

Looking Forward

— a private memorandum

Hello, and this is summer 2025, and I am due to be 90 next year ... and I'd rather like, before I die, to ...

... leave most of my garden tidy, but flourishing and variegated and wayward in its many shapes, shadows and shades, its gravel, stone and pots ...

... audaciously leave behind a good-enough though unfinished website recalling my working life and times, a labour of love, a counter-narrative to various isms, not *too* hypocritical or ego-driven (I hope) ...

... keep secret various follies, failures and fractures over the last 88 years but not by denying or disowning them to myself ...

... depart still unworriedly assuming there is no afterlife awaiting me, or indeed anyone, the other side of the grave, except as a metaphor or placeholder in personal or collective memories ...

... still be a reasonably faithful churchgoer even though in relation to Christianity in general and the Church of England in particular increasingly critical, disappointed, exasperated and alarmed much of the time ...

... go gentle, grateful and teachable into the final dark night with acceptance and consent, and aware of increasing dependence on others, strangers as well as beloveds ...

... and a sense of still growing, as is (I feel) the whole wide unfinished web and dance of life in which I am a tiny, tiny fragment, towards but not ever reaching some sort of completion.

Sometimes, for example at this very moment in an early summer evening in suburban England, I feel these hopes may by and large be realised.

But sometimes I don't feel this at all, and that is why I have signed up for an e-course entitled *Conscious Ageing*, starting today and to which I am contributing this statement of intentions and introduction, as has been invited by the course organisers.

And why, having begun to familiarise myself with the course's proposed content, I am looking forward to it.

Source

Written on the evening of Monday 2 June 2025, and published on the website of Spirituality and Practice, California. The e-course in question had been designed and was to be guided by Cynthia Bourgeault.