

Emotions expressed
by the dying are
unexpectedly positive



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Abstract

Society have seen death as a dreadful event that are often viewed as suffering, pain, and full of agony ; however these view of death may not reflect what the actual reality of death is. This research paper I will examine how death can be unexpectedly positive, and why choosing higher end of life care can bring less pain and suffering to the terminally ill patients.

When we think of dying we often picture suffering, agony, pain and loneliness. However, researches have suggested that the actual emotional experience of the dying showed an increased in a positive attitude and behavior as the dying near their time. By understanding this phenomenon should we treat and approach death in a new manner to make this transition easier for our patients and their families? In my research paper, I will be discussion how dying can be unexpectedly positive and how medical professionals are encouraging patients and their family member to opt for a high quality end of life care versus care that's prolongs the patient's death with synthetic treatments and unnatural life support.

The article " dying is unexpectedly positive" analyzed and studied blogs of terminally ill cancer patients and the poetry and last words of death row inmates. The results were that both groups actually showed more positive words and fewer negative words in comparison to the writing samples created by participants who were asked to imagine how they would feel facing a deadly illness or on death row. What's even more interesting in this study is that the closer the cancer patient came to death; it seems that the more positive their journal became. This is important to know being in the

health care provider because it gives us an insight on how we can approach our patients who are dying as well as how to deal with the family members. As the article points out many patients who are closer to their death became more accepting of their situation. Kurt Gray, who was one of the scientist studying this project explained that “ in our imagination, dying is lonely and meaningless, but the final blog post of terminally ill patient and the last words of death row inmates were filled with love, social connection and meaning”

To further elaborate on the study, Gray and his colleagues analyzed the post and blogs from terminally ill patients who were dying of either ALS, or cancer. Emotional contents of the patient’s blog were analyzed for at least three months, and the author of these blogs had to have died in the course of writing their blogs. In comparison, researchers had also asked a group of participants who were healthy individuals and asked to imagine that they were diagnosed with a terminal ill disease with few months to live and write a blog about what they think they’ll experience. Surprisingly, the blogs from individuals who were terminally ill showed more positive emotions of words that those participants who were told to imagine that they were dying. Researchers also found that as the dying neared death, their blog showed more positive emotions than those participants who were told to imagine their deaths. (Gray 2017)

In their second study, the researched was conducted on analyzing and comparing the last words of inmate and non inmates. Non inmate’s participants were told to imagine that they have been found guilty placed on death row and will be executed the next day. They were instructed to <https://assignbuster.com/emotions-expressed-by-the-dying-are-unexpectedly-positive/>

imagine and feel the emotions that they will be feeling during their execution. Last they were told to write down their last word prior to their execution. Blogs were then compared from Non inmates and inmates who were (facing execution) and studied. Again, the result was comparable to the first study. They have found that the words and poetry of those who were closer to death showed less negative emotions with their poetry and writing, than those who were told to imagine their death nearing. (Gray 2017) So how can these benefit health care providers. As health care provider we can offer ways to accommodate to the patients and family members to help make this sorrowful situation bearable.

Another study based on the article “ positive dying and resiliency in later life:” examined the resiliency factors and process of older adults who experienced dying in a positive light through their perspective. The study was based on interviewing 16 hospice patients along with their primary caregivers. This study points out that Humans are more than capable to adapt quickly and recover from difficult and tough situations through empowering relations with their significant others, confronting mortality, accepting and confronting mortality. When loved ones are near death, strong bonds are created amongst families and friends. The dying may have the chance to rekindle with those they lost touch with or be able to fix a broken relationship. (Mitsuko 2005)

With that being said more than 1. 4 million Americans receiving hospice care every year are demanding a higher end of life quality care. In Minnesota a movement known as “ a death-positive” is finding ways to do so. For example, many doctors in Minnesota are encouraging and referring <https://assignbuster.com/emotions-expressed-by-the-dying-are-unexpectedly-positive/>

terminally ill patients the use of hospice care. In doing so, patients as well as their families have the ability to discuss and plan for the end of life care. As the article pointed out that the biggest shift of change when it came to prolonging a life was custom. Traditionally, doctor's focus has always been on prolonging one's life by whatever means necessary not realizing that it may oppose to the patients comfort. Lindsey Pelletier a hospice nurse in Minnesota hospital quote " At times you were fighting against what the body wanted to do, at times you were doing something unnatural" This was the motivation that encourage medical professionals to focus more on offering their terminal patient a high quality end of life care, instead of trying to continue treatments that are unnatural and often cause the patient to suffer. (Bryan 2019). Another benefit of providing high quality end of life care was mention in the article " Comparing Quality of Dying and Death Perceived by Family members and Nurses for Patients Dying in US and Dutch ICU, their research showed that families that received as well as perceived high quality end of life care, had a less difficult time with their bereavement, showed less symptomatic from the stress, last families felt that it gave them more time to say their proper goodbyes. (Gerritsen, 2017)

Christin Ament, a women that organized and own a café specifically to aim families a place to talk about death, how to handle death, how to accept death and so forth. Her goal is help people find people during this difficult time by providing support, and some answers to their question. (Bryan 2019)

In conclusion, the findings of these studies suggested that our expectation of death may not match the reality of dying. By acknowledging this, health care providers can provide cares that are effective on how we treat patients who <https://assignbuster.com/emotions-expressed-by-the-dying-are-unexpectedly-positive/>

are dying. There are too many people dying in hospital settings alone and in pain. As the researcher team wrote “ Death is inevitable, but dread is not” which makes a good point. To me this means that death will eventually come, and it’s natural to be afraid and fearful. But if we are open to discuss the topic of death, educate our patients and their family, and create an environment that focuses less on the negativity of death then perhaps we can offer an environment that involves sensitivity, empathy and compassion, and most importantly proper care that cause no suffering or pain to our the patients who are terminally ill.

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