

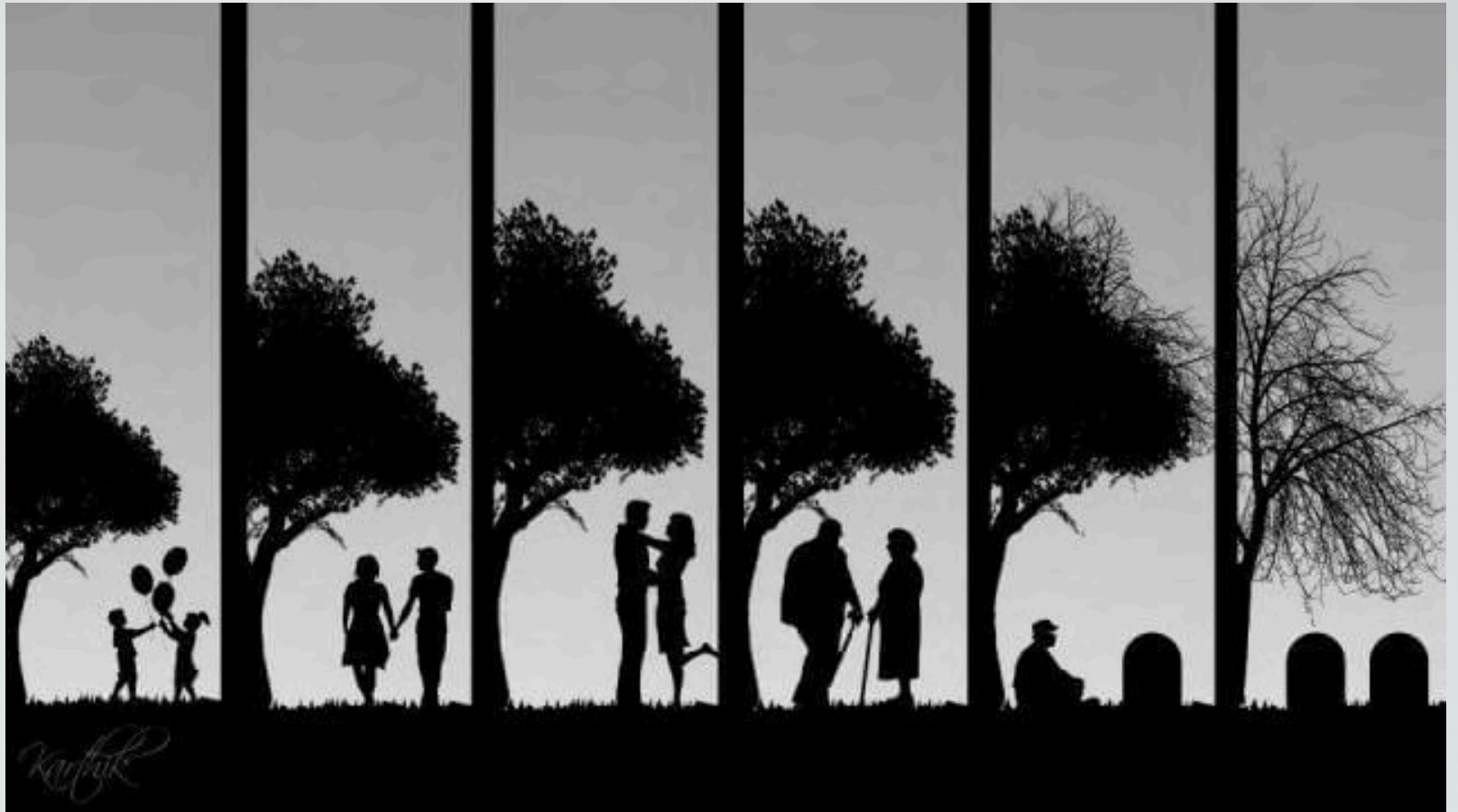
Let's talk about death, shall we?

Libby Kostromin

In this webinar we'll explore ...

- realities of death and dying in Canada
- common feelings and responses to mortality and death
- perspectives on death as part of life
- ways to accept death and invite it into your life
- when and how to talk about death.

Reality



New “safety regulations”

A recent study revealed some alarming risk factors.

- Being alive creates an incredibly large risk of dying.
- The actual death rate was a full 100%!
- The researchers came to the conclusion that being alive is far too dangerous, and the recommendation is to not be born at all.



Desires and realities of death and dying in Canada

Desire	Reality
We want to live forever.	We won't.
We want to be fully able and then die suddenly in our sleep.	Only a small minority of Canadians experience sudden death.
We want to die at home.	Most Canadians die in hospital.
We want to die pain-free.	Many people are able to have their pain alleviated once they receive palliative medical care.
We want to die with dignity.	Dignity resides in the quality and nature of the end-of-life care provided and in the attitudes of both the caregiver and the recipient of care.

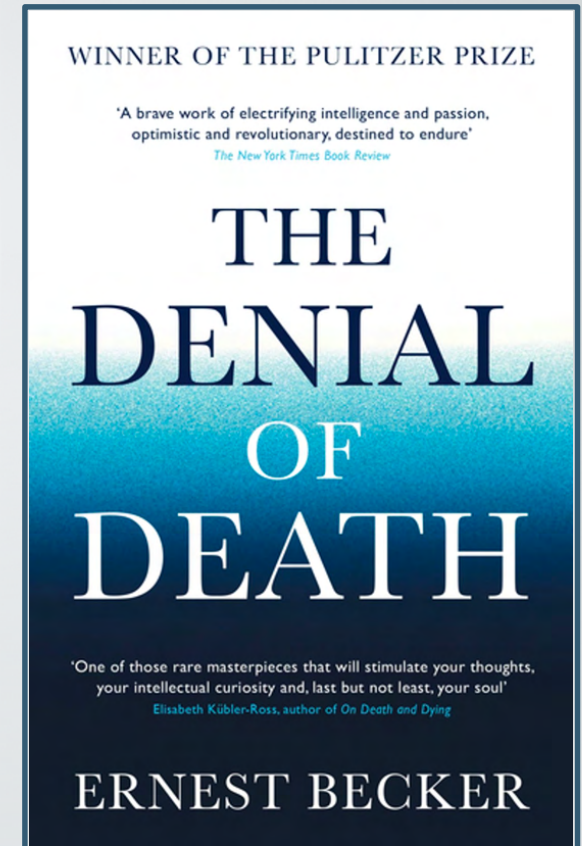
Feelings
and
responses



Passive death awareness and Terror Management Theory

- Fear of death generates fundamental anxiety and unease.
- When people are made more aware of their own mortality, they tend to become more nationalistic, more tribal and more materialistic.
- Anxiety is more likely when we're *passively* aware of death.

