

Work-Life Balance & Life 2.0

Tennessee City Management Association
October 25, 2023

Jeff Fleming, Kingsport

The Washington Post

DYING EARLY AMERICA'S LIFE EXPECTANCY CRISIS

STRESS IS WEATHERING OUR BODIES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

October 17, 2023

...time and again when asked why Americans live shorter lives than peers in other nations with similar resources, especially people felled by chronic diseases in the prime of life: **stress**.

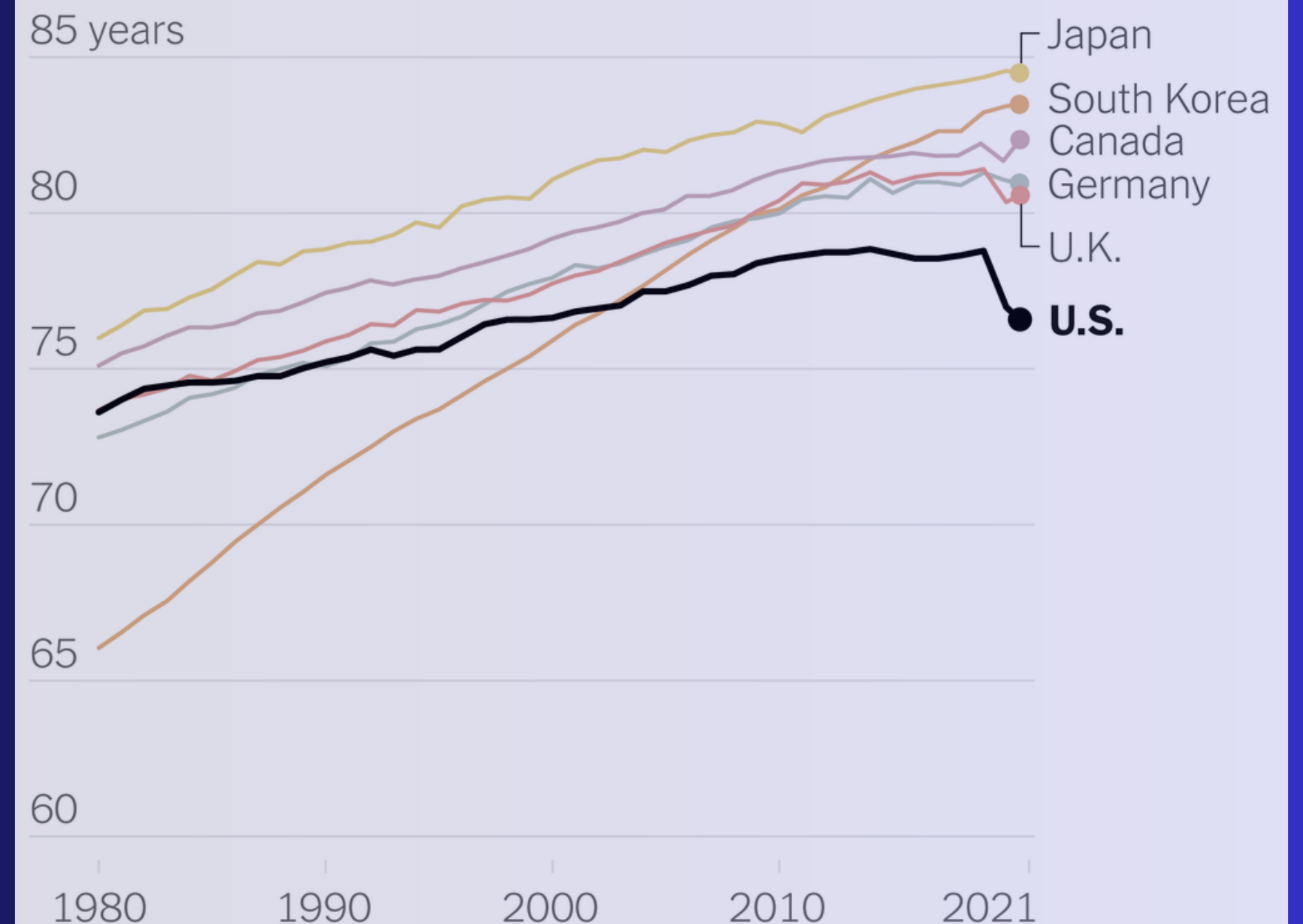
The New York Times

October 24, 2023

In 1980, the U.S. had a typical life expectancy for an affluent country.

Today, we have a lower life expectancy than Britain, France, Germany, Canada, Japan or South Korea, as well as some less rich countries, like China or Chile.

