

Episode #40
 How To Live Forever: A Conversation with
 Encore.org's Marc Freedman
 (4/11/2019)

Who	Audio Segment
Marc Freedman	We've been looking for the fountain of youth in all the wrong places, whether it was the waters of St. Augustine or the test tubes of Silicon Valley. But the way to remain young, vital, to live on in a kind of more profound way is through connecting with younger generations.
	INTRO MUSIC
Andy Levine	<p>Welcome to Second Act Stories, a podcast that looks at people who have made major life changes and are pursuing more rewarding lives in a second act. I'm your host, Andy Levine.</p> <p>Last month, I got to sit down for an hour with the man who is essentially is the creator of the encore career movement. His name is Marc Freedman and he appropriately heads up an organization called Encore.org. Here's a quick summary of some of his accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marc is the winner of the 2018 Eisner Prize for Intergenerational Excellence; • He was named a "Legend in Mentoring" by Mentoring.org; • He was named an "Influencer in Aging" by PBS' Next Avenue; • Most of all, He is the author of five books and we're here to talk with him about his latest book, "How To Live Forever." <p>Today's podcast is longer than our usual episodes but candidly the conversation was so rich in content it was hard to make cut it down.</p> <p>So here's my interview with Marc Freedman.</p>
Andy	So Marc, thank you very much for visiting with me and also for our "Second Act Stories" listeners today. We really...it's terrific to have you on the podcast.
Marc Freedman	Thanks, Andy. I've been looking forward to it.
Andy	So we do wanna talk about your new book, I have it right here, "How to Live Forever: The Enduring Power of Connecting the Generations." But I suspect it'd be helpful maybe to start out with a little bit of background on your own career, and also the organization that you have, Encore.org.
Andy	So we do wanna talk about your new book, I have it right here, "How to Live Forever: The Enduring Power of Connecting the Generations." But I suspect it'd be helpful maybe to start out with a little bit of background on your own career, and also the organization that you have, Encore.org.

Marc	Well, Encore started 20 years ago, but our first project began even before that, and it's Experience Corps, which is like a Peace Corps for people over 50 who wanna take their time and experience and use it in ways that help young people, particularly young people, read by the third grade. And we created it at the same time that City Year and Teach for America and so many other really creative efforts were underway to help young people.
Andy	What year would that be?
Marc	This was in the mid-1990s.
Andy	That's good. And just a word about Encore today and the focus of the organization now.
Marc	We've come full circle, and Encore today is very much focused on mobilizing the older population to help young people thrive to stand up and show up for kids, and to combat that image of the greedy geezer just out for themselves, bankrupting posterity. And yet, over the years, we've traveled a circuitous route. One of the features of Experience Corps is unlike the Peace Corps or Teach for America or programs like City Year, the Experience Corps members weren't passing through, they weren't on route to their midlife career to graduate school. For them, it was a destination, and they would stay a decade or longer. And in the end, they would look back and say, you know, "This was like a second career, I never thought...I thought I was gonna do a year of service but I ended up having..." what we ended up labeling an Encore career, a second act at the intersection of passion and purpose. And oftentimes the paycheck, the Experience Corps members got a stipend. And it opened up this window on a pattern of behavior that many millions of Americans were already undertaking beyond those who are in Experience Corps.
Andy	And so if you had to go back and say the term "Encore career," what date do you put on the start of that, and it is encore.org really the group that started using that and created that?
Marc	I remember being in a meeting where we were...this is about 15 years ago, we were looking at what happened with the Experience Corps members and realizing that it was also what famous people were doing. Bill Gates, Jimmy Carter had this magnificent second act focused on service. People who are doing their most important work at a time that was supposed to be the leftover years, they were making a monument out of them. And so if the Experience Corps members were doing it, and Jimmy Carter was doing it, and Bill Gates was doing it, we were wondering whether there was a broader pattern and started doing research. But I remember being in a meeting where a half a dozen of us were discussing this pattern and we were batting around names. And in fact, our organization was called Civic Ventures then, a very bland title. And somebody came up with the idea of Encore career. Wasn't me, although I've probably taken credit for it...

