

Saying Goodbye

Saying goodbye to someone you love can be a challenging process. The goal of saying goodbye is to find peace for both people. Your Empath Health team can assist you in this process.

Suggestions for Saying Goodbye

- Realize the dying person usually knows what is happening. Not talking about dying may create the additional stress of secrecy.
- Don't wait for the exact right moment; it may never come. Look for opportunities instead.
- Comments such as being tired of being sick, not being around for an upcoming event, or distress related to new symptoms might be a cue that your loved one is thinking about dying. Follow their lead.
- Show up. Be present. Be open to listening and sharing with your loved one. Review shared memories and accomplishments together. Circumstances and geographical distance often make this impossible to do in person. Phone calls, letters, video chat or other ways of communication can be helpful.
- Say "I am sorry, please forgive me" for any regrets you may have or issues that may have come between you.
- Offer forgiveness for any perceived wrongs or regrets, "I forgive you."
- Say "Thank you." Acknowledge the difference your loved one has made in your life and your gratitude for it. Be as specific as possible.
- Say "I love you." List the things you love and will remember about your loved one.
- Assure your loved one that you will be sad, but you will find your way and be "alright."
- Remember that hearing is the last sense to be lost. Continue to talk to your loved one even if there is no visible response. Hold a phone to their ear for people who wish to say goodbye but are not able to be physically present.
- Everyone says goodbye in their own way. Everyone experiences this journey on their own terms and there is no right or wrong way to do it.

Information inspired by "The Four Things That Matter Most" by Ira Byock, MD, and "It's Okay to Die" by Monica Williams, MD, and Kristian Murphy.

Call Empath Health with any questions (888) 855-2838:

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