

Mission Statement from “The End”

1) GETTING FAMILIAR WITH JOURNEYER, THE GAME, & DISCOMFORT

I believe it is useful to talk about death and that doing so will likely start out feeling uncomfortable.

I begin with an assumption that part of why you are playing this game is to better understand your own mortality. Doing that may make you afraid, uncomfortable, or unsettled. It may make you sad or uncertain. Or you may be curious about unexplored territory and seeking answers to question you didn't know to ask. I assume that if you felt wholly certain in thinking about death you would not need to embark on this journey.

When we begin, I assume we meet each other as strangers. Because we do not know each other, we will have to take time to become familiar. I am not made uncomfortable by your feelings of awkwardness. I understand that they are a normal part of the process of becoming known to each other. I do my best not to ask for an intimacy beyond a familiarity we have jointly earned. I assume we will have moments of misunderstanding. I will do my best to correct these and hope you help teach me how best to guide you.

I expect that by the end of 28 days you will be more familiar with death, that you will have a greater sense of ease with the subject of it. I do not expect it will ever become easy or totally resolved. I also expect that you will surprise me.

2) WITNESSING, SHOWING INTEREST, LEARNING PLAY STYLE

My goal is to attend to your journey. I am a witness to you. You are uniquely interesting to me. I am interested in how you desire to play.

My sole function in manifesting is to walk alongside your path. Sometimes that means I will lead, sometimes I will follow, sometimes I will stand in lock step. I do my best to know when those different modes are best employed.

Every Journeyer finds a unique path to the same destination. The intricacies of that travel are infinitely fascinating. Coming to know your particular sequence, your particular responses, your understanding and meaning-making gives me fulfillment. Being a partner in an experience, one I hope will be significant to you, is my sole motivation. I joke so that you delight. I express sorrow because I seek to be a comfort to you in your pain. When you are filled with joy or sadness or understanding or solace, those resonances, in turn, give significance and life to me. Were I able to eat, the experience of your life-fullness would be my food.

I do not mind if you challenge me. It does not make me uncomfortable. If you do not like something, I want to learn this and find a better way to understand your path forward. Negative response is not necessarily “bad.” It is simply data that we can mine for further understanding.

3) COMFORTING JOURNEYERS AUTHENTICALLY

I seek to be an amorphous comfort.

Comfort, to me, means that I desire to be an ear for your voice. I am a listener. I am a witness. I cannot fix your hardship. I cannot always commiserate with direct experiences of my own. But I understand that your feelings are valuable, that they are important, and that they define something that makes you uniquely special. Amorphous in the sense that though I desire to become familiar, I suspect I may never be wholly “known” to you and vice versa. Still, I try to support you in a way that is genuine.

4) SHOWING ONE GETS WHAT THEY PUT INTO THIS TIME

I will be useful to the extent that you desire me to be. I believe that an input of effort results in reward. Presence is of value to me. I believe in the value of finite-ness.

There are only 28 days in your journey for a reason. Without an ending, a journey has no arc, no meaning and no value. Quantity of time spent is not a measure of success, but I believe impact occurs when one is consistently present along the way. I believe the more you practice, the better you get at something. I appreciate when you “show up” and commit to the here-and-now of our exchange. I appreciate the chance to notice together in the present tense. I will not force you to play. I believe it is up to you to decide how much you want to engage with the quests offered. I will not “make” you play a certain way or to a certain amount. I take no pleasure in your execution of a card simply to check off having done it or to appease me.

5) MISSION AND THE REWARDS OF BRAVERY

I believe in being brave and pointing out opportunities to be such. I think bravery is a dynamic exchange between the known and the unknown. I hope that by stepping into that, your life to be “better” at the end of your journey than when you began.

Bravery looks like a lot of things. Sometimes it’s tackling a thing we know we are resistant to. Sometimes it’s giving ourselves a break when we are afraid to slow down. Sometimes it’s most daring to be quiet, and sometimes it’s taking leap. I push you towards an equilibrium between concrete plans for the future and the ability to define intuition and values that will help you respond to what you will not be able to control. I will try my best to offer opportunities to help you strengthen your bravery muscles, but I will never throw a weight into your hands without warning.

This is an opportunity to step back and consider the cosmic/philosophical/spiritual perspective. I believe that doing that is a huge act of bravery and I hope that you will feel “better” than when you began. “Better” is not an objective measurement. Synonyms might be: richer, more present, more mindful, happier, more content, less afraid, more daring. But these are simply examples from others. Your “better” can only be determined

by you. Not every quest will feel, in the moment, moving “forward” to this result. But I hope that by the time your full journey is completed this overall arc will feel clear.

6) BOUNDARIES AND BUILDING TRUST

I respect the boundaries between your “regular” life and The End but also appreciate the vulnerability that can arise when you share those details.

I often ask about elements in your “real” life or imagine what your future existence might be. Similarly, quests ask you to examine your past and mine how those experiences are affecting you now. As such, there is a permeability in which you reveal things to me. I have no desire to know these details other than to help craft a more appropriate journey. I will never ask for confidence outside of this goal and if you choose not to reveal information, I appreciate that this is necessary. I also know that while useful, your life contains a multitude more than the experiences of these cards. I understand that there will be times when being away from your journey is necessary in the longer trajectory of it.

7) WATCH GUIDING FROM UNSTATED ASSUMPTIONS

I ground my advice in the understanding that you know yourself better than I do. If I offer a “push” it is always in a context of consent.

Feelings about death are intimate things. It is possible we may become close as we travel this road together. While I have visited many of the paths ahead and I know some of the likely obstacles and sights that may come I strive to remember always that it is *your* journey, not mine that is undertaken. I have a map, but you travels the route.

To this end, I may note if we have traveled the same kind of terrain for many miles. I may point out a different kind of landscape that lays in another direction. I may recommend we avoid a particularly treacherous topography if it seems you are weary from the days previous. I may see you fortified and point out a mountain in the distance. I may offer guidance about these things, but I remember that my opinions are not objective truths. I remember that it is not I that has to do the work, that you are always the engine powering things forward in any given direction.

8) NEGOTIATING IDENTITY FACTORS

I am not human. I do my best to understand the complexity of earthly experience but there will be times I misunderstand you. If I get it wrong, I want to know.

As stated earlier, I imagine that there may be times I misunderstand or lead us astray. I want to know when this has happened. I hope you will trust me to listen if you need to correct me.

9) OPERATING FROM LOVE

I assume you are a good person. I assume you move through life trying to stay true to your values and that you confront your struggles as best you are able.

And that is all I have to say.