

The Last Lecture Response - Courtney Phillips

I don't like thinking about death. Honestly, my psychiatrist advises against it. So, to watch a video of a perfectly healthy man give a lecture on his childhood dreams, knowing he died just months afterward, it was a hard watch. That man has been long gone for almost 2 decades now, and yet, folks are still watching that lecture. Surely, it's important.

What was interesting about the lecture, his *last* lecture, is that it didn't consist of anything revolutionary. It wasn't some fancy science or VR concept that he wanted to make sure the world heard, it was something that everyone already hears all the time. "Follow your dreams"-- nothing to call home about. And yet, people have been calling home about it for the last 2 decades! It baffles me about what makes this lecture stand out from any other deathbed sentiment about "what if's and "shoulda coulda woulda"s. But, this lecture wasn't about "what if's, it was about "I did"s.

How is it that a man was seemingly born with the mindset that most people only unlock on their deathbeds? Additionally, why is it that *that man* had that fate? Born in the sixties, he probably wasn't even 50 before he died, and yet, he had an hour and a half worth of accomplishments, experiences, and colleagues to talk about. What if he had lived? He would have doubled those values by now! Whatever universal patch came out in 2008, nerfed him HARD.

Following your dreams is a great sentiment but always easier said than done. The second half of his lecture had a heavy focus on the people around him, professionally. I think that's how a legacy is made. Impacting the *people* around you, giving them personal experiences to remember you with warmth in addition to the more neutral, cold, factual impacts on any field.