Life expectancy in select high-income countries





What is your 'higher moral purpose'?

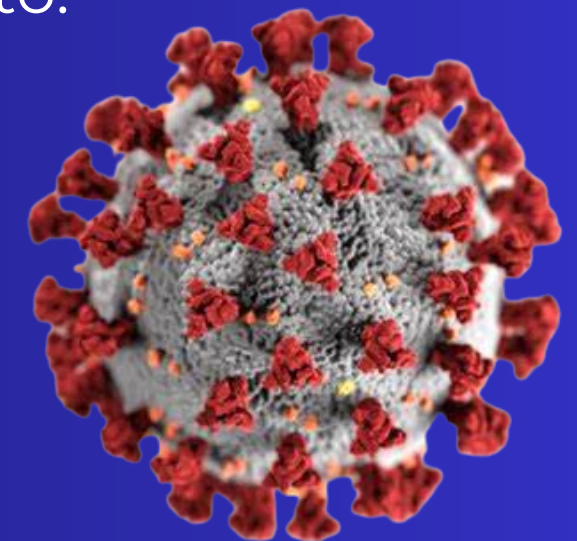
What is your 'why'?

My first experience in understanding my purpose and work-life balance came when my kids were small. Like several of you, I had the opportunity to participate in Senior Executive Institute, a 2-week immersive course in self-discovery. It was life-altering. At first I resisted going, thinking I couldn't spare 2 weeks away completely isolated without technology. The recent pandemic isolation was the closest comparison. Time for introspection and deep thought.

IKIGAI



During the pandemic, I discovered the Okinawan concept of IKIGAI and shared it on LinkedIn. Victor Lay, City Manager of Nolensville --who I first met at University of Virginia-- contacted me and suggested a presentation to city managers. He remarked, "It's a message we don't talk about and we need to."

