fix people, for I am selfish and individualistic; but I will do my best to create ideas and build new technology to combat physical issues such as climate change, mass poverty, and human trafficking until we find a way to mend our societal systems.

I think the idea of purpose is representative. It represents an individual's perspective of the world, unlike some words and ideas, but without a clear definition. Much like in the book *Life of Pi* where the story is decided literally or metaphorically by the reader's perception, the word purpose has a subjective undertone. So, when asked what my purpose is, I would give two answers, the first is that my purpose at this exact moment is to create, whether that be creating a path toward my future, creating ideas, or creating this sentence. The second purpose is to be left undecided, to leave room for change and flexibility in thought.

In the next portion of my life I will be attending college at RIT(Rochester Institute of Technology). I made this decision because I thought it would be the path to best lead me to the future I envision. It may not be the most logical economic decision, but I have decided to incorporate some infusion into my life. I will continue to explore education and creation the best way I can, by maximizing opportunities and keeping my mind open. I hope to change my mindset as I meet different people and learn new complexities about the world.

Citations

“David Brooks: Should you live for your résumé ... or your eulogy?.” YouTube, uploaded by TED, Apr 14, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlLWTeApqIM>.