Helping Those Who Are Dying – & Living
Understanding the Dying Process: help for the dying & for those who are living

I. How I Got Here
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   b. The Journey
   c. The Lessons

II. The Unpopular Topic of Death & Dying
   a. Society’s Contribution
   b. The Medical Profession’s Contribution

III. The “Teachers”
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   b. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross & David Kessler
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IV. Nearing Death Awareness & ELE (End of Life Experiences)
   a. The Dying Process
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VI. What Death Looks Like: The Dying Process

VII. Near Death Experiences
    a. The “9 Traits” of a NDE
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VIII. Tragic, Sudden, Unexpected Deaths

IX. Lessons Learned
    a. For Myself
    b. For Caregivers & Family Members
    c. For the Dying

X. Conclusion
    a. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross’s Death
    b. No Regrets & In A Heartbeat!
    c. Resources
Helping Those Who Are Dying - & Living

The Dying Process:

Grief:

Hospice Nurses:

NDE – Near Death Experiences:

The Afterlife:
Heaven:

Personal Stories:
- Piper, Don with Cecily Murphy. 90 Minutes in Heaven. Revell, 2004.

Articles:
“What I Am Experiencing . . .”

- “I can see where I’m going”
  - Most dying people see a place not visible to others
  - **Timing** - one of the final statements, & a sign that death is imminent

- **Descriptions** are usually:
  - Brief (1 – 3 sentences)
  - Not very specific
  - Say it is “glowing”
  - Describe either a “place of light & warmth” or a “person full of light”
  - Descriptive adjectives: lovely, beautiful, etc.

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- “I can see where I’m going”

  - When asked to “**Tell me more**”
  - **Interpretations** are individual, but often:
    - There is a dreamy look
    - They shake their head
    - Several false starts
    - “I can’t”

  - **It brings them great:**
    - Peace
    - Comfort
    - Security

  - **What to do:** Ask gently if they would like to tell you more
    - **Examples**
“What I Am Experiencing . . .”

■ “It will be when . . .”
  ■ Dying people seem to know when their death will occur – sometimes right down to the day & hour
  ■ Their attempts to share this information may be very clear & direct
  ■ If we can hear their message, we can use the time left to say & do the things we want & need to do

Examples

“What I Need for A Peaceful Death.”

■ Reconciliation
  ■ If this awareness of reconciliation comes late, the person may delay or prolong dying in an attempt to effect a reconciliatory meeting
  ■ The need for reconciliation can be with:
    ■ A significant person (family or friends)
    ■ A supreme being
    ■ Their own values or standards

Examples
“What I Need for A Peaceful Death.”

- Being “held back”
  - Such messages are usually brief
  - They convey the messages that they “are stuck” somehow or thwarted in their efforts to move on to a peaceful death
  - Usually it is something undone – “unfinished business”
  - Caretakers need to look again & see what’s been missed

Examples

NDA Reminders

- Pay attention to everything the dying person says & does
- Any communication may carry an important message
- Watch for key signs
- Pose questions open ended
- Accept & validate what the dying person is telling you
- Don’t argue or challenge
- Don’t push
- They may employ images from life experiences, work, or hobby
- Be honest about having trouble understanding
- If you don’t understand, respond with gentle inquiries
- Avoid instilling a sense of failure in a dying person
- If you don’t know what to say – don’t say anything (touch)
- Sometimes the dying will pick an unlikely confidant