

## Understanding Emotional Changes

Just as your body prepares physically for death, you will also prepare emotionally and mentally for this important transition. The process started when you learned about your terminal illness and is likely continuing, and perhaps intensifying, now.

Initially, you may have felt depressed, afraid, guilty, and angry that your life was coming to a close. As death draws nearer, you may continue to experience these complex emotions to different degrees. In addition:

**You may feel less interested in the outside world and the details of daily life.** As you become more accepting of your death, you may also become increasingly withdrawn from the world around you.

**You may be less talkative.** Talking takes energy. You may prefer nonverbal ways of communicating now, like touching and smiling.

**You may feel less socially interested in others.** As your thoughts turn inward, you may want only a few loved ones near. This may be your way of letting go and saying good-bye to those who have been a part of your life.

**You may experience memory changes.** Events in the recent past may become entwined with memories from long ago. You may recall what happened in childhood in vivid detail but forget what occurred yesterday.

**You may focus on loved ones who have died.** You may find yourself thinking more about deceased friends and family members. Perhaps you will even talk about seeing or hearing others who have died before you.

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