

# Five Wishes

Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

For Pine Tree Hospice Volunteers



# Five Wishes

## Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

Getting ourselves ready first ...

*Ask yourself, How do I feel about death ?*

Those of us brought up in the Western world  
and living within the Judeo-Christian religion

may see an after-life as a  
potential punishment for things  
we've done that we should not  
have, or should have done that  
we did not

or we may have a comfortable  
belief that death is a peaceful  
transition from this life to  
another, and much better  
existence



# Five Wishes

Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

Getting ourselves ready first ...

*Ask yourself, How do I feel about death ?*

What do you **fear**

when you think of your own

dying and death ???



# What do you fear when you think of your own dying and death ???

- ☹ Being unable to communicate my needs
- ☹ Dying alone
- ☹ Being a financial burden to family
- ☹ Inability to complete unfinished business
- ☹ Loss of control
- ☹ Loss of dignity
- ☹ Never seeing my loved ones again
- ☹ Pain
- ☹ Shattered plans for the future
- ☹ Worry about life after death
- ☹ Wonder if there is a life after death



# Five Wishes

Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

Getting ourselves ready first ...

*Ask yourself, How do I feel about death ?*

What brings you **peace**

when you think of your own

dying and death ???



# What brings you peace when you think of your own dying and death ???

- 😊 Being in the presence of divine beings
- 😊 Freedom from pain and physical suffering
- 😊 Reuniting with loved ones who have passed before us
- 😊 Rebirth into a better life on earth
- 😊 Believing that as evolving spirits we are one with the Creator and will join the spirits of all other beings



# How can we support someone expressing a fear of death ???

☆ *Ask questions to learn more about where they are in their thoughts now*

Do you believe in a loving God ? A benevolent Creator ? An afterlife ?

*If s/he does...*

What would you ask God right now?

If s/he **does not** believe in a loving God or an afterlife, what thoughts and memories give you peaceful feelings ?

people you have been with ...

things you have done ...

places you have been ...