Dan Cable, Scientific American, 2020



Active death awareness

- When we are *directly confronted* with life's fragility we become more able to be present and to appreciate our experiences instead of focusing on everyday hassles.
- When we face death actively and directly, there's a much higher chance we'll transcend anxiety, and experience the transformational potential that's possible.

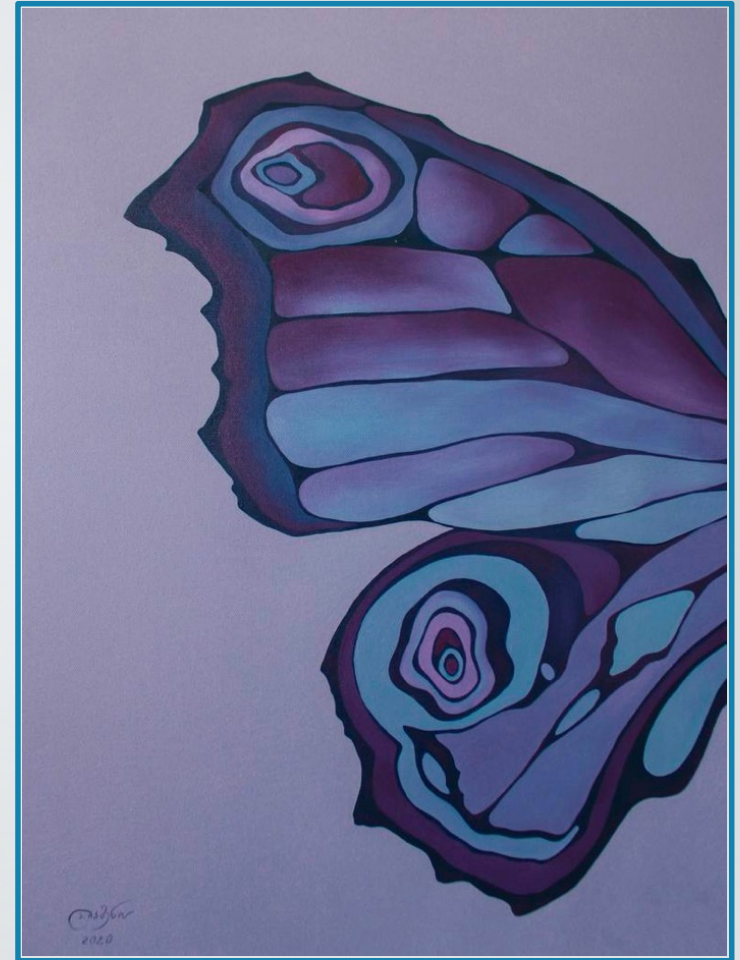
Laura Carstensen, Stanford University



Transformational effects of confronting death

- A new ability to live in the present
- A much more appreciative attitude and gratitude for things that were previously taken for granted.
- The world feels more *real*. Vivid. Beautiful.
- A shift from ego-centredness to altruism.
- A letting go of 'attachment' to ambitions, fears, material goods or social status.

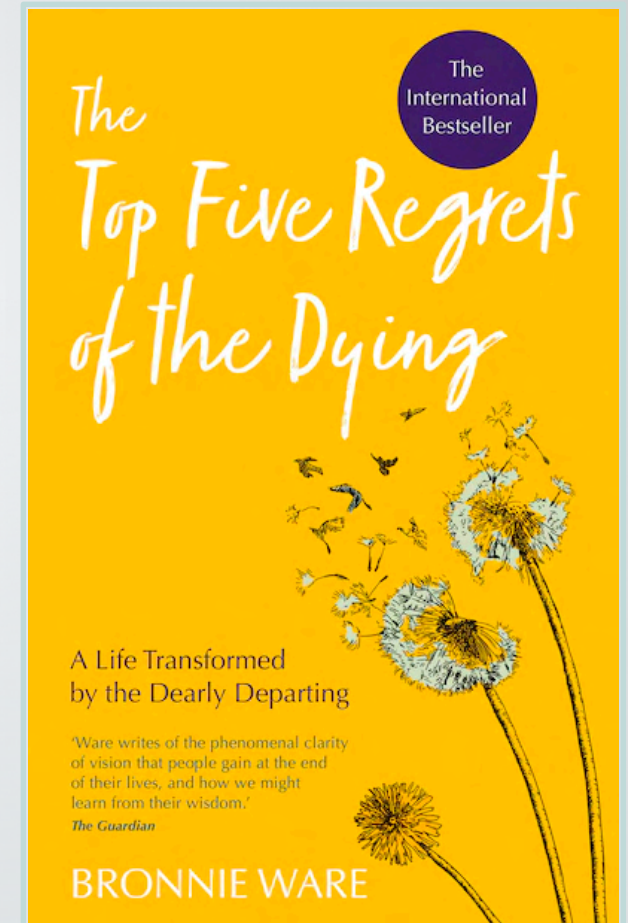
Steve Taylor PhD, Leeds Metropolitan University



