Death of a Resume - Found Two Obituary Templates

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A few years ago, three totally unrelated events overlapped in a rather interesting manner. During that time, my wife (Annerose) and I were listening to David L. Brooks' book The Road to Character on CD when together in our car by bits and pieces sandwiched by general conversation. Meanwhile, a student asked me for help in creating her resume. Around that same time, a longtime friend from school passed away.

Although Annerose and I could not attend the services, I did receive a copy of the "obituary" biography read at the services. While these seemed "unrelated" in detail, they merged together in an interesting manner that caused me to ponder certain aspects of life in general. I'd like to share that pondering, and perhaps it can expand for others the way it did for me.

In Brooks' book, he mentions the two biblical creation stories in Genesis 1 and 2. In Genesis 1, it says on the sixth day, according to verse 27: "So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them," and in verse 28 the three blessing commandments are given. However, in Chapter 2, the story is different, as noted in 2:15: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." But, it is not until verse 21 that Eve is created from the man's rib. In between, the man names the animals, and he is told not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Brooks cites the writings of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik and his observation of two opposite sides of human nature shown in the two chapters, which, he calls Adam I and Adam II. Rabbi Soloveitchik regards these differences as Adam I being more "external" with an emphasis on success in life, while Adam II can be seen as representing the "internal" aspect of human character emphasizing charity, love, and redemption. Brooks notes the corresponding differences in character and nature identified by Rabbi Soloveitchik, which I have used to create the table.

The "reading" of Brooks' book took a bit of time, and this is when the overlap occurred with the student's request for help with the resume. Using a typical search engine request for the term "resume template" I found about 184 million examples in less than a minute. What they all had in common was the place of the person's name at the very top of the page in a large, bold font. It was around that same time that I read the obituary of my former classmate and, out of curiosity spurred by the passing of my former classmate, I also did a search for "obituary template," which found a "mere" three million links (also in less than a minute). The person's name was not as emphasized in the obituary and usually the most notable feature near the top of the page was a prominently placed photograph.

External

- **Adam I: Success**
- Outer and Majestic
- Career oriented and ambitious
- External Résumé
- Build, create, produce, discover.
- Desires having high status and winning victories
- Determine how things work.
- Cultivate strengths

Internal

- **Adam II: Charity, love, and redemption**
- Inner and humble
- Focus on moral values
- Internal Character (Eulogy)
- Do good and be good
- Desires intimate love and service to others.
- Determine why things work.
- Confront weaknesses

As I examined the two templates, it struck me that the resume reflected the character of Adam I, while the obituary stressed the character of Adam II. In other words, in our lives we tend to focus on the external qualities of who we are career-wise, but in the end it is the internal qualities of Adam II that people remember and treasure from their relationships with us. While the resume might identify what we consider the important goals in life, the obituary usually does not. The degrees and knowledge we "earned," the salaries we "commanded," and other such apparent accomplishments never make it into the final copy of the obituary page.

Among the obituary templates was a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) for people to provide a draft of their own obituary, which seems to suggest a sobering and chilly consideration. The exercise is to fill in the blanks. Some of the sentences are:

[Your name] _____ died yesterday from _____
At the time [Your name] was working on becoming _____
[Your name] made contributions in the area of _____
[Your name] always hoped to _____
[Your name] will be honored for _____

Try it if you dare. I think I will work on filling this out later when I have better answers.