

I recently read a blog from a hospice nurse who was reflecting on the kinds of things she has learned from her patients. When questioned about any regrets they had or anything they would do differently, common themes surfaced again and again. Here are the most common five:

*1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.*

*2. I wish I didn't work so hard.*

*3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.*

*4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.*

*5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.*

So how does one live in a way to have few regrets? In short: priorities. And question everything...especially yourself.

The antidote for a life capped by regrets must be "taken" throughout life. It is too late if one

waits until we know the end is near. The preventive "medicine" is keeping a regular routine of reflection on what is important in life, why what matters, matters so much (in other words, checking your motives) and thinking about what would fulfill your purpose in life; God's highest and best for you.

Knowing what is at the top of one's priority list will help, but that is only the first step. The second question is "Does it have a right to be there?" If a person recognizes that whatever is at the top of their priority list AT THE MOMENT OF DECISION determines the choices they make, from the most mundane to the most important, they will more likely understand why they have made the choices they have made in life. Our choices always display our truest priorities. We may or may not be very proud of what we find when we take the time to look, but only when we know what is really there can we make sure that what is there is really what we WANT to be there; what we find most valuable, worthwhile and true.

Always questioning "Am I doing what I ought to be doing?" is part of the ongoing effort to order our days and our deeds in a way that when we get to the end of life we have no regrets. When you can answer, "Yes, this is the best use of my time/talent/resources." or "Yes, this is the best way to take care of my body/life/loved ones." and NOT assuming that your answer is right for always or that your body/life/loved ones would agree, then you are likely just enough of a skeptic to be on the right track.

I hope 2012 is off to a good start for you. And even more I hope that during this year, you will be will on your way to living a "no regrets" life.

Blessings to you,

Pastor Karla

The article that inspired this piece, and listed the top 5 regrets can be read on the following link:

<http://www.empowernetwork.com/Caroline/blog/nurse-reveals-the-top-5-regrets-people-make-on-their-deathbed/>