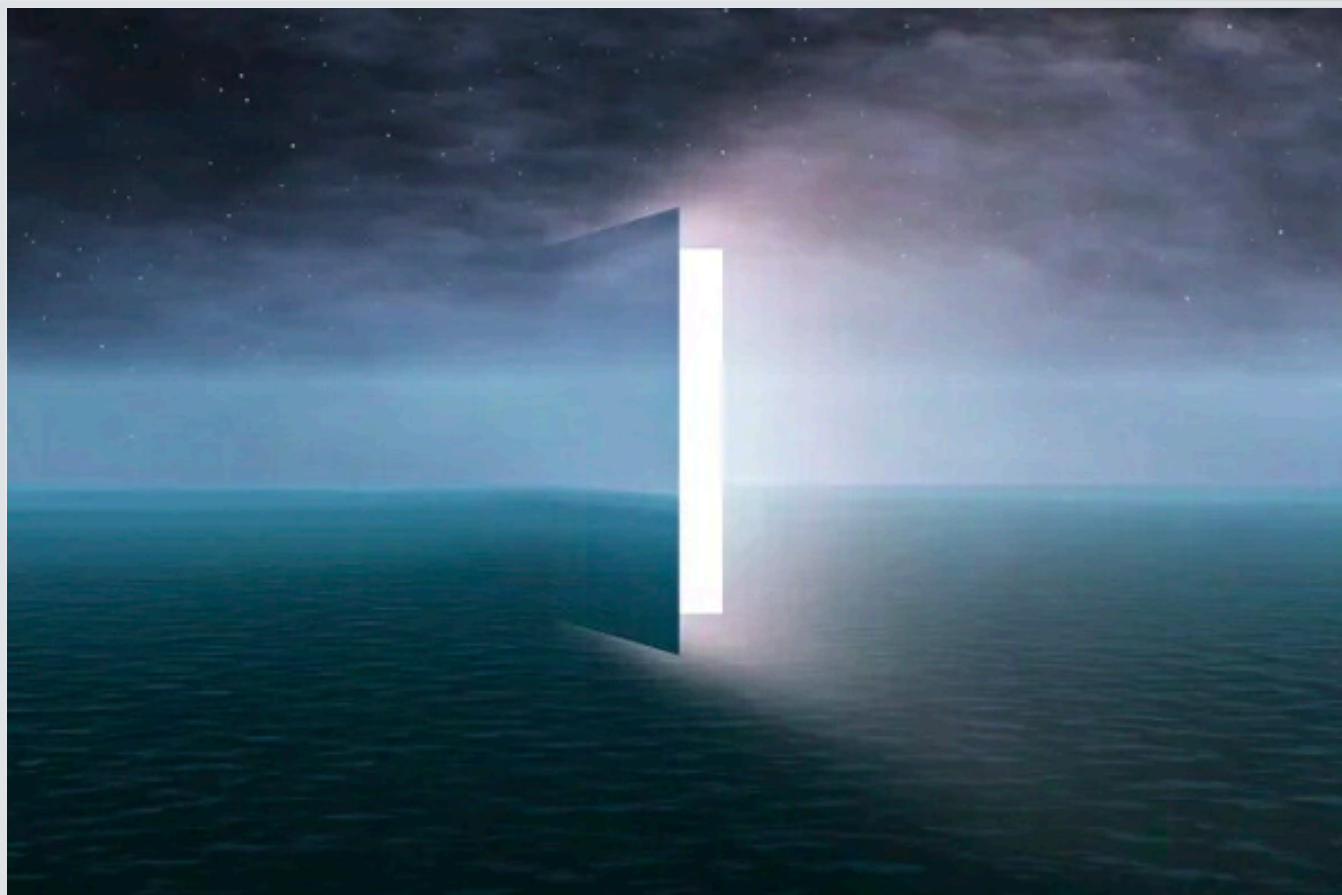
Angelina Damenia

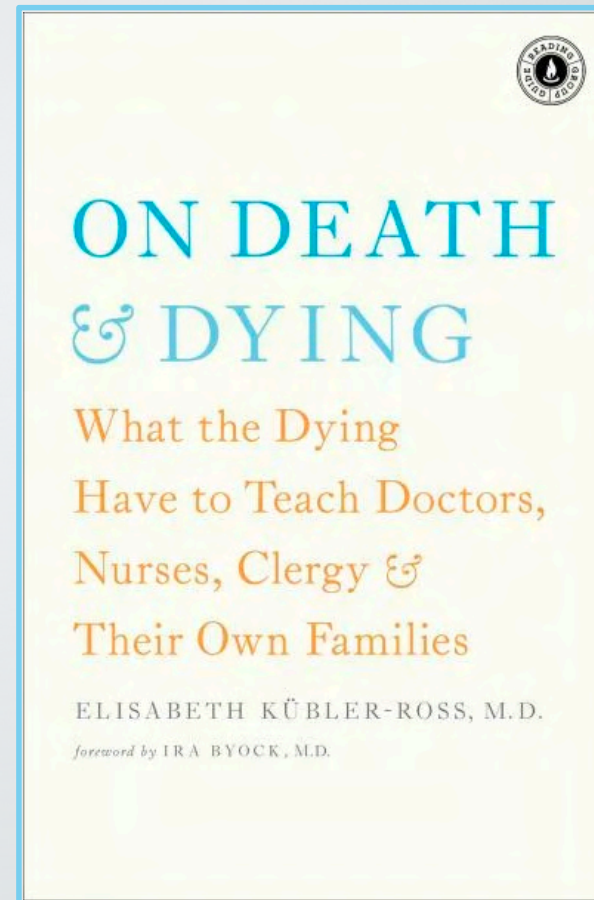
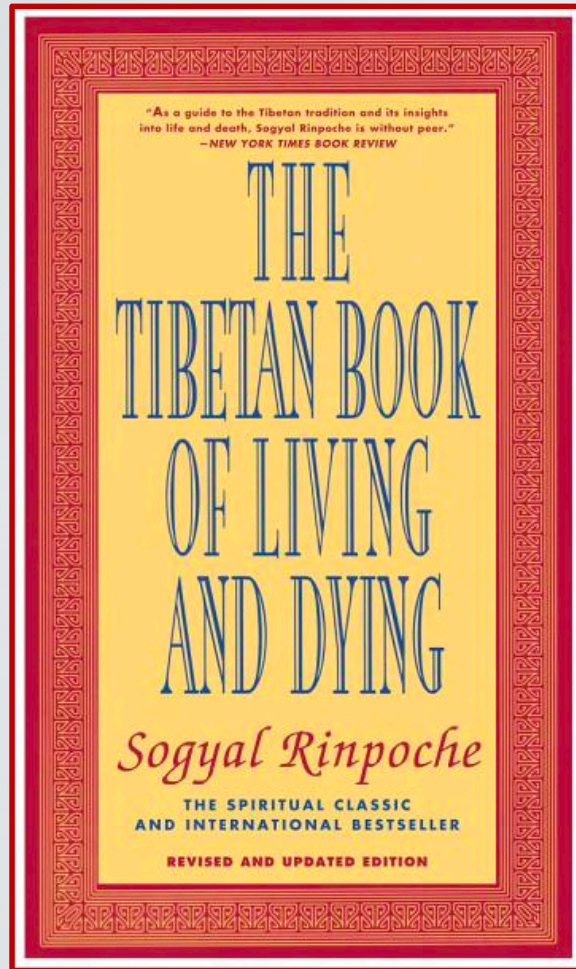
Top 5 regrets of the dying...