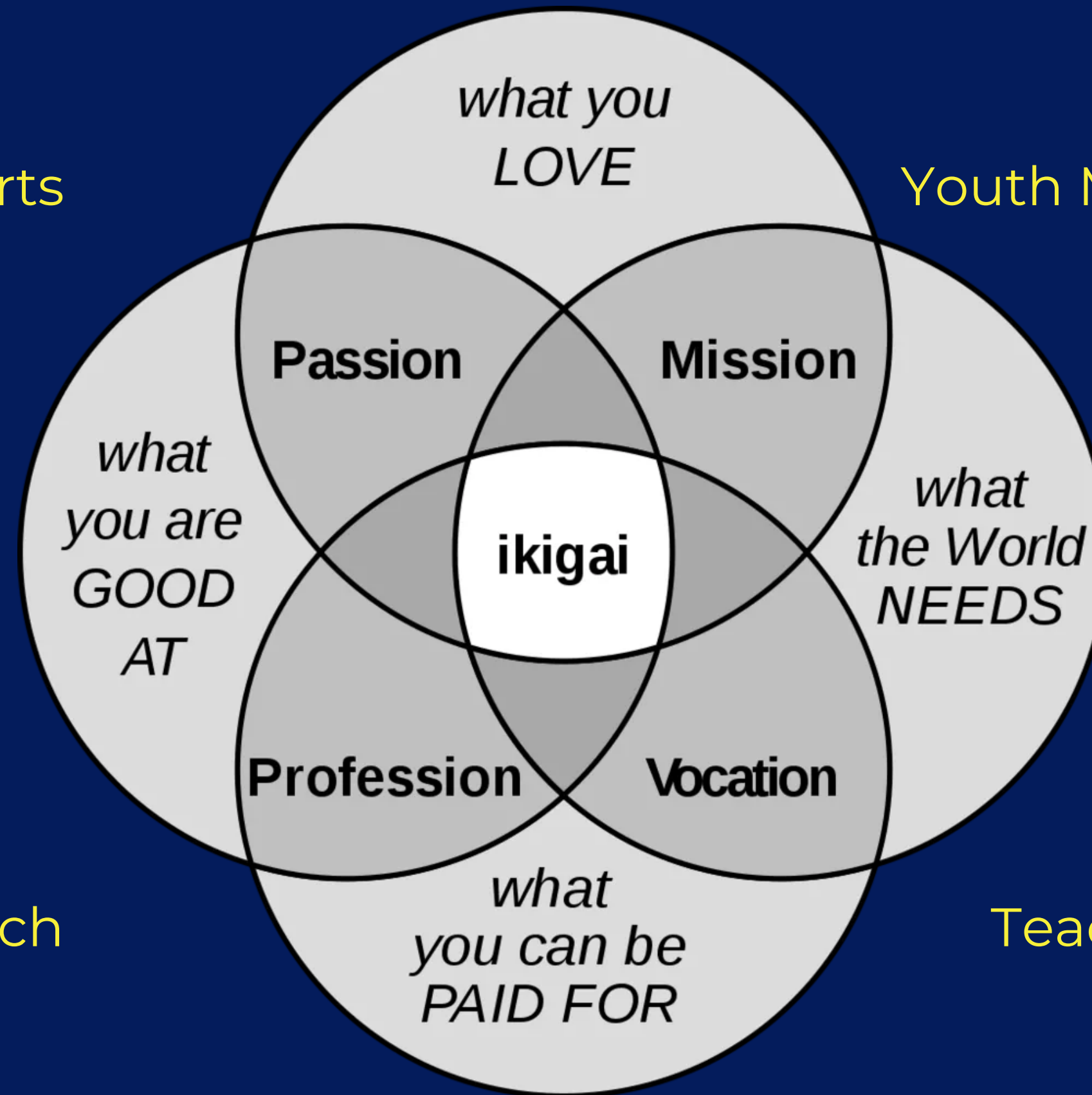


Sports

Youth Minister

Coach

Teacher



When you are working in balance, you're more content and purpose-filled. You are eager to get up in the morning. What are you willing to get paid less to do because you love doing it? Here's an example. This happens to be my son. Help others find their IKIGAI, too!

Communications
Budget & Finance
Economic Development
Engineering

Strong Communities
Good Government

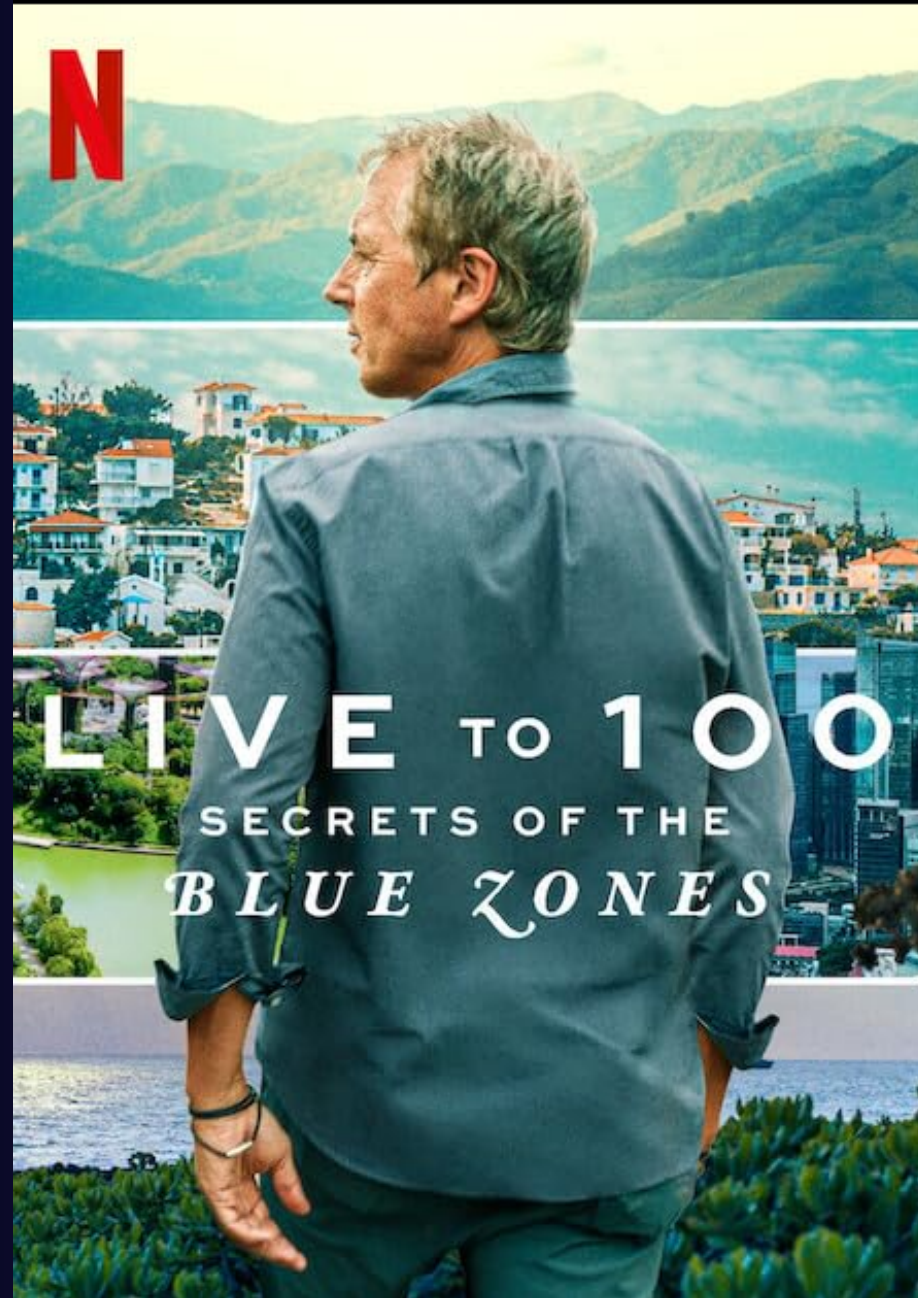
If you're out of balance, you might be making more money, but you're unhappy. For example, you might be a great communicator, but if you make twice as much communicating a message you don't believe in, you won't be happy and content. You have to cover all four overlapping quadrants.

