100th birthday exercise

I am now going to ask you to take a minute to close your eyes and imagine that you have just turned 100 years of age. You have lived a fulfilling life, and you have made it to this astonishing age. There is a big celebration, and everyone you care about is there. Because this is an imagination exercise, we do mean everyone you care about is there: family, friends, people you admire, even people who are no longer living but who have a special place in your heart. Try to imagine where the party is being held, how the room looks, if it is a special place for you. Try to think about what sort of music will be playing and even what sort of aromas you can smell from the food being served.

As a special birthday treat you have asked someone in particular to say a few words about your life. Try to think about someone you would like to speak on your behalf about the amazing life you led. Do you have them in your mind? Now try to imagine what you most want this person to say about you and your life, regardless of what you think he/she might actually say. Remember you have lived a full life, so this person is describing the "you" that lived according to your values, not the "you" that is currently in a difficult situation. Try not to let the reality of now interfere with the description of this ideal future you. Imagine that the speech this person is making is exactly what you would want to hear about the life you led.

Now take a moment to reflect on what you have heard in this speech. What does this tell you about your values? About what really matters to you deep in your heart? Were there any particular domains that stood out in the speech this person made about you? Maybe some themes like family, relationships, friends, work, health, or growth came up. Or maybe even some other domain that is very relevant to you. If you notice that you value some areas more than others, that is fine too; after all, we are all different.

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