5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.
4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.
3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.
2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.
1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.



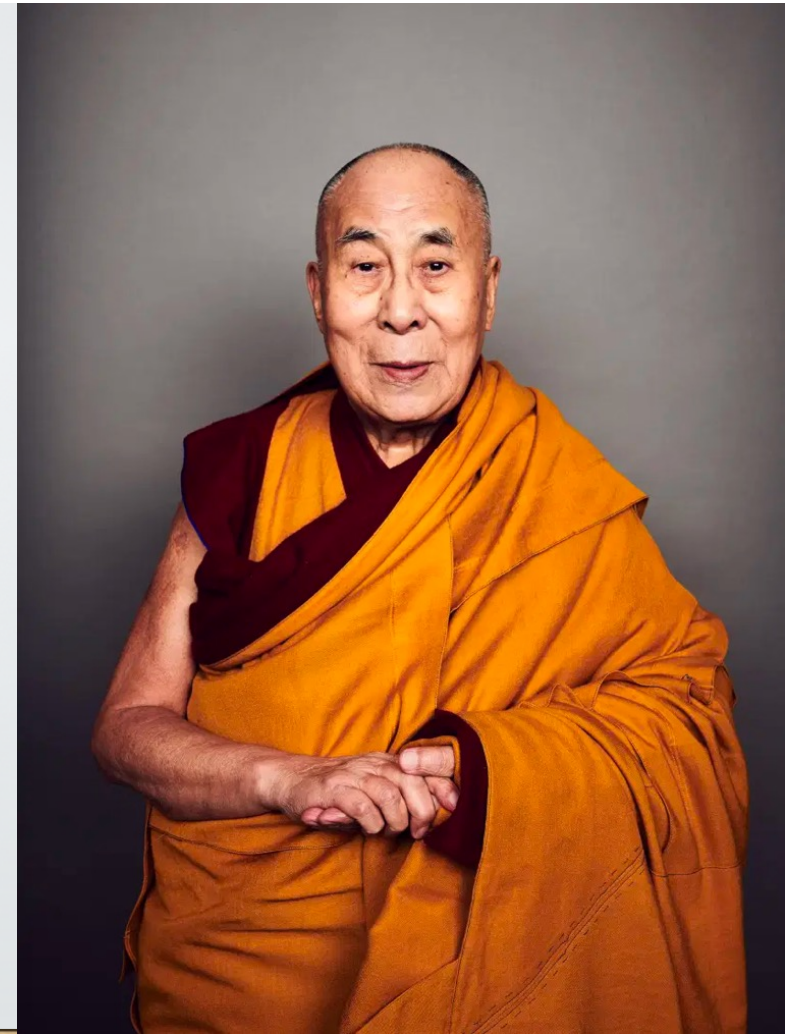
Perspectives on death





14th Dalai Lama

As a Buddhist, I view death as a normal process, a reality that I accept will occur as long as I remain in this earthly existence. Knowing that I cannot escape it, I see no point in worrying about it. I tend to think of death as being like changing your clothes when they are old and worn out, rather than as some final end. Yet death is unpredictable: We do not know when or how it will take place. So it is only sensible to take certain precautions before it actually happens. Naturally, most of us would like to die a peaceful death, but it is also clear that we cannot hope to die peacefully if our lives have been full of violence, or if our minds have mostly been agitated by emotions like anger, attachment, or fear. So if we wish to die well, we must learn how to live well: Hoping for a peaceful death, we must cultivate peace in our mind, and in our way of life.



Preparing for death

116 DEATH.

Uba ya il onaknuto,
Pi yukpa chinta he.

UBA ISHT TALOA 116. 11s.
Death Welcome.

- 1 Antot bilia la chi hatuk keyu ;
Ak antá, ak achoshke ; hoshonti kv
Aiokpulot kohonchet ataya ya
Ai okhlichit okpeni fehvshke.
- 2 Antot bilia la chi hatuk keyu ;
Hushi vt koheba kia, ik kohcho ka
Ohni kak osh lawa ; nukhako kak osh
Apakna fehna ; aya la chi hoke.
- 3 Ilupput em aietta keyu pulla,
Nana aiokpulo iluppa anta
Ik sa bunno ; ailbusha't lawvshke ;
Chisvs oka ont pisa la chi hoke.
- 4 Ai ahantot bilia vba yak o
A hoyo li ; micha yakni iluppa
Ahloopi hohoyo li banoshke ;
Klaist ai itola tok a ohmi hoke.
- 5 Keta hosh Iki atuk a hohoyot
Pisa hi a, ik bunno ka hinla cho ?
142



Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

To begin depriving death of its greatest advantage over us, let us adopt a way clean contrary to that common one; let us deprive death of its strangeness, let us frequent it, let us get used to it; let us have nothing more often in mind than death ... We do not know where death awaits us: so let us wait for it everywhere. To practice death is to practice freedom. A man who has learned how to die has unlearned how to be a slave.



Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926)

There is death in life, and it astonishes me that we pretend to ignore this: death, whose unforgiving presence we experience with each change we survive because we must learn to die slowly. We must learn to die. That is all of life. To prepare gradually the masterpiece of a proud and supreme death, of a death where chance plays no part, of a well-made, beatific and enthusiastic death of the kind the saints knew to shape.



Mary Oliver
(1935-2019)

When Death Comes



Existential psychotherapy

Four “ultimate concerns” of life:

- Death
- Freedom
- Isolation
- Meaninglessness.

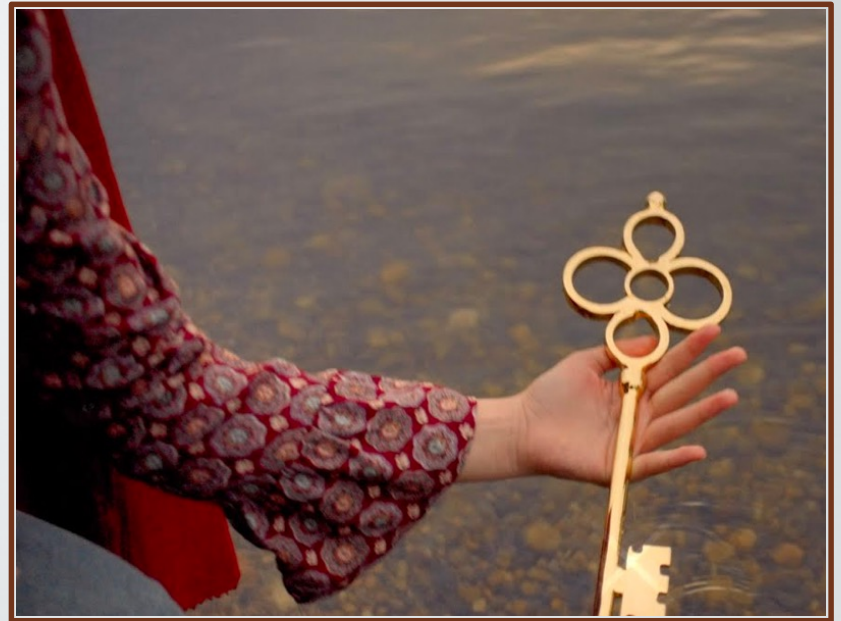
Irvin Yalom



Existential psychology

- Death acceptance holds the key to living a vital, authentic and meaningful life.
- Protect against the terror of death by actively living a meaningful life.