Andy	It's a great term....
Marc	...over the years. And then we started doing the research. And then that led to our own sort of second act stories effort, which was the Purpose Prize. And we decided that was the most dramatic place where we could elevate this idea of a second act for the greater good. Looking at people who were ordinary people but doing the kinds of things that Jimmy Carter was doing, creating solutions to significant social problems.
Andy	He addresses Emory's freshman class every single year and gives them a, you know, sort of start to the year that sort of thing. Let's get into the book, "How to Live Forever" is kind of a trick title. It's not about freezing your DNA. It's not about eating kale. What's behind the title and how did you come up with it?
Marc	Well, the outrage is behind the title.
Andy	It's usually a good thing behind a title.
Marc	<p>I live in the Bay Area, and I'm surrounded by a lot of technologists who consider themselves Masters of the Universe. And there's been a lot of coverage in recent years, about the billions of dollars that they're investing in dramatic extension of the American lifespan. And some, among them, Peter Tiel, and Larry Ellison, the Oracle founder, have actually gone so far as to say that their objective is to conquer death. And it seemed to me not only narcissistic but profoundly unwise and really quite counter to another stage of Silicon Valley. Other than Steve Jobs, who gave that remarkable commencement address at Stanford, and described mortality, described death as the single greatest invention of life. And I think I agree with Jobs and not with Larry Ellison.</p> <p>But I think the main reaction when I got past my outrage at the narcissism of the Silicon Valley elite is that the real way to live forever is not through freezing ourselves or ingesting the blood of some 20-year-old, it's through connecting with younger generations. And that's the way it's always been, it's the way I hope it always will be. And it is very deeply linked with accepting our mortality and not running away from it. And when we accept our mortality, and we realize we're not gonna be living for 5000 years, it creates tremendous incentive to invest in the succession of generations that will follow us.</p>
Andy	We'll come back to that theme in a couple of questions. But talk for a moment about the demographics that we see, maybe just limit it to America in terms of we're living longer, our population is aging. What are the key numbers that are the backdrop of your book here?

Marc	Well, you know, in a way, there's a cultural backdrop, which is that we started out as a country that was enraptured with older people. Historians talk about the early portion of the American Republic being a gerontocracy. And people actually, I didn't write about this book but I'm thinking of it as you ask that question, we wore white wigs. We lied on the census and said we were older than we actually were, we actually had special tailors in colonial America, who cut clothes so that it made people look like they were slumped over.
Andy	We want to look old.
Marc	We wanted to look old. That was the objective because it meant that...living a long life meant that we were...it was a sign from the divine that we did live the life of grace. And so...
Andy	I guess everyone's dying at 40 at that point or something like that.
Marc	Yes. So that was part of it as well. And here we are in a very different place. Since that time, we've become a country enraptured with youth. And we lie on the census now and say we're two or three years younger than we actually are and we cut our clothes in ways that try to make us look more upright. We color our hair. And yet, we're now crossing a demographic rubicon where we are objectively more old than young. There were a series of articles in 2018 talking about the mid-2030s is the time we were gonna officially become the more open young society, but the number they were using was 65 as the old age marker, under 18 as the marker of youth. Turns out that 2019, this very year, is the time we have more people over 60 than under 18, which I think is a reminder that this is already happening, it's not gonna happen in 15 years, or 50 years.
Andy	And we're adding, I think I heard a term you used in one of your speeches, like a month every year or something like that.
Marc	Actually, it's two months a year. And I use that in relation to a famous speech that JFK gave, really, just a few months before his death, he got up in front of Congress and gave a long and really extraordinarily visionary speech about aging in America. And the line that stood out is that he said that the sign of a great nation was one where we were concerned not just about adding years to life, but life to those years.
Andy	Yeah, that's wonderful. Must be a Ted Sorensen line, right?
Marc	It's got to be. And in fact, you know, on the...so here's a guy who, you know, in that same period, asked Americans what they could do for their country, to ask that question, who launched the Peace Corps for the Boomers. But in that speech, he issued a call to action to older people and a challenge. And he said that older people don't wanna go to the seashore, they don't wanna go to the sidelines, they wanna be a central part of making this country great. And he proposed a National Service Corps for older people, particularly focused on helping the younger generations.