City Management
County Management
Public Works

Public Administration



Remember to take care of yourself.



The secrets of blue zones are:

1. **Ikigai** ←
2. Control stress
3. Volunteer
4. Faith
5. Slow down (don't sit idly)
6. Care for elders
7. Right tribe (Moai)
8. Relationship with partner
9. Locally sourced foods, vegetables, honey, & wine

There's that word again. Excellent documentary on the importance of balancing all aspects of your life.



Americans once experienced many of these concepts until the industrial revolution and WWII. They couldn't wait to get off the farm, make more money, and build wealth. They worked relentless hours to provide opportunities for their kids. This is my family in the 1930s. My grandmothers lived to be 102 and 104. My dad (right) and his siblings lived into their 80s and 90s.



This is my brother and I. A picture is worth a thousand words. Apparently Easter egg hunting is a competition sport. Ha!

We were raised by the WWII generation. Dad pushed us hard. He wanted a better life and more opportunities than he had. He didn't want us to experience the hard times he grew up in. We were to be first in the office and last to leave.

All he ever wanted was what was best for his family.

KUB names next general manager

Larry A. Fleming, superintendent of water and wastewater for the Knoxville Utilities Board since 1985, has been named KUB general manager, board members announced Thursday.

Fleming will replace current General Manager E.C. Hoskins upon Hoskins' retirement in December.

Fleming was elected to the post at the regular meeting of the KUB board Thursday.

Fleming, 43, is a native of Kingsport. He worked for KUB during 1969-1974, when he left to work for the Tennessee-Virginia Energy Corp., a natural gas company serving Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. Fleming was vice president of operations, served on the board of directors, and held other man-

agerial positions there until he left in 1983.

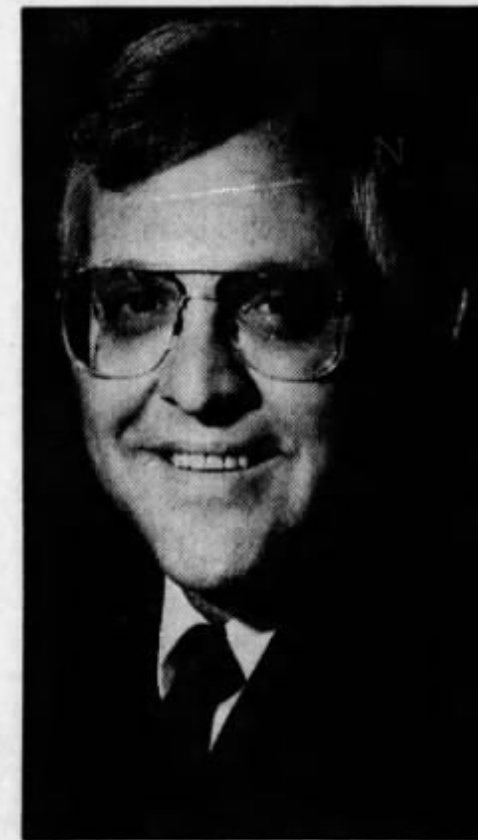
He then worked with a Nashville utility rate consulting firm, Wilson, Work, Fosssett & Greer, until he returned to KUB in 1985.

He is a graduate of the University of Tennessee, with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

Fleming and his wife, Linda, have three daughters and one granddaughter.

He is a member of Dixie Lee Baptist Church, several professional associations, the Knoxville Rotary Club, and a member of the Boy Scouts of America and American Red Cross boards of directors.

