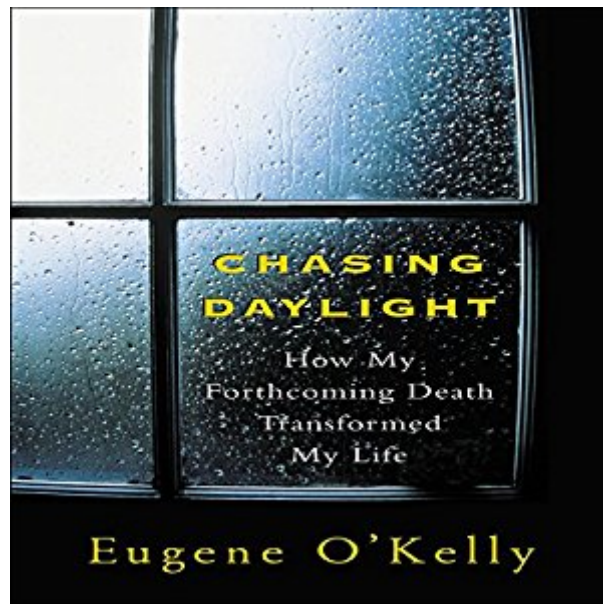


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# Chasing Daylight: How My Forthcoming Death Transformed My Life



## Synopsis

At 53, Eugene O'Kelly was in the full swing of life. Chairman and CEO of KPMG, one of the largest U.S. accounting firms, he enjoyed a successful career and drew happiness from his wife, children, family, and close friends. He was thinking ahead: the next business trip, the firm's continued success, weekend plans with his wife, his daughters first day of eighth grade. Then in May 2005, Gene was diagnosed with late-stage brain cancer and given three to six months to live. Just like that. Now a growing darkness was absorbing the bright future he had seen for himself. He would have to change his plans, quickly, and capture what he could of his last diminishing days. *Chasing Daylight* is the account of his final journey. Starting from the time of his diagnosis and concluded upon his death less than four months later, this book is his unforgettable story. With startling intimacy, it chronicles the dissolution of Eugene O'Kelly's life and his gradual awakening to a more profound understanding. Interweaving unsettling details of his battle with cancer with his moment-to-moment reflections on life and death, love and success, spirituality and the search for meaning, it provides a testament to the power of the human spirit and a compelling message about how to live a more vivid, balanced, and meaningful life. Inspiring, passionate, deeply insightful, *Chasing Daylight* is a remarkable man's poignant farewell to a beloved world.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours and 8 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Education

Audible.com Release Date: October 16, 2012

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B009RVU38M

Best Sellers Rank: #152 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Business Leaders #640 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Cancer #770 in Books > Self-Help > Death & Grief > Grief & Bereavement

## Customer Reviews

You never really consider how short life is until you're given a grim prognostication about your future. This is exactly what Eugene O'Kelly felt, and his story is one that is both poignant and

thought-provoking. Chronicling the last 4 months of his life, O'Kelly describes his path from CEO to terminal patient. It is a touching memoir about the brevity of life and the importance of the small moments. My mom recommended this book for me and it has certainly opened my eyes. You never realize how much time you spend focusing on otherwise trivial day-to-day affairs. It makes you want to break out of your cocoon and explore even the most basic ideas that you've been avoiding. O'Kelly makes his impending death seem like an adventure rather than a morbid object of fear or resentment. It has certainly made me want to make the most of every moment. In doing so, I've tried to find more healthful ways to live my life. I picked up a copy of *Simple Natural Cures: Cheap & Effective Remedies for Everyday Common Ailments* for my Kindle, and it has been a massive help for my health and well-being. I often suffer from indigestion, headaches, and anxiety, but after looking through the treatments outlined in *Simple Natural Cures* and employing them, I've been able to lead a much happier life. Like most people, my life has been filled with stress and anxiety, and O'Kelly's book has taught me that life's too short to live with these basic ailments plaguing everything. *Simple Natural Cures* helps you eliminate these commonplace maladies, helping you live the happier, healthier, and fuller life that O'Kelly ascribed to in his final months.

I was fortunate enough to be handed a copy of this book by the publisher last week, when the James Frey/*A Million Little Pieces* debacle was coming to a head. It was fantastic to read *Chasing Daylight*, a real, un-sexed up memoir that deserves the attention that James Frey's books don't. Most of the book was written by Gene O'Kelly after May 2005, when he was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer (the last chapter was written by his wife after O'Kelly died). He wrote about how he managed his final months alive; saying final goodbyes to friends and family, remembering "perfect moments" he has before the diagnosis and experiencing many more new ones after. Although the book really, REALLY made me wonder if I wanted to know how and when I was going to die, it made me think even more of how one should live. The story isn't about someone who threw his life away with addiction and had run-ins - real and imagined - with the law. O'Kelly was an accountant, most recently head of KPMG, with a wife and two children. He was mostly an ordinary person we can relate to who ran his life at 100 miles an hour - and was forced to step on the brakes when he got his diagnosis. Among other things, the book has a great message to all of us who lead our lives at that speed that we should slow it down, accept certain things the way they are, and value moments with family above time at work. I also found the writing extraordinarily real, and at times had trouble concentrating because I found myself wondering what O'Kelly was thinking when he was writing it, knowing that he had seen his "last autumn in New York" and he knew how his

memoir was going to end. Facing certain death with his level of peace was admirable. This is a great book.

This book is written by Eugene O'Kelly, who was a very successful and ambitious CEO of a large international accounting firm. In May 2005 he was told he had only a few months to live because he was suffering from an advanced form of brain cancer. Mr. O'Kelly shows remarkable optimism in the face of his illness - not in thinking that he could beat it, but in believing that he had actually been given a gift and he would now be given the opportunity to truly live his life to the fullest and experience "Perfect" moments and days. One comes away from this novel very impressed with Mr. O'Kelly, both for the way he chose to live his life at the end and for sharing his experience with us. I earlier wrote a review for a similar book, and will say what I said then - that I don't think we humans are hardwired to always "live in the moment", and appreciate life to the fullest all the time. But these type books do help us understand that we should take the time to do so. Mr. O'Kelly had a strong religious background and he believed in an afterlife and that he might be reunited with his loved ones. For people who do not hold these beliefs this book may be less comforting. But even so, Mr. O'Kelly's recommendations for how to have "Perfect" moments and days are relevant for everyone.

I read Gene's book in one sitting, and will surely read it again soon. It's amazing how this man could possibly face his own mortality with courage, strength, and a new-found appreciation for the little things in life. I laughed (or at least chuckled at his ever-present sense of humor), I cried, and I thoroughly enjoyed every page. This book had a profound impact on me. It has left me with many questions - about my own life and how I live each day. I am going to try to live for those "perfect moments." Thanks for sharing your vision with us Gene.-AA

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