

# The Five Steps to Becoming More Values-Focused.

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**Step 1: Open Up to Limitless Visioning.** Limitless visioning is the context in which you identify your life purpose. It is an attitude of openness and faith that you can have what you want if you can simply envision it. Limitless visioning is grand and abstract and sets the stage for the next step, Active Imagination.

**Step 2: Practice Active Imagination.** Active imagination builds upon limitless visioning by making what you want more concrete. In active imagination you create a sensory rich image of what your life will be like when you are doing the right thing.

**Step 3: Write Your Own Creative Eulogy.** Creative Eulogy further enriches the image of your future life, by adding the element of how people will remember you when you are gone. When you write your own eulogy from the point of view of the people you leave behind after you die, you help to solidify both your limitless vision and your active, sensory rich image of the future.

**Step 4: Create a Personal Statement of Purpose.** Finally, you must boil down what you have discovered in these first three steps into a personal statement of purpose; a statement of what your life is going to be about from today forward. It will include the valence of your overall vision, the sensory rich images of your future life, and a taste of how you will be remembered after you die.

**Step 5: Determine Your Personal Goals.** Once you have written your personal statement of purpose, you can begin to work on identifying the major Personal Goals that are naturally implied by that purpose.

## ***Step 3. Write Your Own Creative Eulogy***

A eulogy is the speech given about a person at their funeral that tells what kind of life and impact the person had. Later, when you have completed your personal purpose statement, you can come back and review what you did hear to see if you would make any changes.

Average life expectancy in the U.S. is currently 74 years for men and 80 years for women ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_life\\_expectancy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_life_expectancy)). With advances in technology and biomedicine, it is likely that someone born in the middle of the 20th century will live into the middle of the 21st century. That's a span of 100 years, give or take. When you start recalling all that you have accomplished already in your life, you'll realize just how much more you are likely to accomplish before you die.

What would it look like if you lived a rich, full life? For the sake of this next exercise, let's imagine that you at age 76 (which is current average U.S. life expectancy, taking both men and women). Think about how you want to be remembered. What mark do you want to make on the world before you die? What do you want to contribute or what do you want to be known for in your life?

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## Exercise 16. Write Your Own Creative Eulogy

Here's an easy format to follow, adapted from [the Art of Manliness](http://artofmanliness.com/2009/06/20/30-days-to-a-better-man-day-21-write-your-eulogy/) [<http://artofmanliness.com/2009/06/20/30-days-to-a-better-man-day-21-write-your-eulogy/>]:

**1. Write an Outline.** It can be geographic (Where all did you live and travel?), chronological (What's outstanding about key periods of your life?), or descriptive (What characteristics will people remember about you as a person?).

- Where did you live?
- Who did you love?
- Where did you go to school? What happened there that's memorable?
- What were your hobbies and interests?
- What did you do for fun? For civic or social duty? For your church?
- How did you act?
- What qualities and characteristics were you best known for?
- Why did people admire you?
- What will people miss about you?
- What impact did you have on people?
- How did you help them?
- And so forth.

Here's a couple of examples from folks on the Web trying this exercise for themselves.

*Known to her family as "nosy Rosie", Rosetta was born near Cleveland, Ohio, but spent most of her life and career in Washington, DC. Early on, she developed a passion for helping people and spent the beginning of her career in the nonprofit field before starting her own business. Rosetta loved to see other people succeed and dedicated her time and energy to empowering others to reach their goals and dreams. She studied English and was able to use words to spread a message of leadership, empowerment, and love. Over the years, Rosetta was able to transform millions of lives with her books, speeches, programs, and philanthropy and won numerous awards recognizing her efforts. She will be missed for her positive, caring spirit and insatiable curiosity about the world. Her friends and family will always cherish her willingness to support them in their lives spiritually, emotionally, and financially. Rosetta loved traveling and enjoyed her experiences visiting every continent and tasting cuisines from across the globe. She was especially fond of dessert, bourbon, and handsome men and enjoyed them in excess. Eventually, she met the love of her life and she and her husband decided to settle down in Honolulu, Hawaii in a modest home near the beach. As part of her legacy, she has chosen to bequeath the bulk of her estate to a nonprofit organization serving women of color.*