cherished possessions ...

~~~~~  
Take a moment to ask these questions silently



# How can we support someone expressing a fear of death ???

*Offer resources consistent with their beliefs*

- ✿ No matter one's spiritual beliefs, we can help them visit their own "peaceful place"

Think of a place where you have been in your life...  
a place that has given you warm and peaceful feelings.

Close your eyes now and go inside. Ask your highest, most pure, and most beautiful Self to take you to that place...

Notice the sights around you    Notice the movement  
Notice the colors    Notice the sounds    Notice everything around you

Take your time, and enjoy the *feeling* of your peaceful place...

You can return to your peaceful place any time and as often as you wish...  
Simply close your eyes and ask your Self to take you there





# Meditation: Mindful listening~Music

So many programs available on computer, smartphone, tablet  
*For your client For YOU*

*Relaxing Music*



*One example:*  
**Marconi Union Weightless**

*Free to listen, with ads; can be purchased  
10-hour version available*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfcAVejslrU>





# Meditation: Mindful listening~Sounds

So many programs available on computer, smartphone, tablet  
*For your client For YOU*

*Relaxing Sounds*



*One example: Rain Sounds*

choose

-  Sound
-  Timer
-  Additional sounds
-  Adjust volume

*Calm beach with chirping birds*



# How can we support someone expressing a fear of death ???

*Offer resources consistent with their beliefs*

- ✿ No matter one's spiritual beliefs, we can help them visit their own "peaceful place"
- ✿ "Peaceful place" music... easily downloaded to a tablet or smartphone
- ✿ We can listen to them with compassion and without judgement
- ✿ We pray with them in their own religious faith or spiritual beliefs; we can read scripture or other text from spiritual books
- ✿ We can arrange a visit with the person's church leader; for those without a church affiliation we can offer a visit from the PTH pastor, who will meet them where they are, and walk with them on that path

A wonderful reference to prepare us for supporting anyone dying with fear with OR without the comfort of religion is

The [Mantram Handbook](#) or [Meditation](#) by Ecknath Easwaran





# Mantra Meditation

A mantra is a name, a word, or a phrase, sacred to you

When you repeat a mantra over and over quietly or silently in your mind, your mind becomes filled with a feeling of peace and your body releases tension

In his book, The Mantram Handbook, Eknath Easwaran offers guides in choosing your own mantra:

- ♥ Well-known . . . . . *roots are already deep*
- ♥ Simple . . . . . *it is hard to dive with an inner tube*
- ♥ Do not change it . . . . . *shallow holes find no water*

Your mantra is personal to you

Try several until one settles comfortably with your spirit

Your mantra can be a full prayer, or a phrase, or a single word



# Mantra Meditation



## **Come, Holy Spirit ... Enlighten me**

- ~ Lift this Burden at my time of need
- ~ Give me a Knowing when I am in darkness
- ~ Fill me with Love and Light always





# Passage Meditation

Ekknath Easwaran [www.easwaran.org](http://www.easwaran.org)

Inspired words that change us from the inside out

- ♥ Memorize a spiritual text, or passage, that embodies your highest ideals
- ♥ Builds the precious capacity to place our attention wherever we choose
- ♥ We begin to resemble and actually become whatever we give our attention to





# Passage Meditation

Repeat it in your mind, or listen to a voice recording

Eknath Easwaran 

## THE PRAYER OF SAINT FRANCES

LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF THY PEACE  
WHERE THERE IS HATRED ~ LET ME SOW LOVE  
WHERE THERE IS INJURY ~ PARDON  
WHERE THERE IS DOUBT ~ FAITH  
WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR ~ HOPE  
WHERE THERE IS DARKNESS ~ LIGHT  
WHERE THERE IS SADNESS ~ JOY

OH DIVINE MASTER,  
GRANT THAT I MAY NOT SO MUCH SEEK  
TO BE CONSOLED AS TO CONSOLE  
TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS TO UNDERSTAND  
TO BE LOVED AS TO LOVE

FOR IT IS IN GIVING THAT WE RECEIVE  
IT IS IN PARDONING THAT WE ARE PARDONED  
IT IS IN DYING TO SELF THAT WE ARE BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE

# We can also support someone expressing a fear of dying

Dying is a process, and there are many unknowns  
Some disturbing and frightening unknowns...

? What if I become unable to make decisions for myself ?  
? Who will do that for me ?

? How will doctors and nurses treat me before I die ?  
? Would I agree with everything they want to do ?

? Will my last days be comfortable ?  
? If I want pain medication will I get it ?  
? If I want to be awake and aware until the last moment...even if I have pain,  
? will they let me ?

? When I'm dying, will people treat me the way I want them to ?

There are things I want my loved ones to know... ? how can I tell them ?



# Five Wishes

## Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

Given a level of comfort in discussing *death* with a hospice client, it becomes our honored opportunity to support him or her during the *dying* process

*Where to begin ???*



# Five Wishes

Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

## *What could you say first ???*

I'd like to help you share your wishes about how you are treated at the end of your life. Would today be a good time to do that?

