I delivered a eulogy for my friend Shane Lopez at three different events, a celebration of his life at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association in Denver, Colorado on August 6, 2016, at the Funeral Mass in Lawrence, Kansas on August 13, 2016, and at a funeral service in his hometown of New Iberia, Louisiana on September 10, 2016. Below is a compilation of the versions given on those three occasions.

Shane appeared to me in a dream last night. He said I could wear my sport coat, but only if I wore jeans and no tie. I told him I was hoping if he appeared to me in a dream, that he would give me more than fashion advice. He reminded me that the funeral was going to be in Louisiana in September, and that I should be sure to wear deodorant. I was hoping for more... Indeed, I think we were all hoping for more.

My name is Tom Krieshok, and I'm a professor in the counseling psychology program at the University of Kansas. Shane Lopez was my student, my collaborator, my co-author, my faculty colleague, my mentee, my mentor, and at the end of the day, the one that really matters is that he was one of my very best friends. I know there are many of you here who could recognize in your relationship with Shane many such connections, and I suspect most of you would come to the same conclusion about the really important one being your friendship. That boy had mad skills when it came to forming and maintaining deep and meaningful relationships, and I miss my friend.

Shane had many facets to him, and I am going to talk a bit about him as a scholar and teacher; some about Shane as a person, before he became that rock star persona who touched so many lives through his TED Talks and presentations around the world; and some about Shane the messenger--both of his explicit message to create ripples of hope, and of his message by example, which was to find something you are good at, grow it, and have the courage to get out of your comfort zone to put that strength to work in the world.

In putting together thoughts for this remembrance, I relied heavily on memory, my own, several others, and the great Google memory, where my wife, Peggy, uncovered an interview done by someone close to Shane's hometown in Louisiana, where they have been asking the same set of questions to locals for quite awhile in a series called Be You. Shane's answers to those questions were at times amusing, no surprise, and at times revealing. In answer to the question, How would you like to be remembered? he replied "I would love for people to smile while telling stories of me at my funeral". So let the stories and the smiles commence. Laissez les bon temps roulez!

Shane J. Lopez came into this world in the spring of 1970, one month before I graduated from high school, a subject he liked to visit upon me regularly. Born and raised in New Iberia, LA, he was very proud of his Cajun heritage. His early work experiences included tending the fry machine at Joe's Drive In, the family restaurant; then as a teen, he umpired girls' softball, which he described as the best job a teenage boy can have. No one would have described Shane's
childhood as easy, but he allowed that to move him in a positive direction, becoming the compassionate person we came to see across the many roles he assumed.

Shane met Alli Rose, and from the time they started dating, they were a permanent couple. He started at the University of Kansas in 1992, the year he graduated as a Ragin' Cajun from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette. The first letter of recommendation I wrote for Shane was for a graduate assistant position at KU, wherein I described him as "very bright, conscientious, articulate, hard-working, easy to get along with, humorous, and caring." That description did not change much over the 24 years of our association.

He was a teaching assistant for several courses, including a minority leadership course, and a course on counseling and consultation skills for teachers through which he formed important relationships with future teachers and with teacher educators who had a profound influence on the work he went on to do later. While at KU, he received pretty much every award one of our students can receive.

In addition to his local service and his volunteer experiences, he developed a strong presence through his national participation. He was active as a student reviewer for Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, and assumed a leadership role in the national APA Graduate Student organization, serving as its representative to APPIC, the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers. He was honored with the CCPTP Outstanding Graduate Student Award, given annually by CCPTP (the Council of Counseling Psychology Training Programs) to one student across the country who embodies the values of counseling psychology.

As Shane was completing his internship at the Dwight D. Eisenhower VA Medical Center in Leavenworth, Kansas, KU had an opportunity to hire him. But we had just merged with another department, and the larger group of faculty was reticent to consider someone who graduated from one of our own programs. In the end Shane was able to win over the department faculty, the dean, and the provost, and he never looked back.

When Shane was hired, KU had just instituted a formal mentoring program for new faculty, and the chair of our newly merged department asked if I would be willing to be Shane's co-mentor with Rick Snyder across campus in the Psychology Department. I had great respect for Rick, and I gladly accepted the role. Rick was Shane's mentor for things like research, publishing, and becoming famous, while I was his superego, tasked with keeping him out of trouble, an assignment at which I was just barely successful enough.

As a faculty member, Shane continued to be a workhorse, teaching many different courses, and teaching them all well. In 2000 he was named KU's Graduate and Professional Association Outstanding Mentor, in 2003 he received both the Kansas Psychological Association Outstanding Teacher Award and KU's most prestigious Chancellor's Club Teaching Award. In 2006, he was named a Kemper Teaching Fellow at the University.

As a scholar, he was incredibly prolific, even while still a student. He worked tirelessly, and most everything he worked on, he wrote about, and most everything he wrote, got published. It seemed unfair to the rest of us who were mere mortals. His early partnership with Rick Snyder
blossomed into a leading role within the positive psychology movement, and he was the founding chair of APA Division 17's Positive Psychology Section. He was in many ways counseling psychology's public face to the positive psychology community.

