

# The Gift of *Timely Conversations*

Samaritan proudly offers these resources as part of our *Timely Conversations* program, an initiative to engage individuals and families in conversations about their end-of-life healthcare wishes.

## Resources & Conversation Starters

### Websites

- The Conversation Project – [www.conversationproject.org](http://www.conversationproject.org)
- Conversations of a Lifetime – [www.conversationsofalifetime.org](http://www.conversationsofalifetime.org)
- NJ Department of Health -- <http://www.nj.gov/health/advancedirective/ad/>
- National Institute of Health – Senior Health – [www.nihseniorhealth.gov/endoflife/preparingfortheendoflife/01.html](http://www.nihseniorhealth.gov/endoflife/preparingfortheendoflife/01.html)
- Goals of Care – [www.goalsofcare.org](http://www.goalsofcare.org)
- Go Wish – [www.gowish.org](http://www.gowish.org)
- Deathwise – [www.deathwise.org](http://www.deathwise.org)
- POLST – [www.njha.com/polst](http://www.njha.com/polst)
- Caring Info by NHPCO – [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org)
- Prepare for Your Care - [www.prepareforyourcare.org](http://www.prepareforyourcare.org)
- Dying Matters Let's Talk About It – [www.dyingmatters.org](http://www.dyingmatters.org)

### Books

- *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande
- *Dying Well: Peace and Possibilities at the End of Life* by Ira Byock
- *The Best Care Possible: A Physicians Quest to Transform Care through the End of Life* by Ira Byock
- *The Four Things that Matter Most* by Ira Byock
- *The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care* by Angelo E. Volandes, MD
- *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch with Jeffrey Zaslow
- *Hope for a Cool Pillow* by Margaret Overton
- *Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs, and Communication of the Dying* by Maggie Callanan
- *Final Journeys: A Practical Guide for Bringing Care and Comfort at End of Life* by Maggie Callanan
- *The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning: How to Free Yourself and Your Family from a Lifetime of Clutter* by Margareta Magnusson
- *I'm Dead, Now What? Important Information about My Belongings, Business Affairs, and Wishes* by Peter Pauper Press

### Documentaries

**Frontline's Being Mortal:** Explores relationships between doctors and their patients nearing end of life. Follows writer and surgeon Atul Gawande as he delves into the relationships doctors have with patients are dying.

**Netflix's Extremis:** Witness the wrenching emotions that accompany end-of-life decisions as doctors, patients and families in a hospital ICU face harrowing choices. **(over)**

**Consider the Conversation 1: A Documentary on a Taboo Subject** provides a 360-degree view on end-of-life care. It features the perspectives of three terminally ill patients in their 50's and the professionals who typically care for these kinds of people – doctors, nurses, social workers and clergy – as well as several leading national experts. Consider the Conversation does not provide the viewer with any particular answer – it's not a hospice film, for example, and it's certainly not a film that advocates for physician assisted death. Instead, it provides something far more important than an answer – some of the questions we all need to think about and answer for ourselves.

**Consider the Conversation 2: Stories about Cure, Relief and Comfort:** highlights the value of palliative care and shows viewers what end-of-life conversations with medical professionals look like, sound like, and feel like. It features the perspectives of seriously ill patients from a variety of backgrounds as well as the doctors who care for them. The primary goal of this film is to demonstrate that communication is a skill on par with the clinical skills of diagnosis, treatment and prognostication – something medical professionals can teach, learn, and use for therapeutic benefit.

## Conversation Starters

- How would you like to be remembered in 8 words or less?
- What's one story you would want told at your funeral? Who would tell it?
- What are the top three items on your bucket list?
- What is your first experience with loss?
- What scares you most in thinking about end-of-life? What comforts you most?
- When you think about the last phase of your life, what's most important to you? Ideally how would you like this phase to be? What would it mean to live well for however much time you have left?
- If you became unable to speak for yourself tomorrow, what "unfinished business" would you regret not having resolved – legal, financial, relationships, etc.