He is also a member of the 1993 Leadership Knoxville class.



Larry Fleming

My brother got a degree in engineering. He was the first college graduate in our family.

He worked long, hard hours, 'burned the midnight oil', smoked, and ate whatever fast food was quick and convenient because he had to get back to work.

He was rewarded with promotions. It changed the financial trajectory for his wife and three daughters.

Some days, he didn't see his girls but for a few minutes in the early morning or late evening. And when he did, he was exhausted.

They lived in the nicest homes anyone in our family had ever known.

We were so proud of him.

Fleming, KUB president, CEO dies at 54

Utility chief remembered for work with children

BY REBECCA FERRAR
ferrar@knews.com

Larry Fleming, Knoxville Utilities Board president and CEO, died Thursday morning at St. Mary's Medical Center following a seven-month battle with cancer, KUB officials said.



Fleming

Fleming 54, had been diagnosed in April with cancer of the esophagus and had undergone chemotherapy treatment. Associates of Fleming said he will be missed, not only for his leadership at KUB, but for his work

with children and community projects.

"Everyone at KUB is saddened by this loss, but we will draw strength from the example he set for us through his leadership, his vision and his boundless optimism, especially during these last months," said Gloria Ray, chairwoman of the KUB board, in a statement.

Fleming served as KUB president and CEO from 1993 until his death, and during his tenure

he placed an emphasis on economic development and organizations that benefit children and the community, including the United Way and the Boy Scouts.

"Larry Fleming was a true gentleman and dedicated to helping the area improve," said Knox County Mayor Mike Ragsdale. "Knox County has lost a real jewel, and I have lost a close

See **FLEMING** on A21

In other business, the board voted unanimously to name its Jackson Avenue facility the Larry A. Fleming Operations Center, and to name its board meeting room the Larry A. Fleming Board Room.

Fleming was president and CEO of KUB from 1993 until his death last year.

He was diagnosed with cancer at Easter and passed just after Thanksgiving.

He collapsed giving a budget presentation and never woke up.

Phillip Fulmer came through the receiving line. He was eulogized on local TV stations by future governor Bill Haslam.

In other business, they named the board room and operations center after him. It was an appreciated gesture, but it didn't bring him back.

I sat consoling one of his girls and she said, "I knew he was busy, but I always had a though we'd have a chance to make-up for it after he retired."

Our family was broken-hearted.

My brother's death changed me profoundly.

He was 12 years older than me. In many ways, he was like a second father. He knew how things worked. He was our go-to guy for advice. We always planned to take care of Mom and Dad as a team, but now he was gone. My parents didn't want to live without him, but they didn't want to leave the rest of us either. Our lives were forever altered.

Our family gatherings were painful. This year marks 20 years--and they've never been the same. He missed getting to see his girls succeed--and they did! He missed getting to spend time with his grandchildren and the birth of his great grandchildren.

