

Personal Reflection

Check all answers that apply

1. Who died in your first personal experience with death?

- 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 would 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 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 your time until you died?

- I would pursue personal pleasures (travel, adventure, chocolate).
- I would prefer being alone: reading, thinking or praying.
- 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 little or no 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):

10. What is one thing you would want to say to someone special before you die?

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 Center for Healthcare Decisions at www.chcd.org.