



Hi. I'm Ken Jones, and this is A Classic State of Mind, with a word about ... Any Day (now)

In my latest book, "If I Should Die Before I Live, (sorting out what matters most,) I list the seven most significant days I believe any of us can navigate. Last week, I mentioned "Someday," for dreaming; it's that day that's a long way off from 'now.' The second day I think important is Any Day, for 'waiting.' All of us are waiting for *something* to happen in our lives. And Any Day is close to this very moment in time. Maybe that's why we call it 'Any Day (now).'

My dad used to say, "Life is short, and one day, you'll turn around twice and notice that your life is behind you." I believed my dad, I guess. He was right about most things, most of the time. But, learning about how short life really is wasn't something my dad could teach me, I don't think. I didn't learn that in school, either. My third grade teacher, Miss Clairborne may have *told* us everybody dies. But, she didn't *teach* us that everybody dies.

Daryl Few did that.

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He lived down the street from my brother Dan and me when we were growing up. A nice kid. We'd play kick-the-can on hot, muggy evenings in Illinois where I grew up. We didn't wear shoes much in the summertime back then. In fact, we didn't wear many clothes at all in the summertime, because it was so hot and uncomfortable.

That wouldn't be important, I suppose, except for that fact that when a guy goes without a shirt all summer, there are things you notice about him that you wouldn't otherwise be aware of. For example, Daryl wasn't fat. In fact, he was close to being skinny. But he had a big stomach. Bloating, I guess you might say. When we'd stand in front of Mr. Miller's store and drink orange soda out of bottles, the sweat would run down our bellies, carving tiny rivers in the grime on our chests. We'd belch like boys do. We'd chug-a-lug our drinks, like boys do. And, when we were through, we'd hold out our stomachs and see whose was the biggest. We weren't wearing shirts, so we could measure really good. And Daryl always won, even though he was the slightest kid on our street.

One winter morning, Daryl's desk was empty. He hadn't shown up for school. I didn't think anything about it until Miss Clairborne told us to clear our desks, and sit tall. She had something to tell us. Now, it wasn't time for recess. We hadn't even had arithmetic yet. It wasn't time for lunch, either. It wasn't time to go

home, or wash our hands, or go to the bathroom. It was time for Miss Clairborne to tell us something we never expected.

Sitting tall in our seats, we waited. Miss Clairborne sat on her desk in front of us, and explained how little time any of us really have left.

“I am very sad to tell you that your classmate, Daryl Few ...” Now, tears welled in her eyes, as she continued, “Daryl passed away last night in his sleep. He had a tumor in his abdomen which ruptured, and he died suddenly at home.”

Miss Clairborne continued talking about Daryl, his life, and how sad it was, and how she knew we would all be sad, too. But I wasn't listening to her speech very much. In fact, I stopped listening to Miss Clairborne right after her words, ‘... passed away last night.’ Passed away? Who? Daryl? Not Daryl? He's only in the third grade. People in the third grade don't pass away? Third-graders don't die, do they? I had never known anyone who had ‘passed away.’ I remember sitting at my desk, wondering what all of this meant. And I especially remembered thinking that if Daryl was old enough to die ... well then, so was I.

At the end of that day, I had learned something I still remember, and I will probably never forget: One day, I will die, ... and it could be Any Day (now.)

How would my life change, or be different if I ‘expected’ to die, I wonder? It's a certainty: There's a world of difference between knowing you're going to die — Someday — and knowing you're going to die, Any Day (now.)

I'm Ken Jones, and this has been A Classic State of Mind. Thanks for listening. You can download a free copy of today's script by visiting our website, [classicstateofmind.com](http://classicstateofmind.com). We'd love to hear from you. And thanks again, for listening.