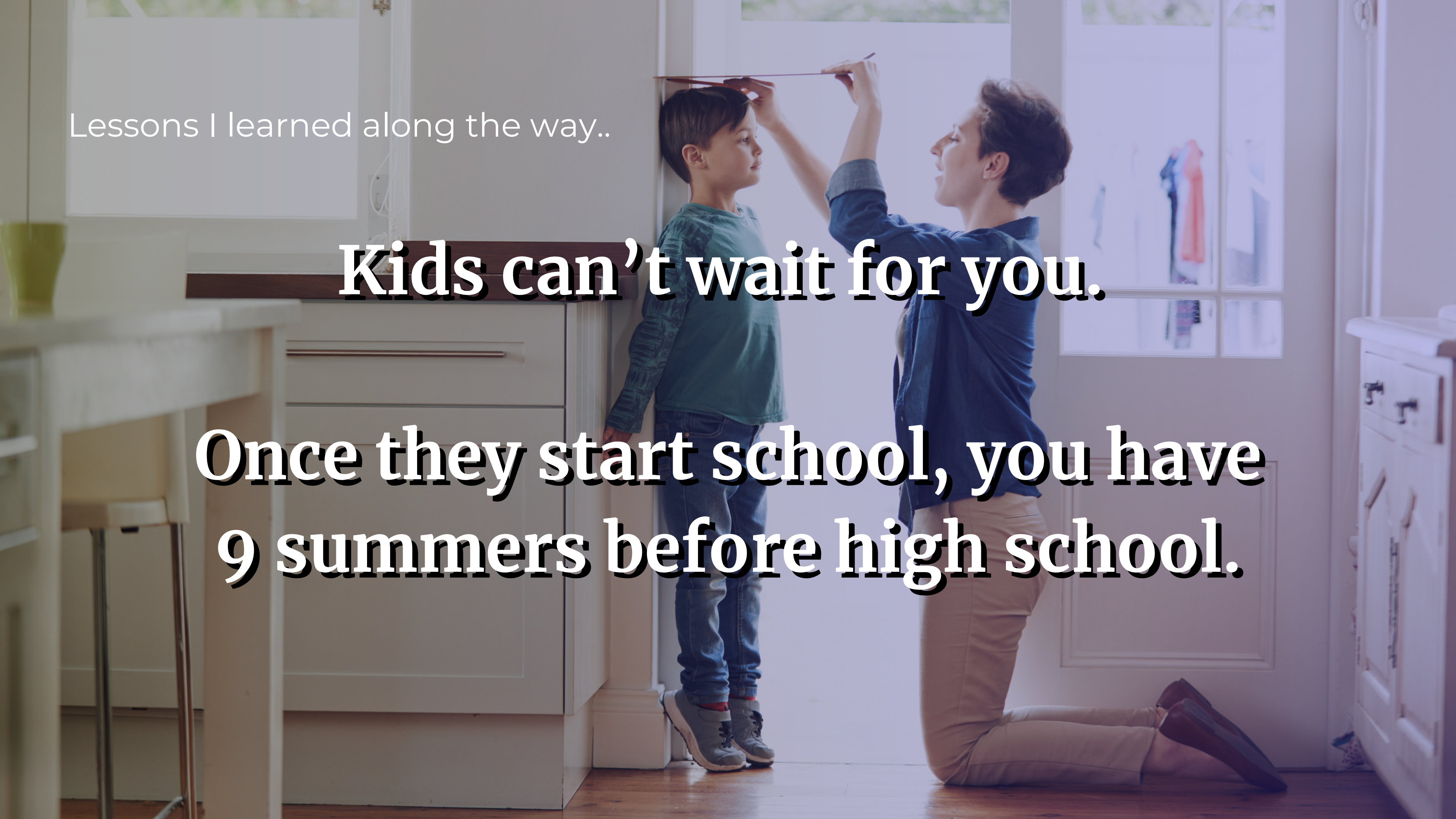
I became a lot more cognizant of my work-life balance. I'm sure I frustrated my superiors and got bypassed for promotional opportunities, but I wasn't willing to give up the time with my kids--and I also needed to be a caregiver for my parents (which I considered an honor).

Here are some lessons I learned along the way that helped me with work-life balance and allowed me to begin Life 2.0 on my own terms:

Lessons I learned along the way..

Kids can't wait for you.

**Once they start school, you have
9 summers before high school.**




**They won't remember what you said or did,
they will remember how you made them feel.**

Be Happy

My nieces remember my
mom making them a
priority and spending
time with them--not the
things she bought, but
the time she spent.

The most important things in life aren't things.



We have plenty of opportunities to overindulge every day. Go slow and make (even slightly better) choices. They'll add up in the long run.

Eat until you're 80% full.

Have a family dinner.

When I was 24 years old, an older colleague told me to invest a little bit from each paycheck for retirement. He said, “Trust me.” Luckily, I did. It wasn’t until years later that I understood the term “compound interest”. Making a small choice and sticking with it can have lasting impact.

Pay yourself first.
Compound interest is your friend.



A person wearing a red hoodie and black leggings is seen from behind, standing on a paved path and stretching their arms above their head. The path is lined with trees and grass, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The scene is peaceful and suggests a morning routine.

30
30
30

30 grams of protein within 30 minutes of waking up followed by 30 minutes of moderate exercise. You don't have to be a serious athlete, just make small do-able choices. The results will show up in your lab results.

**30 minutes of moderate exercise,
5 days per week.**

I'm not telling you what to believe, but I know what I believe.
Knowing that you're a small piece of a bigger puzzle is
calming. And I find peace in knowing that 54, 89, or 104 years
isn't the end of your life, but only the beginning of eternity.

10 minutes per day.

Be completely still.



A couple with grey hair, seen from behind, walking hand-in-hand on a sandy beach towards the ocean. The woman is on the left, wearing a grey jacket and tan pants. The man is on the right, wearing a plaid shirt and tan pants. The beach is wide and sandy, with footprints visible. The ocean is on the right, and the sky is a pale blue.

**Life expectancy in the U.S.
is 76**

You've got to go when you
get the chance, because life
can change on a dime.