<p>Andy</p>	<p>I wanna go to something you talked about early in the book, you talk about Del Webb and Sun City and sort of the start of this trend to try to separate the old from the young. And it starts off sort of with almost a noble purpose but didn't have a favorable ending from what you described in the book. Can you talk a little about that? And the problem you see with this separation of old and young?</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>It's easy to look back from the perspective of 2019 and see the problems that have been caused by age segregation, and particularly by places like Sun City who became these temples. So essentially, playgrounds for older people focused on the ethos of graying as playing. But when I went back in the book and tried to understand where that came from, it didn't make me think that ultimately over the long term it was a good idea and we should keep doing those things. But it did make me much more sympathetic to the people who launched these places because, in the mid-1950s in America, we traveled a far distance from the gerontocracy of the early years. Older people were, in the words of Lewis Mumford, this wonderful urban historian, he said, "At no point in any society had any group been so rejected his older people today." He wrote that in 1956. The leader of the UAW, Walter Ruth, got up in front of his union in the late 1940s and described retirees as too old to work, too young to die. People who are in this state of limbo rejected by society, told to rock aimlessly on the porch in a Whistler's mother-like existence. And it was not a good time to be old. And a visionary entrepreneur, a guy with a very unlikely name of Big Ben Schleifer, who was a New Yorker...</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>Great name.</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>...moved to Arizona because he had asthma, and he went to the desert for its salubrious effects, had had this profound experience on a trip back to New York seeing isolated, lonely friend who was elderly in a nursing home and said he never wanted to end up like that. And he came back, he was working as a real estate agent, and he came up with this brilliant idea of creating a kibbutz, he was Jewish, and he was a socialist, that would provide inexpensive communal living for older people in the desert, and he created a city called Youngtown, emphasizing that this was a place where you could recapture your youth. And it captured the national imagination of Dave Garroway, featured it on his "Wide Wide World" television show, millions of people watched it, and it created a national phenomenon.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>I loved your book, I really thoroughly enjoyed it. But some of the most enjoyable parts of it to me were the people that you introduced me to who were kind of...I think you refer to them as sort of the innovators and people who you introduced.</p> <p>There are probably 50 that I really enjoyed. But I wanna ask you about a couple of them and kind of maybe paint a little bit of a picture of them and what you learned from them. And I have to start with Aggie Bennett and Louise Casey, both foster grandparents at the Maine Medical Center. They seem to have a profound impact on you and your research and just sort of your thinking about this whole thing.</p>

<p>Marc</p>	<p>They really did. And I think I wrote this book for them because there are some stories that I feel like need to get told and continue to get told. And I want to tell the story because I feel such a deep gratitude to them and really a deep affection because we became very close. I was young, I was probably just 30. And I was really interested in the role older people could play caring for young people. I've been involved in a study of the Big Brother Big Sister program. And I was thinking about, you know, where's the untapped love and human capital in society? And that led me to discovering a war on poverty program called Foster Grandparents, which is really a remarkable achievement, still involves about 30,000 people a year, and 2 of those foster grandparents at the time that I was going out to learn about the program were Aggie Bennett and Louise Casey. Aggie and Louise didn't go to college.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>Was like a waitress or something.</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>Aggie was a waitress and Louise worked in a sawmill in Maine, and her husband also worked in the sawmill. But he was a minister in the church of the Nazarene, you know, a kind of lay minister. And he passed away in that church, asked Louise if she would fill in that role. And they retired. They were living on Social Security. Aggie went to the senior center where she was given a job making satin coat hangers, and she was quite salty. Louise was demure. Aggie was the tall one, she was 4'11, Louise was 4'10. And she never let Louise, you know, forget her diminutive status, relative diminutive status. But Aggie, she said she failed retirement. No satin coat hangers for her. She said she wanted to wear away, not rust away.</p> <p>So she heard about Foster Grandparents, signed up. They sent her to Maine Medical Center where she met Louise. They each worked 20 hours a week. When I showed up the first time I met Aggie, she was dressed as a tiger. It was Halloween and she was chasing kids around the halls and there were squeals of joy. And they really, I think, brought a human touch to this pediatrics ward. But it was also an extremely difficult job emotionally.</p> <p>There's a wonderful Blake poem in which he talks about joy and woe being woven fine. As you expect, you know, for all the tiger costumes and squeals of joy, a pediatrics ward at a place like Maine Medical Center, biggest hospital in the region, the most sophisticated care that the kids who had the most serious challenges ended up there and usually for long periods of time. So you're eight years old, you've got cancer, you're five hours away from home, in an institutional setting, and ultimately, your parents have to leave because they are working as a waitress.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>They got three other kids at home.</p>

