

Telling Your Life Story Backward or How You Cheated Chaos

Write down three of the best things in your life: relationships, situations, or objects without which your world would feel significantly bleaker.

Three of the Best Things in My Life

Thing 1: _____

Thing 2: _____

Thing 3: _____

Look over this list and circle your favorite of the three items.

Now recall a positive turn of events in your life that enabled you to have this Favorite Thing. For example, if your Favorite Thing is your job recall how you came to get it (e.g. I trained to become a certified life coach.) Write it down in the spaces below. This is a “proximate cause,” something that directly linked to your Favorite Thing about your life at this moment.

Positive Event That Contributed to Having my Favorite Thing (Proximate Cause)

Now, go back a step further in your life history. Read over the event you just described and describe something else that happened to make *that* event possible. (e.g. I learned about life coaching when I enrolled in an online seminar to lose weight). Write down the thing that led to the thing that led to your Favorite Thing.

Prior Positive/Happy Event that Allowed the Proximate Cause Event to Occur (Antecedent to Proximate Cause)

Keep it up: Follow your chain of life events backward until you can think of *one piece of “bad luck” that helped your Favorite Thing come into your life*. This could be damage far back in your childhood that made you a crusader for justice, a health condition that forced you to think carefully about how you use your time, or a financial disaster that led to a career change. (e.g. There are several intermediate steps, but my ultimate “bad thing” was the familial chaos I mentioned at the beginning of this post.) Write down what you come up with in the space below. If you can think of two or three more, this exercise will work even better.

Supposedly “Bad” Event that Eventually Supported My Favorite Thing

Now here’s the really cool part where you get to see that you’ve actually ‘Cheated Chaos’ by turning the “bad event” into part of your destiny. (Fill in the following story with the answers you created above.)

The Story of My Favorite Thing

I was destined to have [list your favorite thing] ...

Because of this destiny, something negative happened [write in the Supposedly “Bad” Event you identified above] ...

Fortunately, this led to [write Antecedent to the Proximate Cause]...

And that helped this other thing happen [note the Proximate Cause]...

And that, my friends, is how I Cheated Chaos!