**Once you turn 65, that's
11 summers.**


I do Meals On Wheels
once a month--even
when I was city
manager. It keeps
you grounded and
changes your
perspective on
raising taxes and
fees. Your decisions
have an impact on
people's lives.
Remember that.

Give back.



I struggle with this one. It seems everyone is pushing a narrative on mainstream media or 'being a Karen' on social media. Keep up with the daily news, but don't leave it on perpetually. And recite The Serenity Prayer alot.

**Don't allow yourself to be
bombarded with stressful media.**

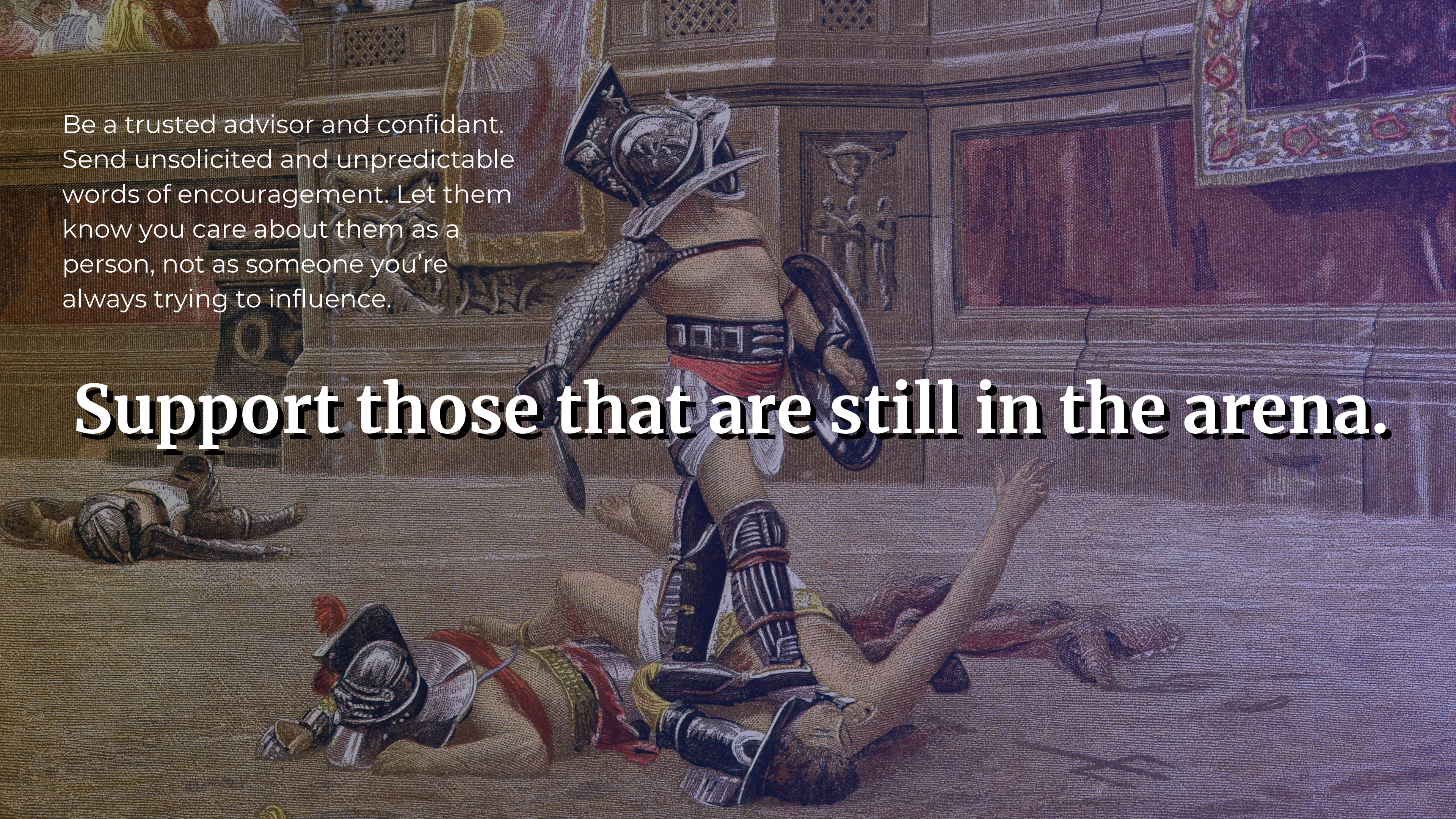
A photograph of a smiling older man and woman sitting outdoors with two young children. The man is on the left, wearing a red shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a dark blue top. They are both smiling warmly. A young boy is sitting in front of the man, and a young girl is sitting in front of the woman. The background is a soft-focus green field.

