

Is Your Child Worried About Death?

Submitted by Sarah Fitz-Claridge on 22 June, 2005 - 22:57

Posted on the TCS List on Mon, 12 Jun, 2000, at 11:52:23 -0400

by **Sarah Fitz-Claridge** (<http://www.fitz-claridge.com/>)



I had quoted the following **Extropian** (<http://www.extropy.com>) principle:

1. Perpetual Progress - Seeking more intelligence, wisdom, and effectiveness, an indefinite lifespan, and the removal of political, cultural, biological, and psychological limits to self-actualization and self-realization. Perpetually overcoming constraints on our progress and possibilities. Expanding into the universe and advancing without end.

A poster replied:

Why would anyone want an infinite lifespan? I hope to go with dignity when my time's up.

I hope not to “go” at all. Or if we have not solved the death problem by that time, to be **cryopreserved** (<http://www.alcor.org/>)_with or without dignity. 8-) Death has got to go.

Another poster had replied to the first:

Why would anyone not [want an infinite lifespan]? When is your “time up”? Do you believe that some external entity owns you and has the right to decide this, or are you content to be (essentially) at the mercy of a lethal bomb hooked up to a random-number generator? An enhanced lifespan can be used for creating knowledge, developing oneself (with an ever-growing knowledge base & tool set), exploring (definitely including but not limited to, exploration of space, etc. This naturally leads to “perpetually overcoming constraints on our progress and possibilities” and “advancing (toward whatever goals one chooses, consistent with the structure of the multiverse) without end”. As for “grandiose” or “taking over the universe”, no one is suggesting that we will accomplish everything in one massive swoop (although some do expect tremendously accelerated progress) or an imperialist crusade (if there is anyone “out there” to colonialize). We can take it one day at a time, at least until the Earth stops rotating, at which point we'll have to figure something else out:-) Perhaps more to the point as far as TCS goes – are you willing to use your best efforts help children achieve any degree of advancement, progress, health, longevity, etc. that they desire, either by helping yourself or finding others? If a child learns of death and says/communicates clearly “I don't want to die”, are you prepared to help em explore the available/forseeable options for postponing or avoiding death?

Yes, while it seems unlikely that most children would think much about death, in some families, where there has been a death, say, a child might well be concerned about death. In that case, Karen's approach would, it seems prima facie, be very unhelpful. The most important thing to do would be to find out why the child (let's call her Little Tia) is worrying about it and try to solve that problem. Is it that she fears that she might drop dead at any moment just like her Aunt Jane did? Then it would be a good idea to explain that Aunt Jane had died from such-and-such a disease, which old people sometimes (but by no means always – tell her the statistics) get but which Little Tia has not got, and is most unlikely to get until she too is old, and perhaps not even then. It would be wise to mention that by the time Little Tia is old, they may have found a cure for that disease anyway!

In general, if a child is worried, try to find out what the worry is, so that you can address it as directly as possible.

Tia might be interested to learn about the ways scientists are trying to solve the death problem, and it might make sense to point out to her that it seems likely that by the time she is an old person, our lifespan will have been extended considerably by all the advancements in medicine, etc. Another thing you might want to do, if your child is thinking about death, might be to read her a book such as ***The First Immortal*** (<http://www.Amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0345421825/takingchildrse09>), by James Halperin, or if she is a bit young to enjoy that, you could tell her about it, or retell the pertinent parts of the story, or tell her about **cryonic biostasis** (<http://www.alcor.org/>).

OTOH, her interest in death might be nothing to do with fear of death. It might be that she is upset about no longer having the nice chats she had about Pokemon with her Aunt Jane. Or the trips to the zoo Aunt Jane used to take her on. So before you launch into a discussion of the ins and outs of cryonic suspension, life extension and the like, check that you have correctly identified the problem. ;-)

to post comments

Comments

Immortality is horrifying.

