



Coping With Change

As a person coping with a life threatening illness, you are probably experiencing a lot of powerful emotions. You may feel:

- Shocked
- Sad
- Worried
- Frightened
- Angry
- Alone
- Hopeless
- Denial

You may feel like you are on an emotional roller coaster with things spinning out of control. These feelings are normal in times of stress. There is no right way to feel at this time.

- Try to share your feelings and thoughts with someone you trust. Talking to others can help.
- Listen to your inner voice. It will guide you to understand your truth and what's important to you.

When the “conspiracy of silence” is broken and loved ones talk openly about the death that is approaching them, then their fears, needs and hopes are met more readily and the path cleared to come to grips with the reality they face.

Victoria Hospice Society,
Medical Care of the Dying, 1993

- Cry – it's okay. Crying is an important way to cope with stress.
- Listen to music, go for a walk, meditate, take a bath, pray, enjoy the sunset, etc. Do whatever makes you feel comfortable and at peace.
- Make time to enjoy life and be with the people you care about. Share stories, reminisce, touch, hug.
- Smile and laugh. Smiling and laughing is an important part of living and helps us to feel better.

*Hospice is a community healthcare charity.
Donations make Hospice support possible to the over 800 people who need it every year.*

Hospice Greater Saint John * 385 Dufferin Row * Saint John, New Brunswick E2M 2J9
Tel: (506) 632-5593 E-mail: info@hospicesj.ca Website: www.hospicesj.ca



- Enjoy your pets. Pat them, talk to them. They can be a tremendous comfort.
- Do something distracting – go to a movie, read a book, etc.
- Do something special just for you – go to the spa, (get a massage, a manicure, a pedicure, etc.), purchase a special piece of clothing that makes you feel good, etc.
- Connect with nature. Feel the sun on your face and the breeze in your hair. Listen to the birds or the sounds of the ocean or stream. Connecting with nature can be very good for your soul.
- Try to get enough sleep and rest. Try to eat and drink to maintain your energy, if you are able to and feel up to it.

“What Do Dying People Want?”

by Dr. David Kuhl

“They want to be heard and understood simply for who they were in the world, in their families in their work, in their isolation in their grief, their suffering and hope.”

The Needs Of A Dying Person

Dr. Michael Downing

Medical Care of the Dying, 1989

Those who are facing the end of their life due to a progressive disease experience many emotional and intellectual reactions. They may have fears, concerns and worries about what is happening to them and what is to be expected. As well, their bodies may be undergoing dramatic physical changes as the disease process takes its toll on their health. The dying patient has many needs which must be attended to in order to provide good hospice palliative care. Some of these needs are listed below:

Physiological	Good symptom control.
Safety	A feeling of security.
Belonging	The need to be needed. The need to not feel like a burden.
Love	Expressions of affection, human contact and touch.
Understanding	Opportunity to discuss the process of dying. Explanation about the disease and its symptoms.
Acceptance	Regardless of mood and willingness to socialize.
Self-Esteem	Involvement in decision-making, especially as physical dependence on others increases. Opportunity to give as well as receive.

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