Being a grandparent is one of the greatest joys in life. Say 'yes' as much as possible--not in a way that undermines the parents--but just be available for them. Make them a priority.

When you get a second chance, embrace it.

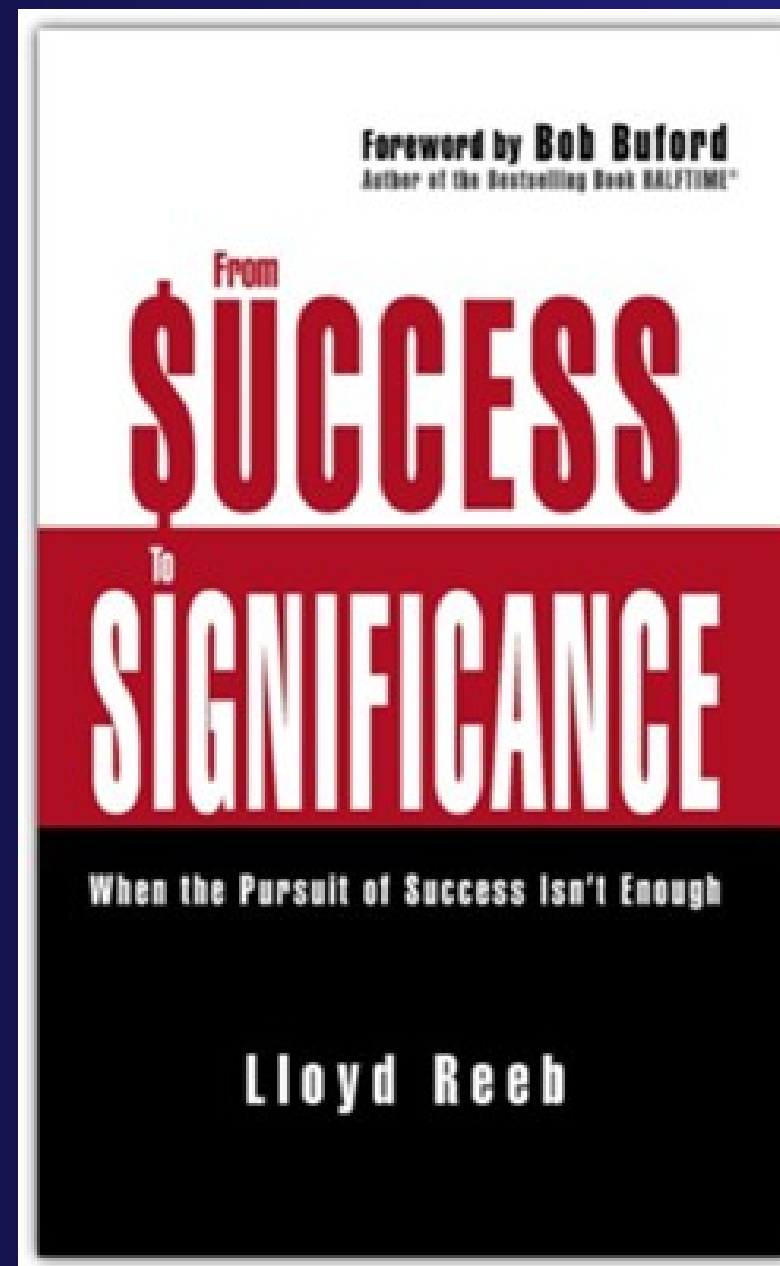
Be a trusted advisor and confidant.
Send unsolicited and unpredictable
words of encouragement. Let them
know you care about them as a
person, not as someone you're
always trying to influence.

Support those that are still in the arena.



A developer became wildly successful. He could pick up the phone and call the CEO of Home Depot or Lowes and they would take his call. But he felt hollow. He said, "God, surely this isn't all I was put on this earth to do." Then he realized his success had prepared him for Life 2.0--his significance.

He took his learned skills and financial prowess and directed it towards mission work. He built homes, roads, and institutions in Haiti.



What is my reason for getting up in the morning?

Job #1 = App

"Acts of Service"
Ambassador
Foundations
Archives
Data Trends
Blogger



My greatest investment is in my children and my children's children

You do missions, visions, budgets, & capital planning for your communities, but do you do it for yourself?

Are you happy & fulfilled?

Where do you want to be in 10, 20, 30 years?

What are you doing today to ensure you get there?

When people say, “It must be nice, they forget the hundreds of small choices made over a 35 year period. It’s not instant gratification.”

...and finally, what are you
willing to give up a day in
your life for?