

The Top Five Regrets of the Dying

The Top Five Regrets of the Dying – A Life Transformed by the Dearly Departing is the title of a new book by Bronnie Ware, an Australian nurse whose own life was transformed by caring for hospice patients at the end of their lives. Here are the most common five themes that those people cited as regrets, and her understanding of the reasons why:

1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.

This was the most common regret voiced, and Ware attributes this to dreams which went unfulfilled.

2. I wish I didn't work so hard.

This regret was voiced by every male patient Ware nursed, and though not exclusive to men, she attributes this to the traditional roles of the older generation, and the choices made to sacrifice family and companionship for the treadmill of work.

3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.

Many felt they had suppressed their own feelings in order to maintain peace with others. This resulted in a loss of their own self and a pattern of resulting illnesses from carrying resentment.

4. I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.

The hectic lifestyle that many had been caught up in turned out to have been the wrong choice, as it came at the loss of their friendships. In the end, it comes down to connections.

5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

Happiness is a choice, which many do not realize until it is too late. Fear of change and truth can make us prisoners of our own lives.