

## Personal Reflection

Check all answers that apply

### 1. What was your first experience with death? Who died?

- Grandparent/great-grandparent
- Parent
- Brother or sister
- A child
- Other family member
- Friend or acquaintance
- Stranger or a public figure
- Animal or pet

### 2. When you were a child, how was death or dying talked about in your family?

- Openly
- With some sense of discomfort
- As though it were a taboo subject
- Do not recall any discussion

### 3. What does death mean to you?

- The end; the final process of life
- The beginning of a life after death; a transition, a new beginning
- A kind of endless sleep; rest and peace
- End of this life, but survival of the spirit
- Other (specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 4. What about your own death concerns you most?

- I could no longer have any experiences.
- I am afraid of what might happen to my body after death.
- I am uncertain about what might happen to me if there is a life after death.
- I could no longer provide for my family.
- It would cause grief to my family and friends.
- There would be some things left undone.
- I have no concerns about my death.
- Other (specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 5. What about the process of dying concerns you most?

- It might be long and painful
- Being a financial burden to my family
- Causing my family to suffer
- Being dependent on others to care for me
- Losing control of my mind and body
- I am not concerned about the process of dying.
- Other (specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6. How large a role has spirituality or religion played in your attitude toward death?**

- A very significant role
- Influential, but not a major role
- A relatively minor role
- No role at all

**7. If you were told that you had a limited time to live, how would you want to spend the time you had remaining?**

- I would pursue personal pleasures (travel, adventure, chocolate).
- I would prefer being alone: reading, contemplation or praying.
- I would like to focus on loved ones.
- I would shift from my own needs to a concern for others (family, friends).
- I would try to tie up loose ends.
- I would try to do one important thing.
- I would make few changes.
- Other (specify):  
\_\_\_\_\_

**8. If or when you are married or have a long-term partner, would you prefer to outlive your spouse/partner?**

- Yes, I would prefer to die second and outlive my spouse/partner.
- No, I would rather die first and have my spouse/partner outlive me.
- It doesn't matter to me.
- This question doesn't apply to me.

**9. If you had a choice, what kind of death would you prefer?**

- Sudden, unexpected death
- Quiet, dignified death
- Death in the line of duty
- Death after a great achievement
- There is no "appropriate" kind of death.
- Other (specify):  
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**10. What is one thing you would want to say to someone special before you die?**

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*The Center for Healthcare Decisions developed this questionnaire, based in part on Edwin Schneidman's "You and Death: An Exercise."*

*For more information, contact the Coalition for Compassionate Care of California at [www.coalitionccc.org](http://www.coalitionccc.org).*