<p>Marc</p>	<p>Three other kids and they can't afford to lose their jobs. And so you're alone, and that's where Aggie and Louise came in and they really became family to these children. And in that, you know, in the most dire circumstances one of the most profound times I had with Aggie and Louise after I got to know them well and they became like grandmothers to me. Particularly Louise, I would get Hallmark cards from her on my birthday with this grandmotherly scrawl. I asked them at some point, you know, well...and I think it was probably right after a child had died. And I asked them, you know, why did they continue doing this? And I was a little worried that I was bringing up a taboo subject, and they got uncharacteristically quiet, especially for Aggie. And they just started talking, story after story, of these experiences they had. And Aggie told me a story that I have a hard time even relating without myself, you know, breaking into tears, but about a baby that had a terminal illness and the mother had to leave. And she extracted one promise from the nurses was that her baby wouldn't die in a crib. And when that baby was in its final hour, Sue North, the head of the unit, came to Aggie and she asked Aggie if she would hold the baby.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>One of the most poignant moments in your book. I mean, it's just really, it was brilliant. What did they teach you when you saw them and what they were doing? Did that tell you that this young and old combination is really a winning combination?</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>It did. You know, in some ways, you know, I've written a lot about and thought a lot about generativity, you know, investing in younger people as a way of living on. So how do you make sense of situations like that where Aggie and Louise...Aggie told me another story where a girl with a congenital heart condition had formed a really close bond with her because she couldn't talk to her parents about what she was going through. And the girl died, in the obituary, it said that she was survived by her parents and a foster grandmother, Aggie Bennett. So is that generativity, you know, when that younger person doesn't even...and I think it is, you know, I think in this kind of deep sense of investing in the next generation and letting go, whatever that's gonna end up meaning. But I think that, you know, they did, along with, you know, deep respect and affection and appreciation, and a reminder of how much people who on paper, you would think, you know, they were kind of proverbial little old ladies.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>Let me take you to another one that really stood out to me. Your book describes a movie, a documentary called "Keep On Keeping On." It was released in 2014. It profiles a veteran trumpet player, Clark Terry, in his second act teaching a young, blind piano prodigy, Justin Kauflin. Kauflin, am I saying that right?</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>Kauflin, yes.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>Okay. Tell us about them and the lesson of their friendship and, I don't know, sort of why that story is important to your book?</p>

Marc	You know, there's so many ways. That's really one of the most moving experiences I've ever had is seeing that film and I watched it over and over again and ultimately became friends with Justin Kauflin. And I think at one level...So the story is about Clark Terry who's one of the greatest jazz trumpet players ever. In fact, Dizzy Gillespie thought he was the greatest jazz trumpet player.
Andy	Miles Davis worked with only the top, top guys.
Marc	He was Miles Davis' mentor. He was the person that Miles Davis went to when he decided he wanted to become a great trumpet player and Clark Terry took him underwing. He did the same thing with Quincy Jones, countless other musicians. He was also a racial pioneer. He was the first African American on "The Tonight Show" band. And in his later years, in his late 70s, he stopped performing as much and became a jazz teacher at William Paterson University.
Andy	Fantastic jazz program.
Marc	Fantastic jazz program and he was kind of a pillar in that program. And at that time, he was diabetic and he was losing his sight as a result of diabetes. And he was introduced to a young, I think 24-year-old piano player who was blind, Justin Kauflin, really because the person who introduced him thought that Kauflin would be able to help Terry deal with navigating the world without sight. And what formed was this beautiful relationship. I think one of the reasons I wanted to write about it was because it isn't an outlier. It's very much in the tradition of jazz that these older musicians...Terry had been doing it his whole life. And he took Kauflin underwing and they developed a very powerful relationship. And I think they...You watch their relationship and there's so many lessons that we can all take in into our own life. But one of them is that Terry was deeply dedicated to Kauflin finding his own voice. He didn't want to Kauflin to sound like Clark Terry. He wanted Kauflin to sound like Kauflin. He showed this kind of deep confidence in him that involved letting go.
Andy	Two others, and these were both ones that I've profiled on "Second Act Stories." Judy Cockerton of the Treehouse Foundation. Just any thoughts on what Judy's experience teaches you?
Marc	I feel like Treehouse is...it's an utterly pragmatic program in some ways because it's a way to conquer isolation and loneliness and the absence of social support that so many foster families face as they're raising kids and so many older people face. We're hearing statistics now that suggests that loneliness is the single greatest public health epidemic in America. The former Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy, has argued that being socially isolated is equivalent, based on research, to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