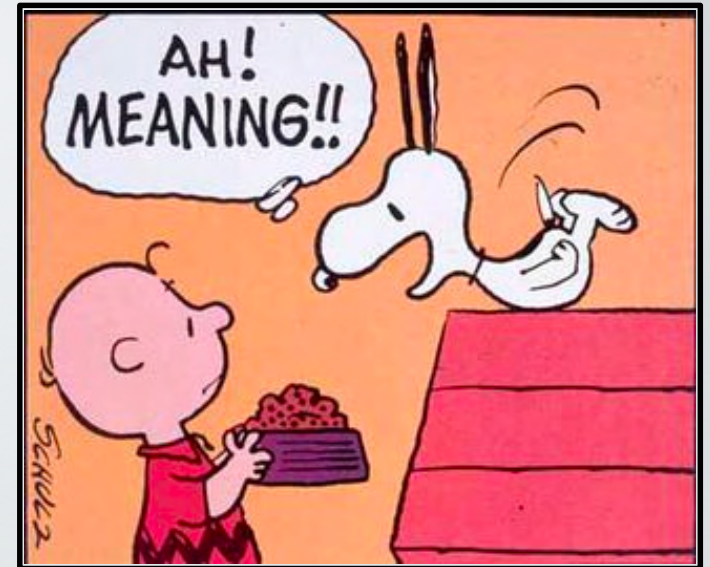
Paul Wong



Meaning-centred psychotherapy

Meaning, or having a sense that one's life has meaning, involves the conviction that one is fulfilling a unique role and purpose in a life that is a gift. This comes with a responsibility to live to one's full potential as a human being; in so doing, one gains a sense of peace, contentment, or even transcendence, through connectiveness with something greater than one's self.

Breitbart & Applebaum



Sources of meaning

- Creativity
- Experience
- Attitudes
- Legacy

Breitbart & Applebaum

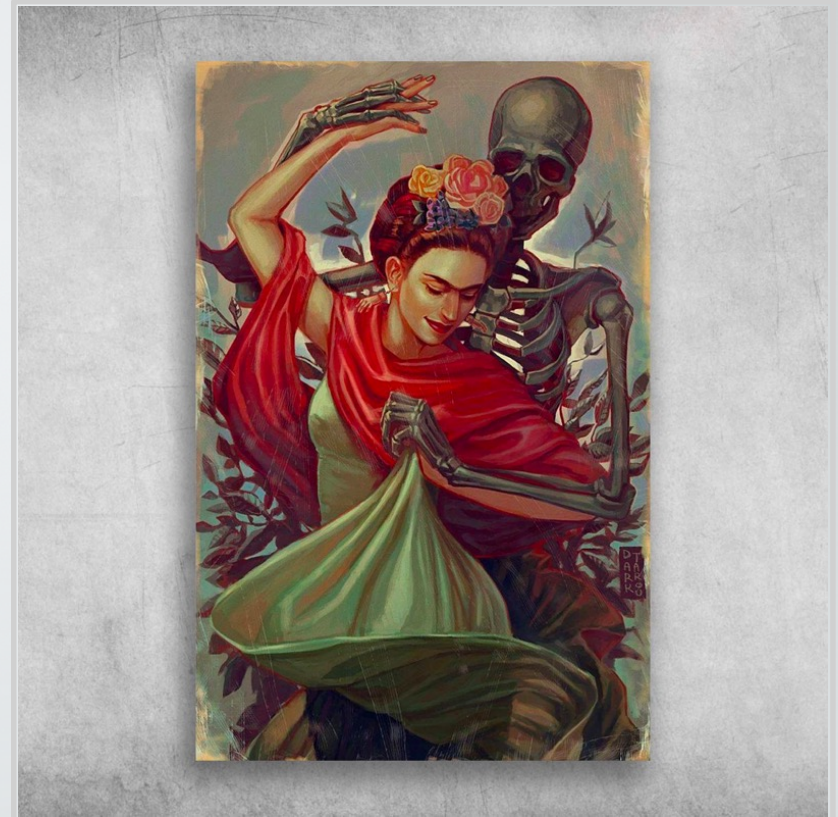


Dancing with death

Journal Entry: October, 2014.

