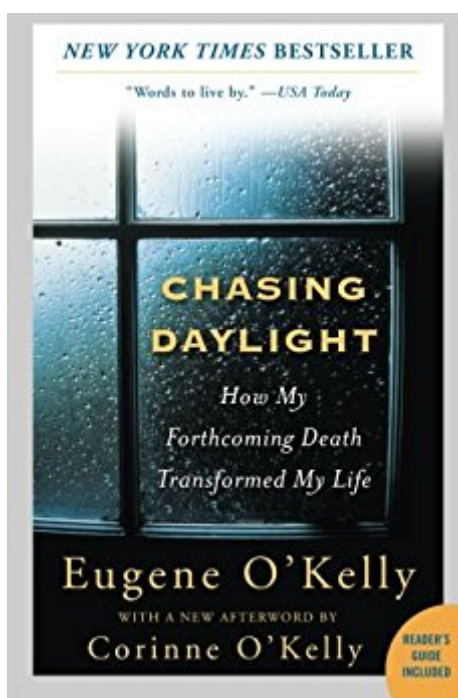


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# Chasing Daylight: How My Forthcoming Death Transformed My Life



## Synopsis

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Chasing Daylight is the honest, touching, and ultimately inspirational memoir of former KPMG CEO Eugene O'Kelley, completed in the three-and-a-half months between his diagnosis with brain cancer and his death in September 2005. Its haunting yet extraordinarily hopeful voice reminds us to embrace the fragile, fleeting moments of our lives—the brief time we have with our family, our friends, and even ourselves. This paperback edition features a new foreword by his wife, Corinne O'Kelley and a readers' group guide and questions.

“Voicing universal truths . . . shared . . . simply and clearly.”—Janet Malin, New York Times  
“Words to live by.”—Kerry Hannon, USA Today  
“One of the most unexpected and touching books you're likely to read this year.”—Edward Nawotka, Bloomberg News  
“An honest, thought-provoking memoir . . . O'Kelly has many lessons to teach us on how to live.”—Steve Powers, Houston Chronicle  
“[A] well-written and moving book.”—TheEconomist.com

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As CEO at accounting giant KPMG, Eugene O'Kelly was so immersed in his job that over the course of a decade, he managed to have lunch with his wife on weekdays just twice. His travel schedule was set 18 months out. Once, he was so obsessed with impressing a potential client that he tracked down the man's travel schedule, booked the seat next to him on a flight, schmoozed the guy all the way to Australia, landed the account, and flew immediately back to Manhattan. His

Type-A ways vanished when, at age 53, a top neurosurgeon in New York told him he had late-stage brain cancer. "His eyes told me I would die soon. It was late spring. I had seen my last autumn in New York." There are no TV-movie-style miracle treatments or extensions of his life expectancy; he's told he has maybe 3 months, and he doesn't spend any energy hoping for a cure. True to his CEO style, he creates goals for himself, lists of friends to visit for the last time; he meditates; he tries to create as many "perfect Moments" that he can, during dinner or phone conversations with friends, and realized how rare those moments of connection and joy were in his "previous life." Chasing Daylight is as much a self-criticism of his job-before-family ways as it is a meditation on time and a transition to a tranquil, spiritual state utterly foreign to him as a CEO. O'Kelly's absolutely more fulfilled by the soul work that he finishes in 100 days, compared to his 30 years of corporate promotions and accolades, and he utterly convinces readers to ponder their own situation, whether "in the gloaming" of life as he was or not. --Erica Jorgensen --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

O'Kelly, the former CEO and chairman of accounting juggernaut KPMG who was diagnosed with brain cancer at 53, writes about his "forthcoming death" as one would expect an accountant to: methodically. He charts his downward spiral, from symptoms to diagnosis to the process of dying in this poignant and posthumously published book. (O'Kelly died in September 2005.) O'Kelly's narrative recounts the steps he took to simplify his life-how he learned, for instance, "to be in the present moment, how to live there at least for snippets of time"-and the final experiences he shared with close friends and family. But his story falters on several occasions. O'Kelly provides few substantial details regarding his long career with KPMG; what information he does offer, and his wishes for the firm's continued success, read like portions of a company newsletter. He also refers constantly to his "wife of 27 years, Corinne, the girl of my dreams," but he fails to give readers a sense of her spirit and personality. (She wrote the final chapter, which takes place largely in the hospital as O'Kelly refuses food and water, eventually dying of an embolism.) Nor do readers learn much of O'Kelly's 14-year-old daughter, other than she's bright and he loves her. Though less than perfect, O'Kelly's examination of the life he lived and the opportunities he missed while climbing the corporate ladder will resonate with readers in "foot to the pedal" careers. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

