

**LEGACY:  
LIFE REFLECTIONS**

**Reg Starkey**



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with your host...

**Chris Grimes**

Broadcaster. Coach. Facilitator. Motivational Comedian.



## The Stories That Almost Disappeared

Reg Starkey's mother used to say 'when I get organised' she'd write her stories. Stories about leaving school at 14 because her parents couldn't afford the grammar school uniform. Stories about factory work in the East End of London, where people were employed just to knock on windows and wake workers for their shifts.

- She never got organised. Those stories – precious fragments of working-class London – lost forever.

The youngest of four children, Reg lost all three siblings in against-the-odds tragedies. Two brothers were killed when the tail fell off a scheduled airliner, a catastrophic structural failure that grounded an entire fleet. His sister, who'd adopted those brothers' three orphaned children, was killed years later when an oncoming driver had a heart attack.

Born in the Blitz, plucked from the East End of London and sent to private school thanks to Sir Reginald Kennedy Cox (a generous bachelor playwright who adopted Reg's family), Reg learnt to speak 'properly' – but never quite belonged.

Too posh for his working-class family. Not posh enough for the gentry. 'I felt like a traitor to my class,' he says.

- A life coach later helped him reframe: 'I don't fit in anywhere' to 'I fit in everywhere.'

Now in his 80s, Reg understood what his mother never could: memories fade, stories vanish.

**People live. People die. People disappear.**

Unless they don't.

## Why This Copywriter Didn't Write His Own Autobiography

Here's an irony that might make you smile: Reg spent decades crafting compelling narratives for major advertising campaigns. He studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. He qualified as a lawyer. He understood the architecture of a good story better than most people. Yet when his children pressured him to write his autobiography, he kept putting it off.

- 'It's a very hard thing to do well,' Reg explains, with the clarity of someone who's spent a career making difficult things look easy. '

And very expensive to do properly.' The arithmetic was clear. Printing costs. Artwork. Thousands of pounds for a ghostwriter. Months or years of work.

- As a copywriter, Reg understood this was precisely the kind of major project that rarely gets completed.

Even beautifully written autobiographies often go unread. Reg knew it. You probably know it too. That memoir on your shelf, barely opened. Good intentions that never quite materialise into action.

But the children kept asking. The clock kept ticking. And his grandchildren – now 5 and 3 – would never know their grandfather when they reach 21.

**Reg needed his version of his life, captured in a way that would truly be experienced.**

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### **That's when he found Legacy Life Reflections.**

Not a book project, ghostwriter, or months of work. Just an hour's conversation on Zoom to capture his voice, his face, his stories, an audiovisual autobiography to share privately with family or, if he chose, broadcast to the world via a UK radio show.

"Ghostwriters, editors, and video specialists can all come with a hefty price tag. Zoom offers a smart, cost-effective solution - and Chris Grimes provides the professional safe hands to ensure excellent results," Reg says.

"Chris's storytelling stands out for its originality and heart. Whether sharing personal stories about his father or interviewing actor Rob Brydon, Chris delivers each narrative with warmth, wit, and a captivating rhythm that keeps listeners hooked." Reg reflected

### **What Happens When You Capture a Voice**

The session took place with Reg in his armchair, where, he jokes, his head sometimes slipped off screen, making him look 'like Buzz Lightyear.'

Chris Grimes guided him through the 5-4-3-2-1 framework; four things that shaped his life, three that inspire him, two that grab his attention, and one secret, in a gentle conversation that went to surprising places.

- "Chris is a gentle man, being interviewed by him is like having a day spa for your brain creating an oasis of kindness. And you don't have to reveal anything you don't want to." Reg says.

His three children watched the recording. They said it 'added a new dimension.' **They heard things they'd never heard before. The hour-long video captured everything: his appearance, his voice ('very important in terms of memory,' Reg notes), the way he tells a story.**

### **The Day He Wrote Off Four Years**

- One of the four defining moments Reg shared: the career switch from law to advertising, catalysed by a psychometric test that cost 15 guineas.

The first of Reg's big four shaping influences was Sir Reginald Kennedy Cox, the generous bachelor playwright who adopted Reg and his family and paid for his private schooling. Then there was Reg's father, who worked for Sir Reginald – a brilliant man. And his mother, whom he describes as bright and beautiful.

Coming from a working-class background, Reg tried for Oxford at 17. They told him to return in two years. He went to Paris instead, studying at the Sorbonne. When he returned, his disappointed mother suggested accounting (rejected immediately), then law (accepted). However, he was thoroughly miserable.

At 24, with four or five years already invested, Reg took the vocational guidance test. The results were definitive: he'd never succeed as a lawyer. His psychological profile didn't match. Had he come at 18, they would have suggested journalism. But given his 'very high interest in money,' they recommended advertising.

Most people would have been devastated. Reg simply 'wrote those years off' and pursued advertising. He completed a copywriting course at Watford and never looked back, building what he describes as a colourful, mostly good career.

- He calls that vocational test 'the single biggest thing that shaped me.'

**Reg believes choosing the right career is super important – perhaps the most important message he wants to convey to his grandchildren.**

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### **The Kitchen Without a Cooker**

For the 'one thing' revelation, Reg revealed something uniquely telling: he's the only person he knows with a kitchen without a cooker. In his London home, the gap where it should be sits empty – a monument to a man who hasn't cooked for himself this entire century.

'I find this very revealing about myself,' Reg says. It's this kind of honest, humanising detail that makes Legacy Life Reflections more than just a recitation of achievements. It captures the person: flaws, dependencies, peculiarities, and all.

### **Love and Be Loved Always**

Reg is unflinchingly honest about his past struggles, involving drinking and gambling. His children have forgiven him. He wants his grandchildren to forgive him too, to understand he was 'basically a good bloke who tried hard, but certainly wasn't perfect' – someone with 'lots of serious flaws' who ultimately did his best.

### **This is his version. His truth. On the record. In his voice.**

- "Love and be loved always" – this is what Reg hopes to leave with his grandchildren, alongside his story.

### **Are You Happy to Die Without Trace?**

When asked what he'd say to someone hesitating about Legacy Life Reflections, Reg's response cuts through every rationalisation: 'Are you happy to die without trace?'

### **The only memories will be others' versions of your story.**

A brief preparatory conversation. Then an hour on Zoom. That's it.

The result: an audiovisual record covering your most important shaping experiences, inspirations, passions, and personal revelations.

'A little personal podcast of your life' that your children will watch (unlike a book they'll feel guilty about not reading).

'If it doesn't sound too pompous,' Reg says, **'I would say I've done my duty. I've done my duty to my children and grandchildren. I've gone on the record with my version of my life,'** something his parents never had the opportunity to do.

### **The Version That Would Have Been Lost**

Reg's mother never got organised. Her stories: all lost now. Gone completely.

But Reg's grandchildren won't face that loss. When they're older, perhaps when Reg is no longer here, they'll be able to hear their grandfather's voice, watch his expressions, and learn about the vocational test that changed his trajectory, the kitchen without a cooker, and the importance of finding the right career.

They'll know he was basically a good bloke who tried hard but wasn't perfect. They'll have his version of his truth.

**Because sometimes the most profound gift isn't leaving something behind. It's making sure your voice – your actual voice, saying these actual things – never disappears at all.**

### **Ready to capture your story?**

Contact Chris Grimes at Legacy Life Reflections

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