



***“If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?”***

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I have had several reminders recently about how fragile and impermanent our lives are, and how precious they are as well. From sitting with a patient as they lay in a hospital bed, just days before they passed away, to helping other patients who are dealing with a life-threatening illness, I find myself, once again, asking the question that Steve Jobs posed in a commencement speech to the 2005 Stanford graduating class. If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?

This question, and those reminders, helps me focus more clearly on what my priorities are, and helps me make choices more in alignment with those priorities. If every moment is both precious and fleeting, what is really important? Of course, the answer to this question will be different for each of us. However, from that place, I am much less likely to let fear dominate my choices, and much more likely to “follow my heart.”

Asking that question also helps me be more present in whatever it is that I am currently doing, whether it be sitting with a client or taking out the garbage. In that state of simply being present to what is before me, I can find meaning in even those seemingly small daily details that we all deal with in our lives. Therefore, I can truthfully answer “yes” to Steve Job’s question, even though I am washing the dishes or pulling weeds in the yard. I can also answer “no.” “No, I need to check in on my friend. The weeds can wait...”

I am both proud and humbled to be a part of our amazing group of marriage and family therapist who make up our organization. Above all, I am grateful. I’m grateful to be a part of a community of individuals who have dedicated their lives to better understanding the human condition, and who continually seek how best to help others in their desire to heal, change and grow. I find myself remembering, again, how important community is. Most all spiritual traditions emphasize the importance of meeting regularly with other aspirants, and in many respects, I consider our field of marriage and family therapy to be a sort of a spiritual calling. How else to describe a field where empathy, compassion and the building of trust are fundamental to the work we do? How else to describe a field where deep inquiry into the nature of “reality” (via our thoughts, beliefs, personal stories, emotional reactions, imagination, body awareness, relationships, etc.) is the everyday stuff of our work? Moreover, how else to describe a field where personal work toward our own physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual well-being is more the norm than the exception?

I am honored to be a part of this organization, and to help nurture the sharing of our ideas, inspiration and successes, as well as our (hopefully, occasionally) frustrations, uncertainties and failures.

May you each find the courage to continue to move toward that which most calls to you!