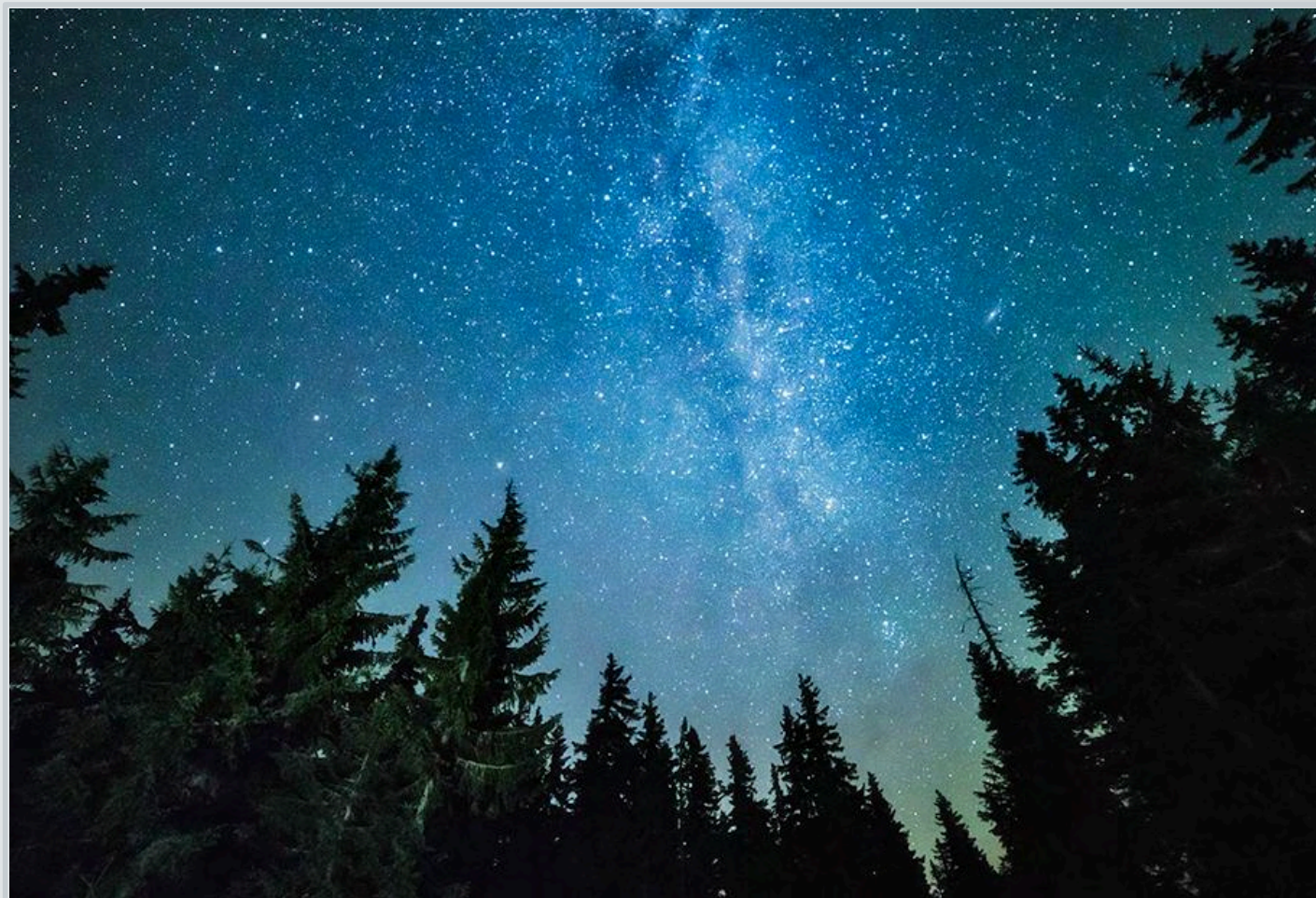
I no longer fear death. The floor-dropping shudder, the emptiness is no longer there at the thought. Instead there's an openness. An acceptance. Perhaps even a surrender.

Life is so short that to spend it fearing death seems like the ultimate waste of time.



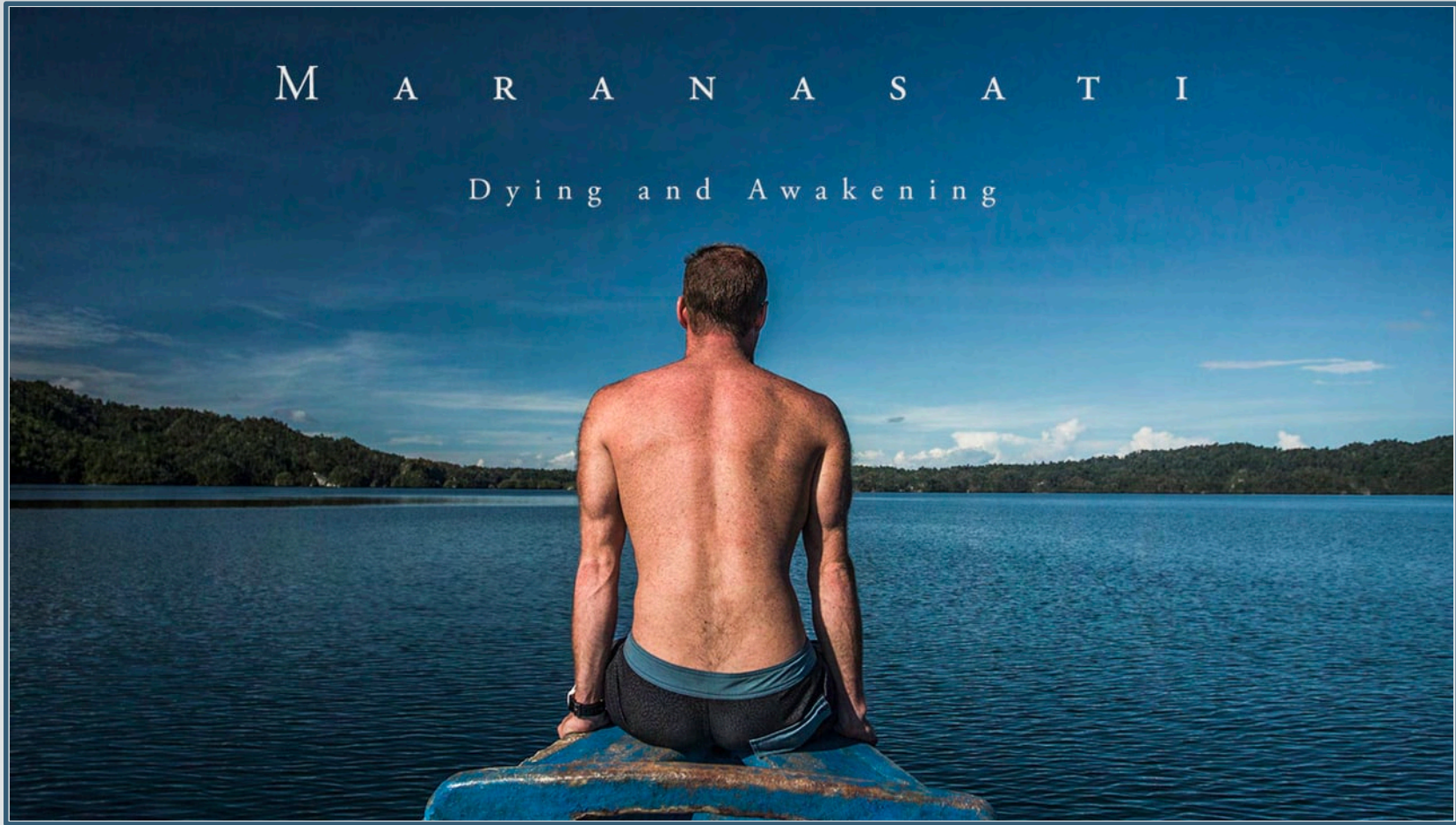
Frida Kahlo

Inviting death
into your life



M A R A N A S A T I

D y i n g a n d A w a k e n i n g



THE ORDER OF THE GOOD DEATH

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Welcome to the Order. Welcome to Your Mortality.

