

'Is it rational to fear death?'

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Of course it is, the feeling of fear comes from many reasons. The pain before death in the horrible car accident in the street, also a lot of blood from the movies or television that we associate with our feeling of pain when we cut ourselves accidentally. The sadness of the loss of our relative or best friend can make us memorize and strongly associate it with 'death'.

That's the general idea of death fear that I had before studying philosophy. It's also true and I agree with the idea of fear of identity loss. I fear the fact that I, Worapol, will disappear from this world. I will be meaningless and the world will forget me. Actually the idea of meaninglessness is the most powerful for me. It's the reason why we need our children to continue our will or our name. My children will perpetuate my personality and continue my work. If I have my own company I will need my child to continue what I started and take care of everything, as the Ancient Greeks always considered to be a kind of 'Immortality'.

I used to doubt when I was still young when I saw some building named after some person who was very important, or some times the person who donated a lot of money to build it. Or the holidays named after some very important person in the nation. But I was able to understand when I grew up that it can make their name or last name still alive after their death. And I think that fact can make them feel satisfied or better before they die. It helps to eliminate the feeling that they will be forgotten or meaningless. Will our identity be destroyed? Yes, that sounds true as well as wanting to continue to exist. I think it's the feeling of losing all the very good things that I already experienced in my life. I can experience when a glass is broken. It has disappeared from my world. It's in the bin. It has been abandoned and forgotten.

The feeling of being parted from my wife, from my family, from my relatives, from my work, everything that I always enjoy. That is a really strong feeling. Anyway one issue that comes to my mind is the similar feelings when we have to change. Every time when I have to change from what I used to do, it's always difficult, our body needs more energy to handle the process of change. If I always read 50 pages of a book every day for five years, then suddenly today I read 100 pages my body will suffer the effects, maybe I feel some sick or I can't sleep until one o'clock, and that will effect everything in next day, because of the 'change'. If I exercise every day for one hour for year, and I increase it little by little just five minute more at a time, in that way the effect will almost nothing.

'Death' is something we never get used to. It's suddenly more than one hundred percent change. It's change from everything to nothing, and that strongly effects my feeling I think. For my Buddhist religion I have been told about the immortal soul, our soul still exists after we die. It's called the 'circle of suffering'. Our soul will go to a new body when we are reborn, to new creature, whether animal or man depends on

what you did in your previous life. In that way of thinking, maybe it can help to reduce that fear of identity loss because we will still hope that our identity still exists and transfers to a new life. But it doesn't help the feeling of being parted from our current joys of life, the fear of been forgotten by the world. I think everybody has their own soul that can't be cloned in the way a physical body can. Even the cloned body must have their own soul and their own identity.

The life before die we is affected by the age of our physical body. Many suffer from bad illness. We also see the sign of death when we see very old people. My grandfather turned 90 this year and he often visits the doctor because he has many problems with his heart. I can feel his suffering, he does not look as happy as he looked when I was young. My grandfather was always the most active working guy that I ever known. He was always a good model for everybody. But now he's turned 90 and unhealthy. I can't feel the energy from him anymore. He is losing his role in the family. He used to be the final decision for everything in family. But now he can't, that's made me feel my relation to his death that will coming soon. The suffering from illness, the loss of status in the family has all made me feel fearful of death. Of course, we all still respect him from what he did in the past, we will all still have good memories if he passes away. But that has not made me feel any better about 'death', not even my Buddhist 'circle of suffering' can help much to reduce it.