I have with me a pamphlet called "Five Wishes". It can help you make clear your wishes about how you are treated if you become unable to express them. May I show it to you now?

Whenever we go into the hospital for treatment we are asked, "Do you have an Advance Directive?" An advance directive tells your caregivers how you want to be treated if you can't tell them yourself. May I help you prepare an advance directive today?

Sometimes, when we reach the end of life, we aren't really able to state our wishes about how we want to be cared for. But we can make those wishes known ahead of time. I'd like to help you write down your wishes.



# *Fielding questions ...*

## What is an advance directive ?

A document that usually addresses 2 questions:

- \* How do you want to be treated when you reach the end of your life ?
- \* Who should make healthcare decisions for you if you are unable to communicate your wishes ?

An advance directive does NOT address your money or your property



## What is the difference between a will and a living will ?

A "will" usually refers to a "last will and testament"

- ✿ Legal document
- ✿ Dictates how your property is to be distributed
- ✿ You appoint a "Personal Representative" to carry out terms of your will
- ✿ Goes through probate: a court procedure to prove that the will is valid

A "living will" is the part of an advance directive that addresses the question, "How do I want to be treated when I reach the end of my life ?"



## Is the Five Wishes a legal document in Maine ?

Yes (*page 3*)

You do not need a lawyer

You do not need a doctor or nurse practitioner's signature

Does not have to be notarized

Your signature does need to be witnessed by two people, and signed by the witnesses

Witnesses do not need to read your advance directive, they only need to witness your signature



## What are the witness requirements for an advance directive ? *Page 10*

Must be over 18

Cannot be your healthcare proxy

Cannot be your healthcare provider or employee of healthcare provider

Cannot be financially responsible for your health care

Cannot be an employee of your insurance provider

Cannot be related to you by blood, marriage or adoption

Cannot be your creditor or your beneficiary



### What if you have already filled out a living will but want to use the Five Wishes instead? *Page 3*

Fill out the Five Wishes, sign it, date it, and have your signature witnessed

Destroy all previous copies of your living will, or clearly write "revoked" on previous copies

Inform your health care agent, health care provider, and family of the change



## Should I carry the Five Wishes with me when I travel ? *Page 11*

You can, but it is easier to carry a wallet card that tells where your advance directive is kept

A notarized copy is a good idea if you are planning to visit a state where notarization is required



## What is a power of attorney ?

Power of attorney usually refers to a financial power of attorney:

someone who is legally authorized to act on your behalf with your money and your possessions

A financial power of attorney does not make healthcare decisions for you



## What is a healthcare power of attorney ?

A healthcare power of attorney makes healthcare decisions for you if you are unable to communicate

Also called: healthcare proxy, healthcare agent, medical power of attorney, durable power of attorney for health care



## Who should I select as a healthcare power of attorney ?

Someone you trust, who knows your wishes and will carry them out, even if they do not agree

Select someone who can make difficult decisions...not necessarily a spouse or best friend

Select only one, but do select a backup person in case the "one" is unavailable when needed



## Can I change my healthcare power of attorney ?

Yes, any time... record, date, sign, and have witnessed, the change in your advance directive



## When does my healthcare power of attorney begin making decisions for me ?

When your doctor AND another health professional agree that you can no longer make health care choices for yourself



## Do I have to use the Five Wishes as my advance directive ?

No, there are many different forms available, such as the "Maine Advance Directive" (2005)

The Five Wishes is gentle and easy to understand; and you can alter it any way you wish...it is still valid



## What is "life support" treatment ?

Life support includes:

- intubation with mechanical ventilation

- renal dialysis

- nutritional support via tube feeding or intravenous infusion

The Five Wishes addresses life support on pages 6-7.

The Pine Tree Hospice library has a helpful pamphlet providing more information in easy to understand terms: "Life Sustaining Treatments"



## Will healthcare providers automatically give me life support treatment ?

Yes, unless you direct otherwise

If you are unable to communicate, healthcare providers should follow your advance directive

- \* They need to know how to contact your healthcare power of attorney
- \* They need to get a copy of your advance directive



### Will healthcare providers automatically give me cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) ?

Yes, unless you have a separate written, signed and authorized "Do Not Resuscitate" order

The DNR order is in ADDITION to an advance directive

You should know:

CPR is done only when the heart has already stopped beating

CPR is not expected to significantly prolong the life of someone with a terminal illness

Brain function may be diminished after CPR

