

## After your Final Status Update

**TEDTalks**

### A video talk by Adam Ostrow

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You are going to watch a 5-minute video of a man named Adam Ostrow, who talks about the implications that physical death has over people's digital persona. As you watch the video the first time, your objective should be to understand the general message of the video; don't worry too much about details during this first viewing.

**Video link:**

[http://www.ted.com/talks/adam\\_ostrow\\_after\\_your\\_final\\_status\\_update.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/adam_ostrow_after_your_final_status_update.html)

After watching the video once, you should complete the following series of tasks, which will help you to understand the video in greater detail and to improve your English communication skills.

#### **1. Listening Comprehension: Understanding the TEDTalk**

Adam Ostrow poses an interesting question: what happens with our digital persona when we die? Watch the video again and answer the following questions using your own words.

1. Which fact made Adam Ostrow think about the relationship between social media and death?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the main difference between this generation and the previous ones, in terms of personal archives?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the potential use that all that data can have after we die, thanks to technology?  
\_\_\_\_\_

These activities were created thanks to collaboration between Ziggurat Language Services, S.L. & Mother Tongue, S.L.

## 2. Express Yourself

Adam Ostrow mentions several services that let people create final messages to be posted after they die. Explain if you would be interested in hiring any of the services below and give reasons for your answer.

- Create a message or a video to be posted on Facebook after you die.
- Create an online tribute to your loved ones (with videos, photos and stories).
- Use an automatic service that predicts your next tweet or Facebook post.

## 3. Language Practice

In this talk, Adam Ostrow uses words related to life and death. Read the sentences below and fill in the blanks with the words from the box.

life	live	alive	death	die	dead
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1. When the paramedics arrived, the man was still \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. Gary was very depressed after his father's recent \_\_\_\_\_.
3. There's a high percentage of people who \_\_\_\_\_ of heart diseases.
4. Sheila has a very intense \_\_\_\_\_; she travels a lot and she meets many interesting people.
5. When I got home from vacation, all my plants were \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I want to \_\_\_\_\_ my life to the fullest.

## 4. Writing

Adam Ostrow presents several possibilities to use technology to interact with dead people. What do you think of these ideas? Do you think it will be possible to apply those ideas in the near future? Would you like to have the opportunity to interact with your departed ones through a hologram or a robot?

## Answer Key

### 1. Listening Comprehension

1. He first thought about it when he saw a post by a journalist who had died of cancer, and which was published by his family after his death.
2. This generation is creating a huge digital archive, where lots of data about each person is made publicly available every day. By contrast, previous generations typically produced a small amount of data, such as videos or photo albums, which remained in the private sphere.
3. Machines such as robots will be able to recreate someone's behavior and responses, by analyzing all the data about that person. Thus, it will be possible to interact with people who have died.

### 2. Express Yourself

*Sample answer:*

I would create a message to be posted on Facebook after I died. This would have a double objective: on the one hand, it would be informative for people who may not know I have died. On the other hand, it would close my life cycle in the digital world, it would be like the digital reflection of my physical death.

### 3. Language Practice

1. When the paramedics arrived, the man was still **alive**.
2. Gary was very depressed after his father's recent **death**.
3. There's a high percentage of people who **die** of heart diseases.
4. Sheila has a very intense **life**; she travels a lot and she meets many interesting people.
5. When I got home from my vacation, all my plants were **dead**.
6. I want to **live** my life to the fullest.

### 4. Writing

*Sample answer:*

In my opinion, Adam Ostrow's ideas are very interesting and they could be applied in the immediate future. I believe that we would be ready to carry out those ideas from a technological point of view. However, I wonder if society would be ready to take that step from an ethical point of view. Reviving a dead person through a robot or a hologram is a sensitive issue that would cause a lot of controversy. Personally, I wouldn't like to interact with someone who has died, even if I was very attached to that person.