

C O D A

Does anyone know what to do when I die? Are my family and loved ones going to be ok without me? Does anyone know what matters to me? Will my life mean anything after I'm gone?

These are the questions we inevitably ask when we think about our life and death. They're unpleasant, and usually they only come up when they're forced out of the dark and we need to address them.

But it doesn't have to be that way.

You are going to die. We can say that for certain without even knowing you. Everything else, though, is completely personal and unique. **Coda is a tool to apply to all your life planning** – from wills and estate planning to running a business, maintaining relationships, raising children, and simply staying true to your values.

This document is a starting point. It is a prompt to get you to start thinking about and answering big questions in a different way. You will die whether you do this work or not – but if you choose to engage with these questions, you give yourself the opportunity to discover how you can live in a way that both honors your life while you are living it and leaves something of value for the lives that will continue.

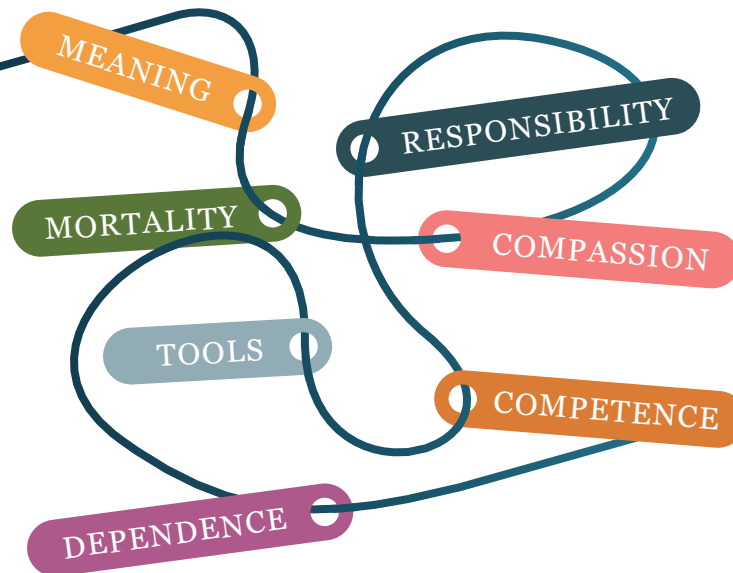
The opportunity awaits and the choice is yours. Will you let death become part of your life and really dig in and explore what you can make of it? Or will you pretend that death doesn't exist and just leave the big questions for other people to answer?

THE CODA KEYS

Creating a better ending starts by **accepting that the ending will happen.**

Coda is a process for living your life consciously and in harmony with the biological reality of your death.

That process is built on **seven fundamental keys:**



These keys are the building blocks of Coda, and each is connected to all of the others. The keys provide an area of focus for you to examine your life. Some things you do, like creating a will, touch on many keys at once, while others are more focused on one key in particular. All the key are connected, though, because they all touch on fundamental aspects of our living and our dying.

The following **prompts** are meant to offer an introduction to the Coda Keys.

Each question should invite deep thought – whether you have an immediate answer or not. If they make you uncomfortable, *that's probably good*, because it means you have discovered an area where you would benefit from further reflection and exploration.

Coda is a framework for you to live these big questions and to see and feel what it is like to live out the answers in your planning and, beyond that, in all of your life's activities.

Welcome to Coda.

CODA PROMPTS

DEPENDENCE

"The experience of becoming increasingly reliant on others to complete tasks that were once simple or effortless."

What steps do you take to promote your wellbeing as you age?

COMPASSION

*"Extending yourself in compassion to another human being changes the nature of your relationship - the acknowledgment of one human being to another is what bonds, strengthens, and expands the human connection."
~ Oprah Winfrey.*

How do you think your ageing and death will be experienced by others?

MORTALITY

*"...we deliberately turn to face death so that it can bring wisdom, perspective, and a motivation to live each day fully and well."
~ Jack Kornfield*

What is your relationship to death?

MEANING

*"When we have the courage to walk into our story and own it, we get to write the ending."
~ Brené Brown*

What does your life mean to you, and how do you preserve that idea for others to understand when you're gone?

COMPETENCE

*"Instant success is never possible. Competence results only from sustained, consistent, self-disciplined effort over an extended period of time."
~ Bud Wilkinson*

How do you prepare others to perform their roles with skill and confidence?

TOOLS

*"It's not the tools that you have faith in - tools are just tools. They work, or they don't work."
~ Steve Jobs*

What tools are you creating that do the work of communicating your values and plans to yourself and others?

RESPONSIBILITY

*"The concept of (self-) responsibility means the accountability of an individual...for actions that have already been performed...."
~ Robert Maier*

How do your actions demonstrate accountability to those who will live with your ageing and death?

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FURTHER PROMPTS

COMPASSION

- How are you communicating your plans for your ageing and death to your loved ones?
- What are you doing to better understand how your loved ones feel about your ageing and death?
- What are you doing to communicate about the way you would like your death to be recognized?

DEPENDENCE

- How will caregivers know your wishes and preferences if you can't tell them?
- How will others know what is important to you when it comes to end-of-life care decisions?
- How much do your loved ones know about their role in your future care?

MORTALITY

- How do you feel about your death?
- What does it mean to you to accept death?
- What would change in your life if you lived with a greater acceptance of your death?

COMPETENCE

- What are you doing to prepare your executor?
- What is the best way to prepare someone for being your executor?
- What do your Powers of Attorney know about you and your life?

RESPONSIBILITY

- How can you make it easier for people to sort through your personal belongings?
- What are you doing to explain and document your planning decisions to those who are affected by them?
- How are you communicating about your short, medium and long-term financial plans?

MEANING

- What do you do to preserve your values and stories for others?
- What is the money for?
- How will those who continue know what mattered to you?

TOOLS

- What do you do to keep your plans and records up to date?
- What tools are you using to prepare for your death and ageing?
- How are your planning tools being updated to reflect your ever changing life?