	<p>So here we're taking two groups that are oftentimes under a lot of stress and isolated older people and foster families, bringing them together in a build environment which enables them to support each other and enables that to happen naturally in daily life. But I think what's kind of shocking if you take a step back from all of the wonderful, commonsensical things that are happening at Treehouse and some other places like it, including Bridge Meadows in Oregon, is that it takes a utopian community to do something that had happened naturally for all of human history.</p>
Andy	<p>Right, intergenerational living. Yeah.</p>
Marc	<p>Exactly. And so I feel like Judy is a kind of pioneer of progressive nostalgia. She's finding new ways to do old things that fit the realities of the world that we live in today.</p>
Andy	<p>The last one I just wanna ask you about, and I interviewed him about a month ago, is Chip Connelly, and his experience is very different than the other three that we've just talked about but sort of a more modern day example of young and old working together.</p>
Marc	<p>Yeah, Chip's a brilliant example. And his work has really captured our imagination at Encore in part because he found a way to label and describe something that we were seeing over and over again in our own work. So we have a program called the Encore Fellows Initiative. We've got about 2000 Encore Fellows. They're essentially like the movie "The Intern" in the real world. Great movie, "experience never grows old" was the tagline. And the Encore fellows are in nonprofits, unlike the Robert De Niro character who's in the high tech startup in that film. But they're using their mid-life experience in new ways to new ends in these new settings.</p>
Andy	<p>He was a wonderful interview. He has this one line when I was interviewing him, he says, "I would be the guy in the room asking a question a 4-year-old would ask, you know, to all these tech 25something's or whatever."</p> <p>I wanna ask you about two quotes in the book that really stick out to me. I think the second one is not yours, but I think the first one is yours. "The real fountain of youth is living with youth." And you've used that phrase in the book, I've heard you use that in some of your talks and online things. What does that mean to you?</p>
Marc	<p>Well, you know, I think the way I ended up saying it, and I'm not sure it makes grammatical sense, or I'm not sure what if you were really to dissect it in, you know, a lawyerly way whether it would hold up. But it's that the real fountain of youth is the fountain with youth.</p>
Andy	<p>The fountain with youth. Okay, I had that off a little bit. Sorry about that</p>

<p>Marc</p>	<p>Yeah. No, no. And, you know, for me, I think the main idea was that we've been looking for the fountain of youth in all the wrong places, whether it was the waters of St. Augustine or the test tubes of Silicon Valley. But the way to remain young, vital, to live on in a kind of more profound way is through connecting with younger generations. You see that in "Keep On Keeping On," you know, because the truth is, you know, we can talk about all the wonderful possibilities in the second half of life that have come with extended health. But death is...mortality is a tough thing to handle and the idea that it may be an end in some ways but not in others I think helps us deal with the central sorrow of life, that what we've learned lives on.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>I think the second quote I wanted to ask you about is his quote, I may have it off a little bit here but, "Every child should have an adult that is irrationally crazy about them."</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>That's Uri Bronfman Brenner. He was the co-founder of the Head Start Program and one of the giants of child development in the 20th century, taught at Cornell for many decades. And at the end of his life, he was asked, you know, "Uri Bronfman Brenner, you've written all these scientific papers, you're a giant in child development. What have you learned?" And he said, "What every child needs is at least one adult who's irrationally crazy about them."</p> <p>And I think when you combine Bronfman Brenner and George Vallen is that they fit together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. What every child needs is somebody who's irrationally crazy about them, someone who's gonna take them underwing, nurture them, give them love. And then you've got George Vallen saying, "Happiness is is love, full stop, and especially love that flows downhill." And it's not an accident.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>I wanna go to chapter eight of your book, it's called "Living Mortal." And while you say at the beginning of it, "This is not a formula, it's not a blueprint for success, no 10 points to follow here," you make a few observations, a few recommendations and I picked out 5 that I think particularly relate well to the area of a second act or an encore career. And I wanna ask you about each. The first is "except mortality." You sort of mentioned that earlier already today. But there's a wonderful line in there, the death rate holds steady at 100%.</p>
<p>Marc</p>	<p>That's from The Onion.</p>
<p>Andy</p>	<p>Right</p>