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 6 November, 2005 - 08:02

Immortality is horrifying. I'll take my death, please.

to post comments

Death

Submitted by Mike Ruff (not verified) on 20 December, 2005 - 04:51

"You won't catch me goin' 'round dyin' all over the place. They'll have to kill me before I die."

to post comments

Technically you never die if

Submitted by anaon (not verified) on 11 June, 2006 - 01:35

Technically you never die if you believe in god... you move on... no body should fear death it is part of life

to post comments

I was very aware of my own mortality as a child

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 28 August, 2006 - 05:38

It is utterly beyond me why anyone would oppose the idea of an indefinite lifespan. Those of you who want to die don't have to keep on living until the clock runs out. Indefinite lifespan doesn't mean nothing can kill you. It isn't as though we've got some evil genie who's going to force immortality on you long after you've changed your mind about the whole idea. Suicide is a perfectly acceptable option for you if you aren't interested in continuing to live. Forcing a slow death by aging on the rest of us, however, is not acceptable, and equivalent to mass murder.

As a child, I was aware of death, and spent a lot of time struggling with the existential questions that came with the possibility that, one day, I might (in fact almost certainly would) cease to exist. It occupied a central place in my mind for quite some time. What was the meaning of it all if I didn't exist anymore? Did it matter how long I lived if it was certain to end eventually? Why not just end it now?

I'm not sure how used any of you are to hearing suicidal thoughts from a (then) elementary aged child, but it was certainly the case.

To this day, I find it impossible to continue living without some belief that I won't simply cease to exist. Some people find that belief through religion, but I could never accept (even back then) something that was, by definition, unprovable. As such, I keep looking up research on the aging process, that ticking clock that serves as the final limit on our lives. As much as we've proven our ability to overcome injury and disease, aging is still with us, and until that ultimate time limit no longer plagues us, we'll never be free to live until we tire of living, which is, ultimately, what indefinite lifespan is all about.

Your child might be thinking about death, and might well be aware of his or her own mortality. It's a lie when they tell you that kids all think they're immortal. I didn't, and it scarred the hell out of me for a very long time.

to post comments

I think I could be as unbiased as ...

Submitted by mammal_mama on 21 January, 2007 - 16:28

Okay, I think I could tell my child about cryonic suspension, and I think I could be as unbiased in the telling as an atheist could be in telling his child about the belief some people have in God and an afterlife.

I think your children will probably pick up on the fact that you prefer cryonic suspension over religious faith, just as my children will undoubtedly pick up on the fact that I prefer faith in God over cryonic suspension.

Is a belief in Taking Children Seriously incompatible with faith in God? I hadn't seen it that way, though I realize some Christians might. I realize many who embrace TCS are atheists -- but so are many moms who embrace their children through attachment parenting.

So I just saw it as a situation where both religious and non-religious could have good sense about how to treat their children. I'm greatly enjoying your writings -- as well as the writings of Karl Popper. I definitely don't believe I (or any other person) has learned all there is to know about God and the multiverse.

I want to communicate this sense of adventure to my children -- this sense that there's so much out there to learn and do. But I feel it would be wrong not to share my own beliefs and values in the process -- wrong, and also incompatible with TCS theory, which says we SHOULD share our theories and experience with our children in response to their interest.

Susan

[to post comments](#)

Worried about death

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 19 March, 2007 - 21:29

hi there, i am in my middle teens and all through my life i have been worried about diing in my sleep. i love life 100% and i cannot really accept death, it frightens my completely. so if i am ill and i go off to bed it takes me hours to get to sleep beacuse of this worry. is there anything i can do?

thank you

[to post comments](#)

Response to Reader Worried About Death

Submitted by mammal_mama on 20 March, 2007 - 15:53

Hi, I'm so happy you love your life 100%. I was actually quite unhappy as a teen -- so it's good to hear about teens who are happy and rejoicing to be alive.

You have so much to look forward to. Since you're happy now, I think you'll be really super happy as an adult: I'm glad I didn't kill myself when I was a depressed teenager, because I've found adult life to be tremendously better.

When you ask, "is there anything I can do"(about the fear of death), I don't want to ignore this question.

