

PERSONAL DECLARATION OF VALUES

Because death is a part of every life, and can come at any time, there are several reasons for giving it careful thought. You will handle it better if it is on your own terms, and it will be very helpful to those who care about you if they know your preferences. You may use this as a guide to completing your Advance Directives.

These questions are worth exploring alone, with loved ones, and with your Agents:

- Have you accepted the fact that you are going to die one day?
- Is it death, or the process of dying, that is of most concern to you?
- Have you experienced a friend or relative's death, or known someone who simply wanted to find release from pain and suffering through death?
- Have you given thought to the meaning of life? If yes - a meaning in general, or the specific meaning of your own life at any given moment?
- How would you feel if at some point you felt that your life had lost all meaning?
- Are you able to savor the small things in daily life, things that you perhaps used to take for granted?
- What are some of the things in life that create warm recollections?

Chronic or terminal illness can cause many of the following:

- Intractable symptoms: pain, nausea, fatigue, anorexia, anxiety, confusion, incontinence, difficulty swallowing or breathing, sleeplessness or sleepiness
- Indignities such as helplessness, loss of bowel and bladder control, inability to wash, dress, eat, walk, or transfer to a toilet or commode
- With dementia, loss of self, memory, and ability to communicate, with radical personality changes such as repeated angry outbursts
- The anguish of those you love as they watch you deteriorate
- Depletion of your life savings to medical or nursing home costs
- Simple inability to enjoy living, given the conditions of life and health

Rate what is important to you with 5 being the most important, and 1 being the least important:

	1	2	3	4	5
Knowing the truth about my diagnosis and prognosis					
Taking part in decision-making involving my healthcare					
Having my healthcare Agent participate in decisions if I am unable to decide for myself					
Living at home, with help if necessary					
Living in a retirement or care center					
Using every medical intervention necessary to stay alive					
Letting nature "take its course"					
Being comfortable and pain free					

	1	2	3	4	5
Maintaining a satisfactory quality of life					
Maintaining my dignity					
Maintaining my privacy					
Maintaining mental capacity					
Being able to pursue my hobbies					
Having physical mobility					
Being able to care for myself					
Maintaining my eyesight					
Maintaining my hearing					
Being able to communicate					
Having hospice care at home (or care center) toward the end					
Being hospitalized toward the end					
Managing my finances					
Controlling health care costs					
Leaving assets for family, friends, charities, etc.					
Avoiding being a burden on others					

Other thoughts and feelings regarding medical treatments and end-of-life wishes:
