

Practical exercises: PD2

Post by "Don" of July 7, 2021 at 10:57 PM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

Quote

PD2: Death is nothing to us; for what has disintegrated lacks awareness, and what lacks awareness is nothing to us. (Peter Saint-Andre translation)

Exercise: visualize your death in detail: physical feelings, surroundings, smells, sounds, mental state, thoughts. Make it personal, not abstract.

Notes: Two ways of doing this are:

- to visualize dying well
- to visualize random ways in which you might die.

Either way, be aware of the feelings this stimulates in you as to how you should live your life and how you define pleasure for yourself in this context.

NB: Do NOT do this exercise if you are feeling any symptoms of depression.

Display More

If I may expand on [Godfrey](#) 's excellent idea and incorporate some of the "control" features I mentioned earlier:

Visualize your death in various scenarios, some quick and unexpected: a car accident, a fatal heart attack, etc. What would be your final thoughts? Could you make your last thought pleasurable? Would you be able to recollect your life with joy? Could you "leave life crying aloud in a glorious triumph-song that [you] have lived well."

One interesting Buddhist saying I remember is:

If you were to fall to your death from a great height, it would be a shame to not enjoy the view on the way down.

That strikes me as almost Epicurean in the sense of taking pleasure in each moment of life... Right up until the end.

Visualize your death in various scenarios, others long and debilitating. What could you recollect to bring joy? Are you creating pleasurable memories now to recollect in the future? This seems

to me to be the more difficult scenario. I sometimes have a hard time accepting PD4. Theoretically, yes. Practically? I reach for Tylenol when I have a headache! A chronic, painful condition? That's going to be hard... But maybe PD4 gives us a goal?