We can't do religious proselytizing here -- but maybe it's okay for me to simply share that my faith, prayer, and reading my Bible help me to have peace and conquer this fear as well as any other fear.

Best wishes to you in your journey! Susan

[to post comments](#)

Re: worried about death

I'm not sure it matters whether or not we can accept death. There just isn't much we can do about it once it happens. We can do what we can to keep ourselves in good shape and health, and being as safe as possible when living our lives.

Being ill is certainly no fun. Lying in bed awake for hours worried one might die in their sleep is not at all likely to keep this from happening yet it is very likely to keep one from enjoying life fully.

What is at the root of the fear? Fear that death is painful and awful? Fear that life would be over and one would miss out on so many things? When we shelter ourselves out of an irrational fear of missing something, we tend to miss out on a lot, if not experiences, the full enjoyment of those experiences.

[to post comments](#)

death

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 28 April, 2007 - 22:53

I have just now begun my teenage years and lately all i can think about is death!! Every night i fall asleep thinking about it and it scares the heck out of me. To think of being gone out of the world and not seeing my mom again or friends its just a very crazy feeling.I pray to god everynight to make these thoughts go away but they dont. I dont know quite why im thinkin these thing but its something i can get out of my head!! help me please!

[to post comments](#)

thinking habits

Submitted by canyonstar on 1 May, 2007 - 20:41

grappling with the concept of death is something that we all do unless such ideas are totally repressed (and don't repressed concerns come back to bite you in the butt in some odd form sooner or later? so no point in doing that).

the article and comments above contain some good ideas about ways to think about death. maybe you, above reader, would enjoy reading the book *the first immortal* along with other books, articles, discussions about death, and about fear, and about the emotions that come up around the idea of leaving loved ones and/or loved ones leaving you. Maybe this is a good time to explore existentialism.

also, there are thinking habits that a person can develop to distract one's self from thinking thoughts that they know they don't want to be thinking, when undesirable thoughts keep looping around and around. these can vary from person to person, but finding things of more interest to think about, something gripping to read or do when you find yourself looping, could help to break that repetition.

in general, more research, talking to trusted advisors, finding out what other people think, how they have coped, trying something different- like maybe doing an enjoyable workout several hours before going to sleep to help to tire yourself out, or meditating/doing segmental relaxation when wanting to go to sleep- can help to unravel big

things that are bothering a person, bit by bit. It is a learning process, not to be feared, but to welcome. I hope you have good trusted help nearby to turn to with this.

very best wishes

[to post comments](#)

thanks

Submitted by A HAPPY PEEP (not verified) on 3 August, 2007 - 16:13

ime in my teens and i can not stop thinking abought death it scars me so much and whats after it but this site has helped me a lot and its comferting to know there people like me THANK YOU TO EVERYBODY ON THIS SITE

P.S SORRY ABOUT THE SPELLING

[to post comments](#)

Re: Worried about death

Submitted by Bulmafox (not verified) on 7 August, 2007 - 01:13

If the reason you fear dying is because there's still so much you want to do/get, then follow the old cliché saying 'seize the day'. The best way to get started, in my opinion, is every day, or when you see a window of opportunity closing, is think of something you'd really kick yourself over if that window closed and you didn't do it. Then work up the courage to do it; maybe add that you'll kick yourself or give a group of friends permission to kick you if you don't. That's gotten me to do a few things I wanted to do but wouldn't have otherwise.

...I still need to follow that advice more...>> << >>

[to post comments](#)

childs fear of dying

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 3 January, 2008 - 16:40

My daughter has recently started worrying about what is going to happen to her things when she dies. She hasn't directly mentioned being afraid of death, she is just worried about her drawings and things she has made. She is eight years old. I have tried talking to her to try to find out what has trigered this but she says these thoughts just pop into her head. Is this 'normal' for a child her age?

