



THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

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“This could be your last shift so be ready.”

When I was on the job that was my mental mantra beginning each shift at my locker after putting on the gear for my days as a cop. The inverse of that was also true, knowing that I had the responsibility of holding other lives in the balance as well with a General Mattis quote “Be polite. Be professional. But have a plan



to kill everyone you meet.” While that may offend the senses of some, it isn’t meant to be intentional with violence, but simply to be intentionally CAPABLE of it when necessary and for the right reasons.

The stoic philosophers used the latin phrase “Memento Mori” (you can die at any time) not to be depressing but to invigorate life, and to create priority and meaning. They treated each day as a gift, and reminded themselves constantly to not waste any time in the day on the trivial and vain.

Reflecting recently on how much time we waste on trivial things that bring entertainment and comfort but produce nothing of value in my life, this phrase has taken on a new influence to me all over again. When my job had a more palpable ‘life and death’ feel to it I found it easier to keep this mindset, but now I recognize that without being forced into a hard job I have to push myself to do hard, uncomfortable things, that can create this awareness in me in new ways.

If you knew that you would die one day from now, or 7, 30, or even 100 days from now how would you respond? What physical activity would you go do and enjoy? What would you say to those you have key relationships

with? How would you arrange your finances and business for those you leave behind? Have you addressed the fears of the unknown of what awaits after death?

We live our lives as though death may not come to us but my friends, it will knock on all our doors. It might just be that in order to truly live, we must remember that we will all die.

*Mike the Cop is a public icon for America's law enforcement who served with the Detroit Police Department for 11 years. He continues to serve America's law enforcement by creating public awareness around police and closing the gap between the police and communities they serve. Mike is a friend and supporter of The Blue Family Tree.

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