



A response to some criticisms of my end-of-life decision

[I am being 'selfish'](#)

For many weeks, I struggled with this criticism and long thought how I might respond to it. If you believe that I plan to commit suicide, then I would agree with you that that might be a selfish act and that I was perhaps acting out of desperation and a sense of hopelessness.

But this is not the case - I do not consider what I'm planning to do to be suicide. I am choosing to end-my-life because I believe I have completed many of life's actions that were important for me to have done.

I have no feelings of desperation that my life is so untenable that I wish to end it. I am not depressed - well, at least according to me I'm not - I am not under any duress or fear which leads me to my position.

I have spent all my life considering the lives of others so how can I be 'selfish'? Selfishness often covers concerns of one's own personal profit or pleasure. I have done the exact opposite. I have taken my tiny savings and shared all of it amongst family members, their children and my friends. No-one could call this a selfish act.

In 2023, I travelled the globe to visit as many people as I could to begin to say goodbye. I know this may not be comfortable to some and I'll say it again - if when I contact you to arrange a visit you feel you cannot do this, I will understand. Some friends have already asked me to engage with them according to their wishes and I will everything I can to accommodate their wishes. Again, I do not believe this is selfish.

In 2024, I will travel again to the UK, Europe and South Africa for my final farewells.


[I am too 'young'](#)

People die at all ages - what is different here is 'choice' - and if you believe that your life is 'complete', you should be able to exercise that choice. It may be difficult to accept that a life at twenty or thirty years old being claimed as 'complete' - one has to have lived, worked, loved, lost - over a significant number of years before you can claim this premise.

I am almost 70. I have written of my life and shared it with the world. On reading it, and reflecting on all I have done (and to be honest, the book is really just a microcosm of my actual life) - might you not agree that it is complete?

100 years ago, average life span was around 50 years old which meant that 70 was a good age. Medical research and technology have significantly increased our life expectancy over the last century.

Relatively speaking, I am 'young' and may live naturally for many more years. But there is a reality that I will become dependent, frail and even



terminally ill. I have made what regard as being a 'brave' decision to not lose the dignity with which I have lived my life. When I was very young, I saw a stage production of Zorba (and later the very famous movie) and was struck by a line from one of the songs:

'life is what you do, while you're waiting to die' - listen to it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMRb9Elttns>

I do not wish to wait until I die, I'm choosing to go with my health, faculties and dignity still all intact. I think that's a good way. In fact, I plan to donate my organs for transplant opportunities – this is not selfish and my 'younger' organs may prove more beneficial.

[You still have so much to give to the world.](#)

This sounds like I haven't given enough - trust me, I believe I have. If I turn this argument around and look at it from your perspective, it sounds like you need even more from me - which in a way is perhaps a little selfish, my having given all that I believe I have been able to give.

I once read a story which I am including below about - 'enough'.

Recently I overheard a father and daughter in their last moments together at the airport. They had announced the departure.

Standing near the security gate, they hugged and the father said, 'I love you, and I wish you enough.'

They kissed and the daughter left. The father walked over to the window where I was seated. I tried not to intrude on his privacy, but I could not refrain from asking:

'When you were saying good-bye, I heard you say, 'I wish you enough.' May I ask what that means?'

He began to smile. 'That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone.'

He paused a moment and looked up as if trying to remember it in detail, and he smiled even more.