[<http://happyblackwoman.com/reset-your-life-day-15-write-your-own-eulogy/>]

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*Carl Johnson was a true New Yorker. He was born in the city in 1978 and he never truly left. Although he traveled the world extensively, and lived at times in other places, he always came home to the Big Apple. He said the city was truly in his blood, and there was never any doubt about where he would retire. Carl grew up in the Bronx and showed his propensity for adventure early on when he snuck out of the house and rode the subway all over the city at the tender age of 8. Carl's parents were terrified; Carl was delighted.*

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*Carl went to school at NYU and studied journalism. He wanted to be another Bob Woodward or Carl Bernstein. He worked for several smaller papers, always burning the midnight oil, always hot on the trail of the next big story. He landed his dream job when he was hired by the New York Times to work in their Washington bureau. He loved politics. He loved getting to the bottom of the wheeling and dealing that went on behind the scenes. Most of all, he loved to uncover corruption. He was an idealist that believed that that one man could help change the government by exposing the dark things to the light. It was his work in this capacity that won him the Pulitzer Prize for his story on the bribery going on in the Department of Natural Resources.*

*While Carl loved his work, he loved his family more. He married Cindy, the love of his life in 2001. They were as close and in love as any couple I've ever met, two veritable peas in a pod. In reference to Cindy, he said to me several times, "I'm the luckiest guy in the world." Together he and Cindy had two beautiful children, Robert and Elizabeth. He adored those kids. No matter how busy things got at work, Carl was always there at his children's activities. Of all his life's great accomplishments, Carl was most proud of the splendid people his children turned out to be.*

*Although he settled down, Carl never gave up his adventurous spirit. The places he traveled are too numerous to list. He wanted to see every corner of the world and succeeded pretty well in doing so. He camped in Alaska, rode an elephant in Egypt, and canoed the Amazon. He had a long bucket list of things he wanted to accomplish, and he did all of them before he finally did kick the bucket.*

*I can unequivocally say that Carl was the best man I knew. He combined a carpe diem attitude with faithfulness to his family and an untarnished professionalism at work. Everything Carl did, he did with integrity. 20 years after I had loaned him 50 bucks, he came across an IOU for it, written on a post-it note and stuffed in a shoebox. I had long since forgotten about the loan, but Carl came to my house that very day to repay me. He was also loyal, almost to a fault. Whatever jam someone was in, no matter how busy Carl was, he would drop everything to come help them. He would give anyone the shirt off his back. Yet while his principles were rigid, he was no stiff. He was the only person to ever make soda come out of my nose. He could find humor in absolutely every situation.*

*I will miss so many things about Carl. I'll miss his mighty bear hugs. He was not a man ashamed of hugging. I'll miss the blueberry pancakes he made me whenever I came to visit. I'll miss his unflinching optimism. There was no such thing as a bad day for Carl, just challenges that had to be faced and overcome. I'll miss the great book recommendations he gave me; he always seemed to know just what I would love. I'll miss the site of him roaring up on his motorcycle, smiling his ever-boyish grin. Most of all I'll miss how full of life he was. Whenever I was with him, I somehow felt more alive. Now that's he's gone, I can't feel that firsthand anymore, and yet his legacy continues to spur me to seize the day.*

[\[http://artofmanliness.com/2009/06/20/30-days-to-a-better-man-day-21-write-your-eulogy/\]](http://artofmanliness.com/2009/06/20/30-days-to-a-better-man-day-21-write-your-eulogy/)

**2. Write your own eulogy.** Somewhere in length between the two examples. This is your life as you hope to have lived it. Jot down "memories" of yourself as you would hope people might remember or memorialize you.

**3. Ask and answer these questions.** How did you feel as you were writing your own eulogy? Were you contemplative? Hopeful?

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4. Make some notes in your learning journal.

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