Severe injury is likely if CPR is done on a frail person

CPR is usually followed by intubation and mechanical ventilation



## Can I put a "Do Not Resuscitate" request in my advance directive ?

You can, but it will not be honored unless you have a "Maine Emergency Medical Services Comfort Care/Do Not Resuscitate Directive"

The directive can be signed by anyone over 18, along with your primary care provider signature

if EMS is called, they WILL intubate AND initiate CPR

- \* even if you have stated your wishes in an advance directive
- \* unless they can see a properly signed DNR order on the bedroom or refrigerator door
- \* Another pamphlet in the PTH library : "About DNR Orders"



## Are there any complications with life support treatment ?

Yes. They can be uncomfortable and they can cause damage

Given a health condition from which you are not expected to recover, life support is unlikely to restore quality of life

Prolonged life support can be unacceptably costly and can become a hardship for loved ones



### Are there any complications with life support treatment ?

Points to consider from the pamphlet "Life Sustaining Treatments"

- ✿ The breathing tube placed in the windpipe can be very uncomfortable. Over time, it can cause lung infections and damage to the windpipe
- ✿ For curable conditions, a ventilator supports breathing until you can breathe on your own
- ✿ For incurable conditions, permanent dependence on mechanical ventilation may result
- ✿ Removing a ventilator may lead to unconsciousness followed by death. But if you remain conscious, you can be made comfortable with oxygen and medication



## Are there any complications with life support treatment ?

Points to consider from the pamphlet "Life Sustaining Treatments"

- ✿ While CPR is often routine in accident situations, if you have a terminal condition, you may or may not wish to be revived if your heart stops beating
- ✿ Follow-up treatment in intensive care is often required after CPR
- ✿ Death occurs if CPR is withheld, and there is no further trauma



## Are there any complications with life support treatment ?

Points to consider from the pamphlet "Life Sustaining Treatments"

- ✿ Renal dialysis may give you time to wait for a kidney transplant
- ✿ For uncurable conditions, you must stay on dialysis for life, unless a kidney transplant can be performed
- ✿ Dialysis can sometimes have serious complications
- ✿ Withholding dialysis results in coma, then death



### Are there any complications with life support treatment ?

Points to consider from the pamphlet "Life Sustaining Treatments"

- ✿ When you are dying, you usually do not have an appetite
- ✿ Tube feeding can be uncomfortable. You may become confused. Restraints may be needed to keep you from removing the tubes
- ✿ Total parenteral nutrition can sometimes have serious complications
- ✿ In terminal illness, death usually follows withdrawal of feeding tubes



### Are there any complications with life support treatment ?

Points to consider from the pamphlet "Life Sustaining Treatments"

- ✿ Intravenous therapy is often considered short-term therapy
- ✿ IV lines are also often used to give medications, blood, and basic vitamins and minerals
- ✿ Swelling, clotting, or damage to the vein can cause pain
- ✿ Some types of IV lines are placed in a new vein every few days; others are flushed regularly
- ✿ If you are confused, you may dislodge or pull out IV lines. Restraints may be required to prevent this



## How do I make a decision about a DNR order ?

It is scary to ask for a DNR order, but we all need to ask,

“When is life no longer valuable?”

A way to begin to ask... “What do you want us to do when your heart stops?”

PTH library has a helpful book, Hard Choices for Loving People by Hank Dunn

- ✿ honors inevitable and impending death with dignity
- ✿ discusses the implications of unpleasant life prolonging treatments
- ✿ offers compassionate help for people faced with these issues

PTH has a volunteer hospice chaplain, Pastor Sue Burgess



## Where should I keep my advance directive ?

An accessible place, such as hospital, doctor office, with your healthcare proxy

Your healthcare proxy should have a copy or know where to find it

Do not keep it in a safe deposit box or other location that requires you to obtain it

Your wallet card should state where to find the advance directive



### Can I be specific about details if I use the Five Wishes advance directive ?

Yes,

- you can add anything to the form

- you can cross off anything you do not agree with

- you can attach additional papers to the form

You may wish to sign, date, and have your signature witnessed on any changes



# Five Wishes

Helping Someone with an Advance Directive

How I am treated is not important to me  
if I have no awareness and  
I am not expected to recover awareness  
*or*

I'm not concerned about what happens  
to my body after I die

Do I still need an advance directive ?

An advance directive spares your loved ones from making hard decisions during what will be a difficult time for them



*Let's begin to fill out our own Five Wishes,  
beginning on page 6, and in any order...*

- 1) The person I want to make health care decisions for me when I can't make them for myself
- 2) My wish for the kind of medical treatment I want or don't want
- 3) My wish for how comfortable I want to be
- 4) My wish for how I want people to treat me
- 5) My wish for what I want my loved ones to know