

The Tao of Shane Warne

The death of Shane Warne gave me pause for thought: what is a life and how are we remembered?

I think about this all the time but the fact that Warnie is a similar age to me and was one of a kind meant more people than usual joined me on this reflection.

The ABC journalist Leigh Sales in 2018 said he was her number one interview pick. I can see why. The interview was rebroadcast recently. It was fascinating to watch. Warnie was Australia's best cricketer and chief larrikin. He was famous for going out with Liz Hurley, chain smoking and getting into the papers with stories of chasing women and gambling. This appealed to many men and offended everyone else.

In the interview, Warne revelled in his being an honest man, who made mistakes and whose biggest regret was the pain he caused his children. He said he saw psychologist Jeremy Snape when he felt he needed to change his life. Snape said the work would be brutal and got him to write his obituary.



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This is a tool we use (as well as the less confronting challenge of writing the leaving speech your boss would write about you but most of our clients are the bosses!). Warnie wrote it honestly and was not happy with what he read. He vowed to be a better man. This is the work we help our clients with through a program called www.beabetterancestor.com.

In the interview, Warnie's love for his family was crystal clear and he said he had apologised to them and that they had accepted his apology. He seemed like a resolved man to me. He knew who he was and celebrated it. He wore his role as a public figure without complaining and did his best to make the people he met happy.

It reminded me of a book I read about the impact of Mohammed Ali on those around him and his contribution to the world, [The Tao of Muhammad Ali](#). Warnie is not of that stature but his impact in Australia has been significant.

He was honest about his capacity for romantic relationships and said he wished for a deeply loving one but, in the absence of that, being single was the next best thing for him. He was not your classic role model material but there was a nobility in his strength to be responsible for himself. There were dalliances with cosmetic surgery but he also did the inner work and took Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey.

As often happens on the death of people with a public profile, the comments were positive but his negative shadow side was so well known that it could not be denied.



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Our clients similarly realise that their success (fame, wealth etc) was not requested by their children yet those people will have to deal with the consequences of it. We impact our children significantly in many ways, not least of which is by leaving them the biggest lump sum they will ever receive. While it is a first world problem, the parents have effectively poured petrol on their children and need to prepare their heirs to deal with that and with the family system they are in.

I talk to people about legacy all the time. Even when a client signs their “last will and testament”, I joke that it is not their document, but rather mine. I tell them to write their story and leave a message to their descendants whose opinion and respect are the only ones that really count.

Think of it like a version of “Desert Island Discs”!

Our clients on the www.beabetterancestor.com program are also given tools to make things better: explain themselves, apologise, forgive, educate, comfort etc. They are each on the road to building, if not one of the great families, at least the best version possible.



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They get peace of mind, closure and perspective from seeing the gift they are giving in the safe appreciative hands of their family.

Warnie wrote an autobiography called “No Spin” and apparently it is brutally honest. I wrote my [migrant's tale](#) and found it to be a cathartic process. I am pleased to explain our family to my son who hopefully will read it while I am alive. In the end, people usually want to know the truth.

While the latest war in Ukraine is tragic and depressing, the death of one man in Australia is allowing us to celebrate the evolution of individuals. There is hope for us all.

A smoking, drinking, gambling larrikin gets a State Funeral. Thank Christ for Australia!

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