

Death Wish versus Life Wishes

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Why should we start talking about making life wishes?

The idea for being overt and purposeful about this idea is because contemplating death is often silent, isolating, and disconcerting for the person who starts down that path. We talk about suicide prevention - so let's also look at what we can understand about what is life-affirming. The questions we have asked ourselves includes, "What if we can shift the discussion away from the edge, earlier?"

"Why stay alive? What good am I, really? What is the point of continuing this pain?" Notice these aren't questions...answers aren't expected. These are statements of someone trying to make up their mind, to be the judge and jury of a case they've brought against themselves. Unfortunately, only one side of the case is being heard and the trial is rigged.

With this awareness as a backdrop - the varied reasons to think about or respond to change - we can begin to discern how complex the forces are that cause anyone to turn away from a life wish and instead consider the opposite, a death wish. Though never expressed this way (no one walks into a conversation and says, "I now have a death wish,") there are real reasons and avenues people explore that change their view of their existence, causing them to begin to wonder about the value of maintaining it.

"...perhaps this dark night (of the soul) could be more accurately described as the meeting of two immense storm fronts, the squally vulnerable edge between what overwhelms human beings from the inside and what overpowers them from the outside." -David Whyte

The place of making a death wish is a lonely place. The place appears to have no doors out, no possibilities beyond the dark room the person is in - disconnected (even from choices still available). A person outside that darkened room is needed to reach in and reconnect - giving the darkness warmth, at first, and then a little light. Hopefully, the person lost in their unjust trial will not only see the light brought by a loved one but will shift back into creating their own again.

Questions to consider:

1. What is the first step I can take towards life wishing?
 - Ask yourself what you can value about today.
2. How do I pause when I am moving away from life-affirming thinking?
 - When thoughts of death or dying show up, tell your mind, "That's just some of thousands of thoughts I am capable of," and then think a different thought. Repeat.
4. What small life wish will help me care about something?