

Talking About Death and Dying

Talking about death and dying can feel uncomfortable, but it's an inevitable part of life. Embracing this reality can help us live with intention, focusing on what truly matters. Discussing death openly not only reduces fear and uncertainty but also fosters deeper connections and helps us make practical plans for the future.

Three Reasons to Talk About Death with Your Family

1. It Reduces Fear and Uncertainty

Avoiding death-related conversations can heighten anxiety, leaving important questions unanswered. Talking openly brings relief and peace of mind by addressing fears directly. Planning your funeral in advance makes the topic less intimidating and reassures loved ones that your wishes will be respected.

2. It Strengthens Family Connections

Discussing your end-of-life preferences allows family members to understand your values and feelings. These conversations can build unity and help avoid misunderstandings or conflicts during a difficult time.

3. It Encourages Other Important Conversations

Talking about death often leads to discussions on healthcare decisions, legal preparations, and financial planning. Taking time to address these matters now ensures your wishes are known and your family feels prepared.

How to Start the Conversation

Starting a discussion about death can be challenging, but practical strategies can make it easier. Share your desire to plan ahead so your loved ones feel prepared. Framing it as a practical topic rather than an emotional one can help reduce discomfort.

Death Cafes

A Death Cafe is a group-directed conversation about death with no agenda or objectives. People gather to share tea, cake, and thoughts on mortality in a relaxed, respectful, and confidential space. The goal is to increase awareness of death and help people make the most of their finite lives.

More Information

Here are some helpful resources to explore death-positive thinking:

- McGill's Death Café: A Safe Space to Talk About Life and Death (CBC News)
- How to Create a Death-Positive Mindset by Dr. Karen Wyatt
- Podcast: Aging Well: 100 is the New 80 with Dr. Karen Wyatt and Larry George, MD
- Talking About Death – Games and Conversation Starters (Compassionate Alberta)

Talking about death doesn't have to be morbid—it's an opportunity to connect, reflect, and plan for the future with intention and care.