[to post comments](#)

sounds normal to me

Submitted by canyonstar on 7 January, 2008 - 15:40

... whatever 'normal' is. it is happening, so what to do?

while it might seem to be reassuring to a parent, to figure out 'what has triggered' thoughts that the parent does not understand, it is likely to be intrusive to try to get into a kid's mind and try to figure such a thing out. such a detour does not address the problem being expressed by the child. parent might get an inkling of the origin of the child's concern, in the process of pursuing a solution to the actual problem that the child has identified, but to divert there immediately might be a mistake and actually end up with parent dismissing the child's concerns if parent does not take the 'trigger' seriously. (oh, it was just the dead crow in the road, such things happen; oh, it was just a joke that someone told that you misunderstood; oh, it was just a cartoon show on tv, that's not even real)

so a person's best explanation is that thoughts just pop into hir head. if the thoughts are disturbing, together can you pick it apart to identify what exactly is the concern? what happens to possessions is expressed as the concern: work with that and don't assume further. do we know any children who have died? what happened to their things? what would this owner of things like to have happen to hir things if she was not there to use them any more? people make out wills, to say what happens to their things after they die. would you like to make out a will?

i suspect that we adults have lots of unresolved fears and feelings and beliefs about death, maybe especially when the questioning comes from the mouths of innocent babes and young people with their whole lives ahead of them. none of us wants to dwell on the possibility of losing a child. but we all have to face these possibilities; some of us have to live through such an experience. facing one's own questions and fears about death, as a parent, and sorting it out rationally can help us to really hear and help our children in their own exploration and knowledge creation about death. it's another example of learning that never ends (until we turn our toes up, or go the cryonic route until something better turns up)

to post comments

Worried about Death

Submitted by [Amii \(not verified\)](http://www.aol.com) on 28 February, 2008 - 20:28

I was very worried about death for a while especially just before going to sleep. Im not religious so i have no idea what to believe in. I read some of the stories on this site and they are very comforting and have given me so much to believe in after i die. To me now, death is a human created idea. Death itself does not exist. There are two worlds to explore. Your physical body is allowed to explore this galaxy, but for most of us, just planet earth. When you make the change from your physical body into your spiritual body a whole new universe is waiting for you. I would really reccomend anyone who is worried checking out this site: www.near-death.com (<http://www.near-death.com>)

to post comments

Lost in death... From an atheist...

Submitted by AllTheLostSouls (not verified) on 5 August, 2008 - 00:46

Death is so watered down in modern society by the general myopia. The problem seems to stem from a lack of public acceptance of death. So often you hear that animals were "put to sleep" or "passed away" or something equally as politically correct. Its unfortunate that people view death as a negative. I suppose, however it is inevitable and natural to question our on mortality. It is because death is the only great unknown and everything we know and love's existance relies upon the absense of it. It is then so ironic that we rely on it for meaning in everything we do. Life would be pointless without death. An immortal man would forever envy the mortal man because everything that the mortal man does is so much more beautiful due to the fact that his existance is doomed. He knows he will not be here again, he knows his time is precious, he knows that there are no guarentees, and he knows that death is just as beautiful and nessescerry as life.

[to post comments](#)

my son is afraid of death

Submitted by Eve (not verified) on 4 February, 2009 - 01:22

my 8 yr old son has recently [the past 2 weeks] been worried about whats going to happen to him when we,, his parents die... or when his sisters die... I've tried to explain that this is something I'm not planning on happeneing to me for another 30-40 yrs and even longer for his sisters.... he'll be fine, then you can see him becoming very sad...I explained that I understand it is very sad when someone we love dies [my dad died 3 yrs ago... his only grandparent he had], but we have wonderful memories, and tried to point out some of the very happy times we have had since my fathers passing, so he understands that he will be fine when one of us passes, even though it won't be a happy part of his life...we continue to live our lives... if this continues, should I speak to his school counselor? I think it started because I had minor foot surgery and he was terrified something would go wrong..

[to post comments](#)

My son is afraid that something will happen to me or dad

Submitted by Fay (not verified) on 25 February, 2009 - 11:22

My son is 7 years old and just lately it has come to light that he has a fear that when he is at school something will happen to me or his dad. I have explained to him that nothing will and that we both intend on living to an old all being well!.