He was easily tenured after just 5 years, was made a Fellow of the American Psychological Association in 2008, and his developing relationship with Don Clifton and Gallup finally became his fulltime gig shortly after that. Quoting from his Fellows talk in which he discussed his work in the schools: "Capitalizing on strengths creates hope. Hope fuels academic success. And all of this happens within the emotional climates in schools and homes. These climates are determined by how much students feel safe, respected, and cared for."

After his passing, Gallup posted an announcement on its website: Dr. Lopez was a Gallup Senior Scientist, and Research Director of the Clifton Strengths Institute. He was the world's leading researcher on hope. His mission was to teach people that investing in their future pays off today. Dr. Lopez was also one of the most vocal advocates of the psychological reform of America's education system. He helped schools function less like impersonal factories and more like dynamic human development centers that enable students to achieve the meaningful futures they say they really want, including a good job and a happy family. He was the chief architect of the Gallup Student Poll, a measure of hope, engagement and well-being that taps into the hearts and minds of U.S. public school students to determine what drives achievement. It is available at no cost to public schools or districts interested in using it to start a conversation about hope in their community. More than 4 million students have participated since its inception.

For me personally, Shane was one of only a few people who really got my particular genius. He saw it, and appreciated it. He named it, and reminded me about it regularly. This is a very powerful experience, and Shane had such a skill for being able to see into people's souls, and articulate their particular genius. I know that many here had the same experience with him. What a gift to the world that was.

Shane deeply loved Alli and their son Parrish. He loved walking P to school and back home. He was very happy being Parrish's dad, and Shane had a peaceful energy when he and Parrish were together.

He loved being Cajun, and making and eating foods that I never did learn to pronounce.

He loved having a critical impact on dozens of students and professional colleagues, and on the hundreds and thousands more who were touched and changed by hearing him speak even once.

As news of his passing spread, there was an immediate outpouring on several online discussion groups, and below are a few comments from those:

Shane wasn’t just doing the research and bringing it together. He was reaching out to people in many walks of life to hear their stories and help them understand how to nourish hope.
One of my favorite insights from Shane was: “Hope is created moment by moment through our deliberate choices. It happens when we use our thoughts and feelings to temper our aversion to loss and actively pursue what is possible.”

Dr. Lopez made me feel that my contributions to our work mattered. He was the real deal. An exceptional man whose authenticity, empathy and humor will forever shine a bright light into the universe. He blessed us with his kindness and generosity.

Many of you may not know that a little over two years ago Shane fell suddenly into a very deep depression. I had lunch with him one day, and he was his regular, normal, healthy, chipper self. When I saw him two weeks later he was so depressed, I spent the night with him and Alli at their house because I was worried for his safety. I have worked around depression for many years, but his was unlike anything I had ever seen, and it came on so suddenly, as if he had been struck by lightning. If you ever wondered about depression being a bio-chemical event in the brain, Shane's experience is living evidence that it is.

One thing about Shane's experience that stands out for me, was the incredible response from so many of his closest friends. I was at meetings with people who lived in and around Lawrence, who worked to identify ways we could be helpful and supportive, by bringing in meals, by visiting, by having any kind of contacts that might make sense. Shane was cradled by his family and friends during that very rough period, and it was the nature of the relationships he and Alli had built with those people that made that a possibility.

After awhile Shane finally agreed to get out of the house, but he didn't want to go out into Lawrence yet. We drove around in my car, on all kinds of country roads I never knew existed. Sometimes I would talk, mostly he would not, often we would just ride around in silence. We might stop at Sonic or DQ and get a malt, and the first time he was willing to get out of the car was a stop at the Lawrence airport. Many people don't know that Lawrence even has an airport. Well it does, and it's fairly small, with only a handful of folks working there and an occasional passenger. But that was where he was first willing to get out of the car, and that was a milestone.

I had contact with him every day or two, usually by text, sometimes by phone, and we got together for a beer or lunch at least every other week. He got to where he was able to get up for presentations and conference calls for work, and over the next year he managed to get back most of his old self, only to have another setback. Again, he slowly battled back from it, but it was always two steps forward, two steps back, and very disheartening. He was a very willing client and patient, working with the medical and therapeutic communities, and working hard. It taught me a new appreciation for what depression can look like at the extreme.

We can never know another person's experience of the world. The human mind is complex, and we have so far to go in our understanding. Shane's chosen profession of psychology is dedicated to trying to untangle some of that complexity, while at the same time helping people live lives worth living. And his specialty of positive psychology has done much to shine a light on the importance of focusing on the positive in people's lives, on their strengths, their values, and on their aspirations, doing this both when the context is normal, healthy development, as well as those times when suffering is the dominant experience of the day to day.
In the end, perhaps the suffering was just too much for too long.

Shane was an incredible gift, and he so loved Alli and Parrish and his larger families. He was also a person who understood and appreciated that he was loved by a very large network of friends and family, many of them here today, and a great many others.

There is lots of grieving to be done for now. Grieve well my friends.