Marc	No, it's really true. I mean, I think it all starts with that because I think our own mortality is the trigger that gets us thinking about flowing downhill. And in Atul Gawande's book, I don't think I wrote about this in mine, but he quotes the philosopher Josiah Royce who has this notion that, you know, you would feel very differently about your own death if you knew that five minutes after you died the whole world did too. But there's meaning in knowing that what we've contributed to life continues to resonate beyond. But I think there's a paradox in a way because it's not really about control, it's trying to contribute in positive ways to younger generations but just like Clark Terry did with Justin Kauflin, letting go. And I think that that is really where it all starts. That Steve Jobs is right, not Larry Ellison.
Andy	Jobs wins.
Marc	Jobs wins.
Andy	Second one that I picked out was "focus on relationships." Talk about that for a moment. You had a line in there, "Relationships matter most, full stop."
Marc	Alison Gopnik, a psychologist at Berkeley, has a beautiful book called "The Gardener and the Carpenter." And she argues that we focus so much on, as parents, as developers of the next generation, trying to kind of saw and chisel these young people into things that, you know, we think that'll help them do better in the world. But really what we need to do is just create these gardens to show love, to create thriving environments and help young people find their way. And I think these relationships are in many ways the most important thing that we can impart to young people. I think it not only helps to knit the social fabric but it gives them a kind of fundamental sense of humanity.
Andy	Get proximate" was one of your other recommendations in there. And I guess here you're talking about really sort of rejecting this age segregation concept?
Marc	I am. I mean, I think that a lot of the reasons...if our developmental imperatives as human beings push us towards connecting with each other and these connections bring great happiness and a sense of fulfillment, you would think that they would happen naturally. But in fact, the way we reorganized society in the 20th century caused us to go from the most age-integrated society in the world to arguably the most age-segregated to what some people have described as a state of age apartheid. And so a lot of what used to happen naturally doesn't happen naturally anymore. Just think of it in terms of grandparents and grandkids. So many grandparents, my case, our kids' grandparents are living in Philadelphia in...
Andy	Two thousand miles away.

Marc	Right, right. And so we have a challenge of creating opportunities where people can interact naturally. And I think that's something we can do as individuals. Don't go live in Sun City where, you know, if you have your grandchildren come live with you they're gonna plant a sign on your lawn. Don't spend all your time in environments where you're only gonna interact with your peers. There's nothing wrong with having peer contact but I think we need to work harder to put ourselves in the path of young people just like Clark Terry did by going to William Paterson and becoming a teacher in an environment where he was gonna meet Justin Kauflin. So I think there's a lot we can do to be in a position to have these relationships form.
Andy	Two more that are very, very relevant to my work. "Find the changemaker within," comment on that one.
Marc	That really grows out of our experience with the Purpose Prize where we gave out prizes every year to social entrepreneurs who were over the age of 50. And we wondered early on whether we would end up having enough good candidates for that prize. At the end of 10 years, we had 10,000 nominations for the Purpose Prize. Helps if you're giving \$100,000 prize. But still, the vast majority were remarkable. I remember in the first year, we were hoping we would get 100, we got 1200 for the 5 prizes and we had to create a group of Purpose Prize fellows who are essentially in the top 5%. And in that fellows group, there were three MacArthur Genius Award winners. So it's a reminder of the kind of creativity and social innovation potential that's in the older population.
Andy	I interviewed one Purpose Prize winner for this podcast, James Fallon of the Peter Green Project and just brilliant guy and just...
Marc	And Judy Cockerton was a winner as well.
Andy	Oh, I didn't even know that.
Marc	You know, and they're great examples of people who are using their mid-life experience and marrying it with creativity and innovation and showing that experience and innovation can go hand in hand.
Andy	The last one you have is also interesting, "combined purpose and a paycheck." I think this relates back to the 4.5 million that are in Encore careers.
Marc	Absolutely. You know, people think that this has to be a voluntary enterprise. And I hear from a lot of people, you know, I just can't afford to do this, but in fact, there are so many opportunities to have full-blown second acts that may not be as lucrative as what people were doing in mid-life but help pay the bills and create a platform for doing this enormously fulfilling work.