The Order is about making death a part of your life. Staring down your death fears—whether it be your own death, the death of those you love, the pain of dying, the afterlife (or lack thereof), grief, corpses, bodily decomposition, or all of the above. Accepting that death itself is natural, but the death anxiety of modern culture is not.

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THE ORDER

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Death Café Edmonton

Join us for tea, coffee, cake, and conversation

WeCroak – An App



Find happiness by contemplating your mortality.

The Atlantic

The New York Times

THE TIMES

SFGATE

10% HAPPIER

Christian

BRIC
TV

FOROBS
LUNOON
RECORD
FOOD

BECOME A PATRON

The WeCroak app is inspired by a Bhutanese folk saying: to be a happy person, one must contemplate death five times daily.

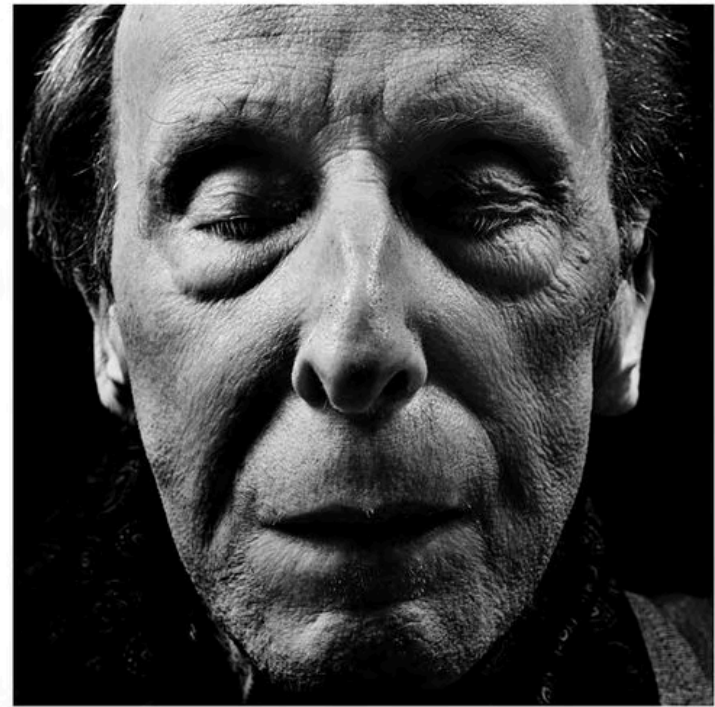
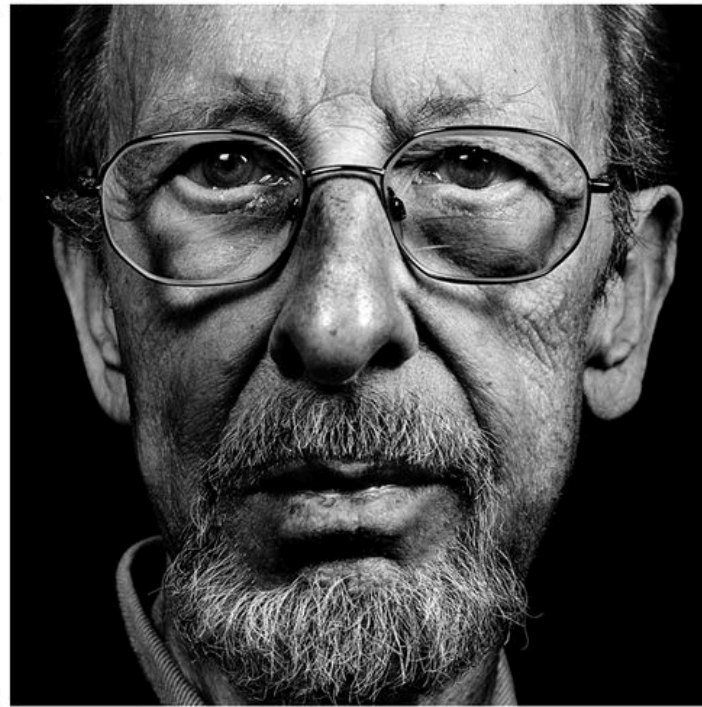
Each day, we'll send you five invitations to stop and think about death. Our invitations come at random times and at any moment, just like death. When they come, you can open the app to reveal a quote about death from a poet, philosopher, or notable thinker.

We encourage you to take one moment for contemplation, conscious breathing or meditation. We believe that a regular practice of contemplating mortality helps us accept what we must, let go of things that don't matter and honor the things that do.

If you want to go deeper into action, consider joining Leap for challenges to help you face impermanence in all its aspects and live better lives today.

Walter Schels' – 'Life before death' portraits

Walter Schels' – 'Life before death' portraits



Walter Schels – 'Life before death' portraits



Talking about
death and dying



Talk with friends and family about:

- How you want to live as you age.
- The kind of legacy you want to leave.
- How you'd like to approach death.
- How you want to be cared for.
- How you want to show up in the last stage of life.
- The resources and supports you'll need.

Talking About Death is...

