

Listen to Life

Wisdom in Life's Stories

November 25, 2007

A free newsletter about learning and getting more from life by paying attention to our own stories and the stories of others, based on the presentations, writings, photography and workshops by Dion McInnis (www.dionmcinnis.com). Copyright 2007 Dion McInnis. All rights reserved.

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TREASURE CHEST

If you knew that your children and spouse were going to access your things after you die, what in particular would you want to leave so they better understood who you really were and what your life was about? They will have their memories, photo albums and such, but what would YOU choose to leave behind for them?

Those questions were particularly poignant for me as I (finally) made serious headway this rainy weekend in (re)organizing years and years of files, clips, letters, writings and more. Aside from the work that I produced--speeches, photographs, poems and prose--there were news clippings, personality tests, supervisors' job evaluations of me, and boxes more. One way or another, each of the final selections contributed in some way to conveying my life and times. I thought, "would I like to have something like this of my mom's or dad's?" If the answer was yes, I kept the item in question. I threw away a few bags' worth of stuff. That led to new questions about how to organize the remaining files. There is the business perspective for some items that I believe are pretty unimportant. How to organize the things that can live long beyond me is another matter. And that led to another revelation.

Everything we create is temporary, no matter what. A lightning strike could take out electrical files, a storm surge could take out most everything, or a nuclear explosion (heaven forbid) would make everything moot. Though I will continue to compile and organize things in ways that I and those who follow me can access them--like writings and drawings created by my sons at various ages--I will also remember that the greatest treasure chest is my own. Beneath that chest is a heart that pounds, that lives and that loves those for whom I want the files to survive. Being fully alive and loving is the only legacy that really matters.

Listen to Life is an electronic newsletter that presents lessons for living by listening to life, based on the writing, poetry, photography, presentations and workshops of Dion McInnis. Stories such as these inspired the book, "Listen to Life: Wisdom in Life's Stories," published in 2005, available at Barnes and Noble, Amazon and Borders. Dion's next book will share his views of being father and son.

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