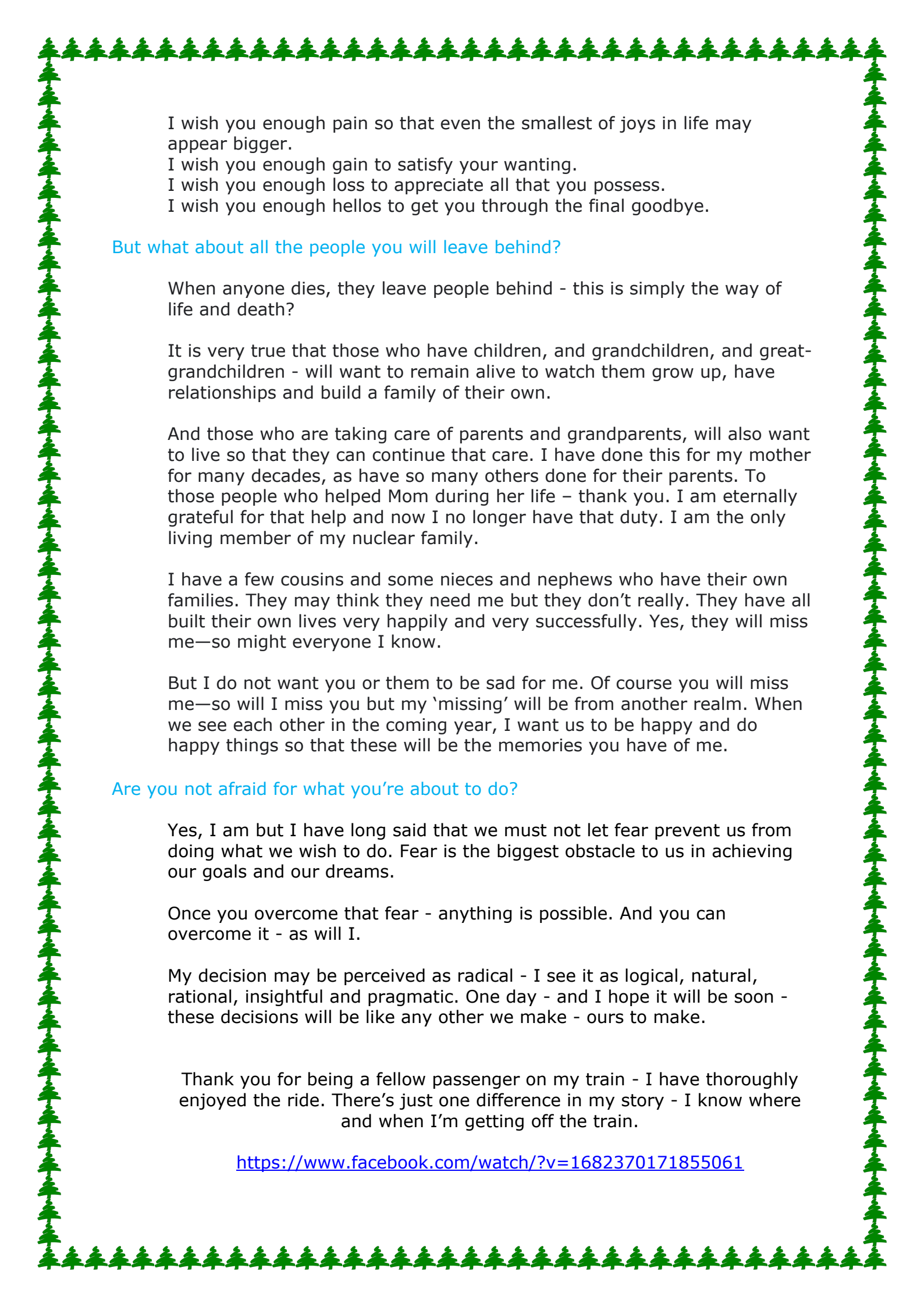
'When we said, 'I wish you enough,' we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them.'

Then turning toward me, he shared the following.

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how grey the day may appear.

I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun even more.

I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive and everlasting.



I wish you enough pain so that even the smallest of joys in life may appear bigger.
I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.
I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.
I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final goodbye.

But what about all the people you will leave behind?

When anyone dies, they leave people behind - this is simply the way of life and death?

It is very true that those who have children, and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren - will want to remain alive to watch them grow up, have relationships and build a family of their own.

And those who are taking care of parents and grandparents, will also want to live so that they can continue that care. I have done this for my mother for many decades, as have so many others done for their parents. To those people who helped Mom during her life - thank you. I am eternally grateful for that help and now I no longer have that duty. I am the only living member of my nuclear family.

I have a few cousins and some nieces and nephews who have their own families. They may think they need me but they don't really. They have all built their own lives very happily and very successfully. Yes, they will miss me—so might everyone I know.

But I do not want you or them to be sad for me. Of course you will miss me—so will I miss you but my 'missing' will be from another realm. When we see each other in the coming year, I want us to be happy and do happy things so that these will be the memories you have of me.

Are you not afraid for what you're about to do?

Yes, I am but I have long said that we must not let fear prevent us from doing what we wish to do. Fear is the biggest obstacle to us in achieving our goals and our dreams.

Once you overcome that fear - anything is possible. And you can overcome it - as will I.

My decision may be perceived as radical - I see it as logical, natural, rational, insightful and pragmatic. One day - and I hope it will be soon - these decisions will be like any other we make - ours to make.

Thank you for being a fellow passenger on my train - I have thoroughly enjoyed the ride. There's just one difference in my story - I know where and when I'm getting off the train.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1682370171855061>