~~Weird~~

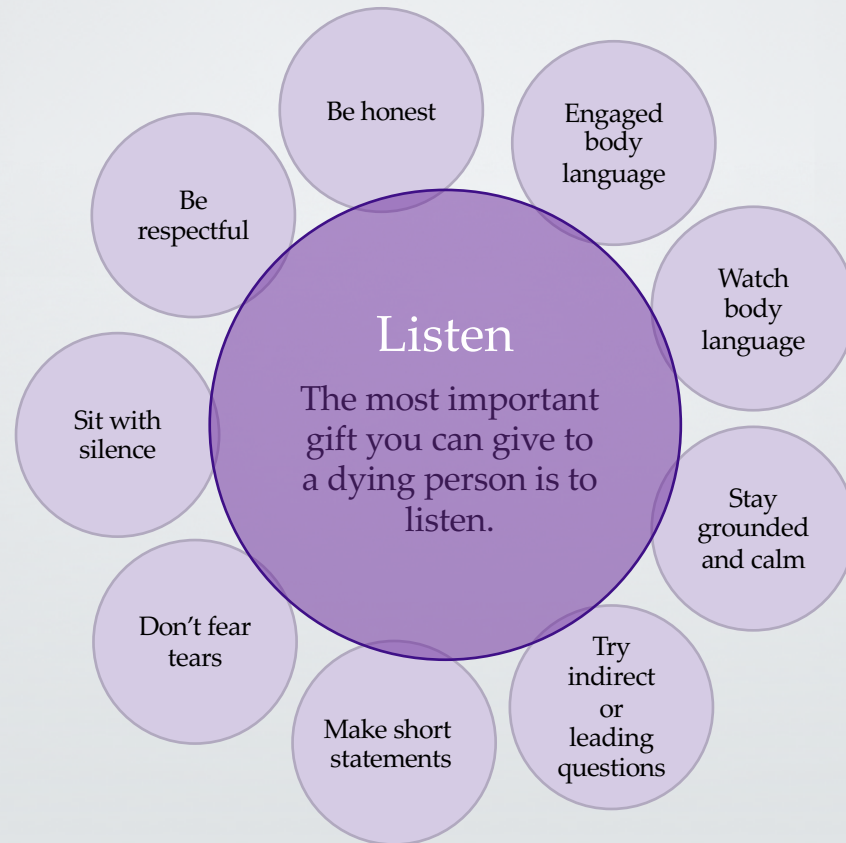
~~Taboo~~

~~Bad Luck~~

~~Morbid~~

a part of life.

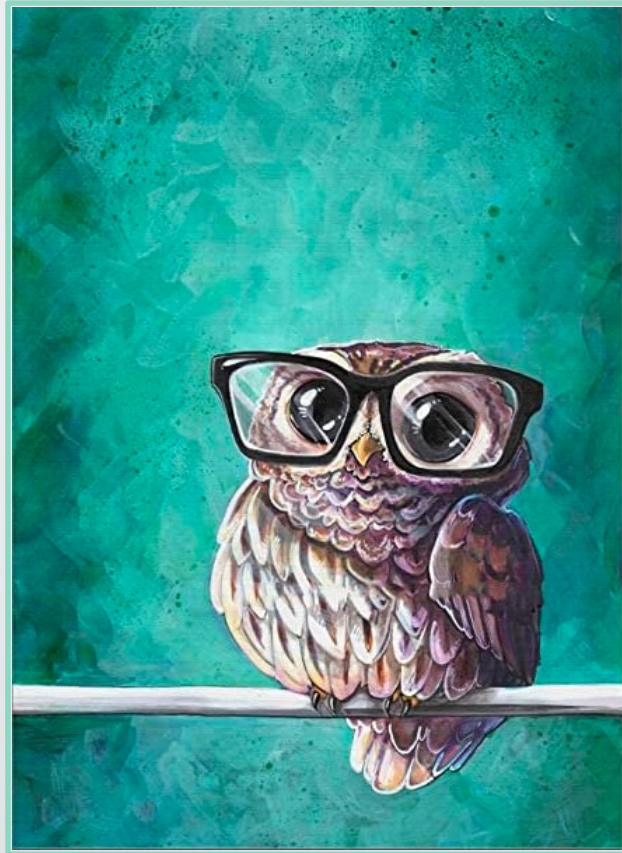
How to have conversations with a dying person...

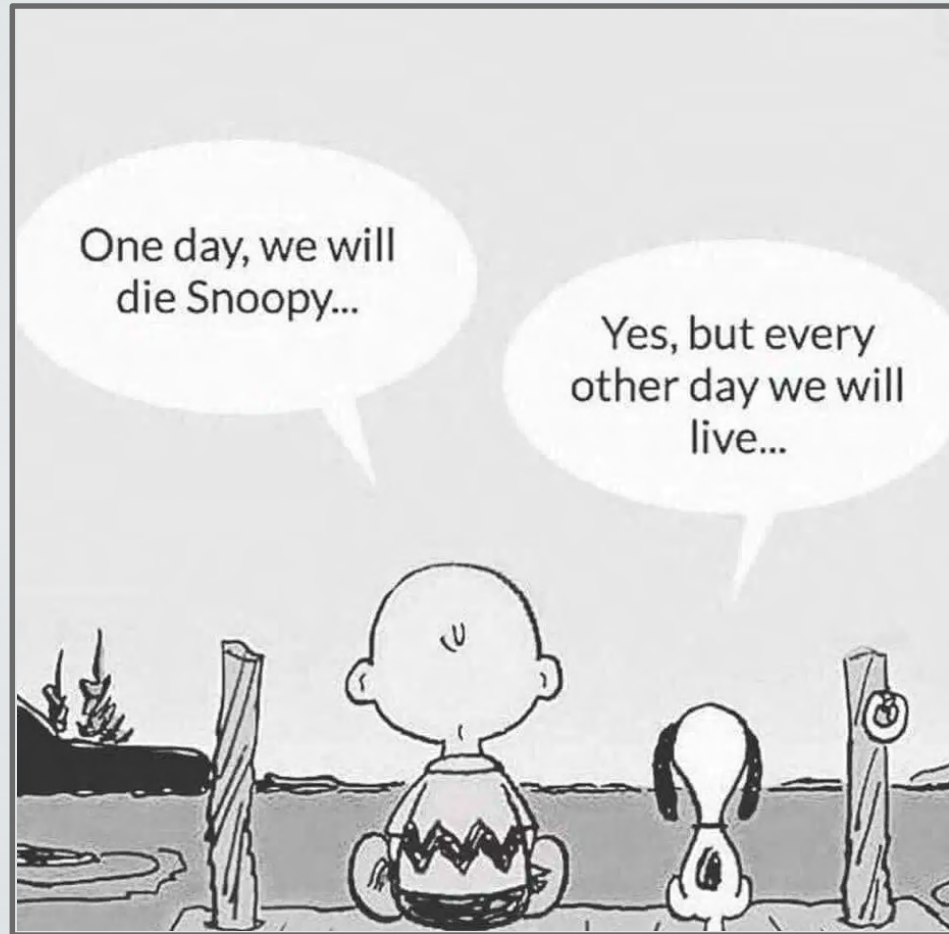


Talk to your kids about death



Professional implications





One day, we will
die Snoopy...

Yes, but every
other day we will
live...