I have noticed a trigger point and that is when he hears the word 'life' he gets very sad and starts to cry. He tells me he has had these feelings for a while and cannot get them out of his head.

I have said to him that when he gets the feelings to try to think of some thing that makes him happy.

Last year my nan died and both my husband and I agreed that both our children should go which they did. My youngest became very inquistive at the sight of the coffin and the thought of her in it. Could this be where the problem has come from?

[to post comments](#)

really afraid..

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 29 March, 2009 - 17:37

hey.....im reeaally scared of death....im 12 and i think about it all the time.....and also for my parents.im afraid that ill be alone.sothng hPPENS and i think that im dying and my heart beat is very quick....im very depressed....plleeeeeease help me...(i have it since i was 9)

tnx

[to post comments](#)

Really Afraid

Submitted by Willow on 17 April, 2009 - 20:55

Can you talk to your parents about this? What you describe about your heartbeat quickening is a normal reaction to being frightened. Taken to extremes, it could be a panic attack, but I don't think you are dying.

Where in the world are you? In the UK we have some confidential telephone support charities, most notably, Childline (0800 1111). There are probably similar things in the US.

It is pretty unlikely that one of your parents will die before you are an adult, and even less likely that they both will.

I'm 32 and both my parents are alive and well, as is my grandma.

[to post comments](#)

repost: MY Child was worried about his death

Submitted by canyonstar on 6 May, 2009 - 15:53

[this comment was left on the wrong article so I am posting it here for Laural]

"My son was just 19 years old four weeks ago. Over the last year he told his father and I a lot of very scarry things about him dying. He didn't understand it and it scared him somewhat. We of course thought that he was having a break down and put him into the hopital at one point. Well the Doctors didn't know what to think about it so they just started him on drugs. Well that was a year ago and four weeks ago he was killed in a car accident. He told his Dad the night he left that he would never see him again and he was right. Now they did an investigation and they say that it was just a very tragic accident. I know now that if your child tells you something like that you may want to listen. We didn't and we are very sorry. We could have done things a lot differently. But now its too late. I love and miss him so much. I would love to be able to tell him, if not permanantly than maybe just one more time. I LOVE YOU BRANDON and where ever you are I send you ALL OUR LOVE. And know if your brother ever says anything like that we will listen to every word."

By laural at 2009/04/28 -

[to post comments](#)

My 4 year old is worried about dying

Submitted by yrivers (not verified) on 11 May, 2009 - 01:45

Thank you for this site. I was just looking around the Internet to see if there's something wrong with my 4 year old boy. He recently realized that he and us (his parents) will die someday. On a couple of occasions, he has cried a lot saying that he doesn't want to die. I do my best not to lie to him, but I just didn't think it was right for a 4 year to be in so much emotional pain, so I told him that people who die go to heaven and that his family will be together in heaven. Now he talks about when he is going to die and go to heaven frequently. And I just ask him not to talk about it, because I don't know how to respond and I don't want him talking about dying all the time! Does anyone else know of a child this age worrying about dying (without someone in their lives dying)? Any suggestions for how to help him stop worrying?

[to post comments](#)

thank you

Submitted by Teen (not verified) on 25 August, 2009 - 03:03

Hi im 16 years old and i have recently been really afraid of death and what happens after, but reading these stories and different point of views is really comforting. knowing that others are also going through the same problems as me makes me feel like im not alone :)

[to post comments](#)

Death... Why.?

