

Welcome!

As you familiarize yourself with this Binder of a Lifetime, begin to think of it as the one location for all key elements of your life and thinking. Store this in a place where your family can find it easily – ideally in a fire-proof, water-proof safe. Copy and discuss key pages with those you love.

More than anything, enjoy putting efforts to a project that will provide

- *peace of mind for you*
- *opportunities for meaningful conversations with friends and family NOW*
- *comfort to friends & family members now and in the future*

Why wait to share memories, wisdom and keepsakes? In the context of Dr. Gawande's quote (on the next page), you will appreciate spending time on this project and sharing it with those you love whether you're at the age of 25, 45, 65, 85, 105 or anywhere in between, Enjoy the experience!

Steve

P.S. Don't forget to customize this by putting your name and phone number on the first page (and on the spine label)

One book supporting Binder of a Lifetime (BoaL) principles is *Being Mortal*, written by Dr. Atul Gawande. It's worth reading!

Relating to BoaL efforts, this quote seems especially pertinent:

“Technological society has forgotten what scholars call the “dying role” and its importance to people as life approaches its end. People want to share memories, pass on wisdoms and keepsakes, settle relationships, establish their legacies, make peace with God, and ensure that those who are left behind will be okay. They want to end their stories on their own terms. This role is, observers argue, among life's most important, for both the dying and those left behind. And if it is, the way we deny people this role, out of obtuseness and neglect, is cause for everlasting shame. Over and over, we in medicine inflict deep gouges at the end of people's lives and then stand oblivious to the harm done.”

~ from the book *Being Mortal* by Dr. Atul Gawande (page 249)

While Dr. Gawande mentions this as being true in the dying role, being near-death really just spurs on the energy to do this. Since knowing when we're dying is not the norm, why wait to do this?

A few thoughts relating to BoaL logistics:

- While this is a hard-copy binder, some may want to summarize all or most information on your computer. If so, each of the BoaL pages is available in an editable format in the Resources section of www.BinderOfALifetime.com.
- To enhance sharing as you continue BoaL efforts, consider doing some activities using “higher tech” approaches (i.e., other than paper-and-pencil.) For instance, you may want to collaborate with tech-savvy relatives and do some of this using
 - Electronic pictures
 - Audio recordings (put to CD, thumb drive, online services like YouTube, ...)
 - Video recordings (put to DVD, thumb drive, online services like YouTube, ...)