You never really consider how short life is until you're given a grim prognostication about your

future. This is exactly what Eugene O'Kelly felt, and his story is one that is both poignant and thought-provoking. Chronicling the last 4 months of his life, O'Kelly describes his path from CEO to terminal patient. It is a touching memoir about the brevity of life and the importance of the small moments. My mom recommended this book for me and it has certainly opened my eyes. You never realize how much time you spend focusing on otherwise trivial day-to-day affairs. It makes you want to break out of your cocoon and explore even the most basic ideas that you've been avoiding. O'Kelly makes his impending death seem like an adventure rather than a morbid object of fear or resentment. It has certainly made me want to make the most of every moment. In doing so, I've tried to find more healthful ways to live my life. I picked up a copy of "Simple Natural Cures: Cheap & Effective Remedies for Everyday Common Ailments" for my Kindle, and it has been a massive help for my health and well-being. I often suffer from indigestion, headaches, and anxiety, but after looking through the treatments outlined in Simple Natural Cures and employing them, I've been able to lead a much happier life. Like most people, my life has been filled with stress and anxiety, and O'Kelly's book has taught me that life's too short to live with these basic ailments plaguing everything. Simple Natural Cures helps you eliminate these commonplace maladies, helping you live the happier, healthier, and fuller life that O'Kelly ascribed to in his final months.

Many reviewers have listed things they don't like about this book. They don't like the fact that the author spent much of the book recapping his business successes. They don't like the fact that he spent so much time "unwinding" (i. e., making final contact and closure with) somewhere between 500 and 1,000 friends and acquaintances, instead of spending more time with his wife and daughter. Some question his decision to write this book rather than spend time with his family. Although I might have similar feelings, my view is that these were decisions for the author to make; it wasn't his responsibility to live his final months in a way acceptable to others. So, was his book a self-indulgent exercise, or does it have valuable lessons for those of us who might find ourselves in a similar situation? To be honest, I didn't find a lot of value in the book. But there are many four and five-star reviews here that show the book was helpful to many others. So, read some other reviews and decide if it might be helpful for you.

I made the purchase because I am very interested in the subject of work life balance. This is a powerful, thoughtful look at life, death and balance. O'Kelly and his wife gave us a gift - a roadmap for making the most of a death sentence. I have to admit that I was a little melancholy while reading this - that's just what happens when you contemplate your death, I guess. The

lessons, however, were worth it. One thought, in particular, was very powerful to me. O'Kelly talks about he wanted to be the CEO of his death - he wanted to make the last three months of his life the best months of his life. And, he is constantly on the lookout for "perfect moments." While you never hear the word, "mindfulness," that's really what he's talking about as the major lesson. In fact, he seems to relate that the majority of his life was lived in a mindLESS manner where he went from meeting to meeting running a Big 4 consulting firm. He worked 90 to 100 hours a week, attended only a couple of events at his daughter's middle school. And, he admits to possibly having his priorities misaligned - probably not an easy admission. There are no answers for how to create work-life balance but it is a source of motivation to start living and pay attention, now.

I finished this book last night but I had to take all day today to digest the story. I have read many books on people dying but this book was different in that Mr. O'Kelly knew how many days he actually had before he died. Mr. O'Kelly had a "high profile executive position" who finds himself in a "new" position when he learns he has cancer. I feel his acceptance of this new outlook as his life spirals downhill should be considered by all of us...if we have the time to do so!

If you knew you had three months to live, what would you do? After the author's dire diagnosis, this question becomes actual rather than hypothetical and we witness his personal journey to his last days. It's an inspirational take on "live like you were dying," and does give some insights on how to wrap things up ("unwinding") in terms of relationships, both casual and intimate. But, like others, I was put off by the narcissistic tone as he reiterated his success as a wealthy CEO throughout the book. His wife and his daughter obviously were important to him but I was left with no real picture of either. And, like others, I questioned how a man set on orchestrating his last ninety days on earth had the time to add one more little thing to his agenda: write a book.

what an awesome life changing book. my friend told me about this book, I'm glad I jumped on it and bought it, I read through it in a day or 2, and it made a huge impact on my life. a few months later and I still think about it.

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