	<p>I had the chance during research for the book to go to the U.K. and I saw one of my favorite projects there. Lucy Callaway, a renowned and beloved financial journalist at "Financial Times," at the age of 58, inspired by her 20-something daughter who did the British equivalent of Teach for America announce to her readers that she was going to leave the "Financial Times" and become a math teacher. And she did something that nobody here in the United States has done. Not Jimmy Carter, not Bill Gates, not even us at Encore, and said, "Readers of a certain age, quit your jobs and join me." And lo and behold, 1000 people came forward to become teachers.</p>
Andy	<p>I wanna take you a little different direction that's a little more personal. Your book also talks about your father, his recent passing, and also a particular reading at his eulogy which might be a good way to...I think you use it to sum up the book and might be a good way to sum up our interview.</p>
Marc	<p>Yes, you know, on this theme of mortality, I was taken by David Brooks' short Ted Talk, which he then picked up in the book, "The Road to Character." And he talked about the eulogy virtues and the resume virtues and essentially argued that we spend much of our life beholden to the resume virtues, trying to pile up accomplishment after accomplishment but that can be at odds with what you want to be remembered for, what you want the person who's delivering your eulogy, after you've gone, to say about your life. And that oftentimes has to do with things like relationship, love, legacy. And so I was gonna go to South Korea to really get a full experience of the eulogy virtues because there's a thriving program in that country led by the funeral industry in which you could stage your own funeral.</p>
Andy	<p>It's wonderful. I read it in your book and it's really funny.</p>
Marc	<p>Yeah, I think 30,000 people have done it now where you go and you're locked in a coffin for 10 minutes. It sounds terrifying and you deliver your own eulogy. But in the midst of planning that trip, my own father passed away and it wasn't a surprise because he'd been sick for some time. I felt a lot about his life because in many ways he embodied everything that I was writing about in the book. He was mandatorily retired from the School District of Philadelphia at the age of 60, right at the time that we were bringing Experience Corps to the School District of Philadelphia. So some bitter irony there. But instead of going off to play golf and bingo at Sun City, he started substitute teaching and he started organizing track meets for elementary school students. He'd been a track star in high school and college and had a lifetime love of track and field.</p> <p>And I thought a lot about how that had been really....it was something that he did not out of a sense of obligation, out of some grim sense of, "I've gotta live a..." It was just a joyous thing. He loved being around kids.</p>

	<p>And when he passed away, I was disappointed because the rabbi that he knew wasn't available to do his eulogy and a young rabbi came in his place. And I was worried that this person who didn't know my father wouldn't capture his spirit, and I was so wrong. And the story that he told, that I put in the book and that I remember vividly to this day, was one from the Talmud. And it's about an old man who's kneeled over planting an acorn. And a rabbi, a crusty, curmudgeonly, not particularly pastoral rabbi comes upon him and scoffs, "Old man, I can't believe you're planting an acorn. You're never going to see that turn into an oak. Crazy. Why are you wasting your time?" And I imagine the old man kind of slowly turning up and fixing his glance on this unwise rabbi and saying, "You know, I spent my whole life under the shade of trees that others planted before me and I plant this acorn for those who will follow."</p> <p>And it reminded me of a Greek proverb, "Society grows great when older people plant trees under whose shade they shall never sit." And it reminded me that this is ancient wisdom that spans just about every tradition and that there is a purpose for that season that's accumulating in later life. And it's the purpose that we've had since the beginning of human history, which is to plant seeds that will provide shade for the generations to come. And that's how my father lived his life. And I think that's the only way we're gonna make it as a more old than young society.</p>
Andy	<p>The book is called "How to Live Forever: The Enduring Power of Connecting the Generations." Marc Friedman, thank you so much for coming in today, for joining us. It's really an honor to interview you and I hope many other people read this book because it was an absolute joy and I was thrilled to read it.</p>
Marc	<p>Thanks so much and it means a lot. And it was an absolute joy to have this conversation with you.</p>
<p>OUTGOING MUSIC</p>	
Andy	<p>So that is a wrap on Episode 40 of "Second Act Stories." Our special thanks to Marc Freedman for taking the time to meet with me during his recent visit to New York City. Special thanks to Sarah McKinney, also of Encore.org, for setting up this interview.</p> <p>If you are enjoying Second Act Stories, I hope you'll consider joining our group of 150+ Second Act Advocates. There's no cost to joining. We'll let you know when a new episode is out and ask that you share it with your own social media following on Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. You can sign-up by visiting our website, www.seconductstories.org, and clicking on the Second Act Advocates link in the upper-left hand corner of the homepage.</p>

	<p>Our Second Act Advocate for the month of April is Gordon Hochhalter. After a long career in advertising and marketing, Gordon now runs the Art Of It, a creative consultancy that works largely with non-profits and exploits the power of purpose, tribes and storytelling. Thanks for continuing support, Gordon.</p>
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We hope you'll keep listening. There are more second act stories just around the corner.