Submitted by Coreymiller13@g... (not verified) on 2 September, 2009 - 10:01

hey my name is corey. im 15 and i dont like death... im upset that sometime in a few seconds to a few years my grandparents will die. and im also worried about myself. now i have something as a religeon... i beleve in a god of some sort... i mean seriously... think about it. physics and time and gravity and darkmatter in the universe. what if our life is just someone elses science experiment???? or what if its something more!!! like our whole universe.. in another universe. and on some foreign planet we are an atom of some kind on its soil?. thats a lot to think about..... honestly i dont wanna die... and i know that someday i will. but i dont want too... i cant keep my mind off of it... what should i do? i mean im not suicidal! im too scared to die lol... but i just know someday ill not be here... and before i die i will lose everyone.. everybody that i love!. i dont want to die. yet what is the point of living in a world with 6.7 billion other people, of wich most dont give a darn about the planet or the other people on it.... what if they dont want to die.... i just need someone to talk too. with religeon howver i am not in a specific one... i just think that there is something someone... and maby even god. but i dont want to die. my mom is christian and she says death is only the beginning to life. however i just dont know... and there are too many religeons so i am just more less waiting to find out when i die... and if theres nothing... well o well.... D= =((~.~)

[to post comments](#)

Memento mori

Submitted by Timothy on 16 September, 2009 - 22:39

Just wanted to toss out some ideas for those worried about their own mortality. I don't know if this will calm you, but it certainly calms me.

First of all, think back to the time before you were conceived. Was it uncomfortable in any way? Certainly not; your brain did not exist then, and likewise neither did any of your present senses or thought processes. That time may as well never have existed for you. Why expect anything different after death? If there is agony in death, it is all in the anticipation.

Why, then, do some people fear death with such dread anticipation? To answer that, think of the people who do not fear death. One person I can think of is my grandmother, who, as an ill octogenarian, saw nothing wrong with death and even welcomed it. She had achieved many goals in her life, and was quite content to leave things at that.

What, then, are the goals we pursue that can conquer even our fear of death? I submit that bringing new humans into the world and helping them become responsible adults is the foremost death-conquering goal. Another is to protect and promote our family, our friends, or our tribes.

We are evolved creatures with evolved minds, and so we are mentally driven in countless ways to increase our reproductive fitness -- that is, to increase the reproductive potential of ourselves, our family, and our whole genetic in-group, up to and including the entire human race. As we achieve such fitness, we often find deep psychological satisfaction transcending even the fear of death.

So whether you are a religious believer or not, embrace your legacy as the descendant of an extremely long line of creatures, all of whom managed to escape death long enough to raise a new generation. Find your unique talents and exploit them for your family and your fellow humans. Dedicate yourself sufficiently to this cause and even death itself cannot undo your life's legacy.

One final thought: in biological systems, there is never any such thing as stasis. An organism is either growing and metabolizing, or it is dying and decaying. If you want to ward off death, your best bet is to pursue constant growth in body and mind.

[to post comments](#)

5 year old scared of dying

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 5 December, 2009 - 18:27

How is your son doing now? I have the same problem with my 5 year old, but the heaven story does not work with him..... Any other suggestions

[to post comments](#)

My 4 year old

Submitted by a reader in the US (not verified) on 7 January, 2010 - 03:55

Hi,

I just wanted to say that I'm going through the very same thing with my 4 year old. It's VERY upsetting! Tonight he said to me "mom? when I die will you go to my grave and dig me up and bring me home with you?" all while getting choked up with tears in his eyes. It was heart breaking. I keep explaining to him that he doesn't have to worry, that he will be an old man in a very long time... Anyway, I've just noticed that you wrote this a few months ago. I hope he's moved past it, and that mine will too...

Katherine

[to post comments](#)

My 7 year old son's fear of death

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 28 January, 2010 - 03:28

My son has a fear of death. He's a thinker. Since he was 3, he gets lost in thought. His first panic attack about his fear of death, I was able to calm him down with "heaven". Around the age of 4, he wasn't buying the heaven thing...he told me that heaven is something that grown-ups tell children to make them happy. What 4 year old says that? He's an only child. Around the age of 5, he had another death/fear/panic attack--This time I calmed him down with reincarnation. The thought of him coming back to earth as a duck or a turtle was exciting to him. Around the age of 6, he had another P attack--This time I explained how there are a million eggs inside of my body, and he was the only egg that was chosen to become a person. He understood and realized how lucky I was to be the chosen egg from Grandma. All has been well, until last night. He was reading, I was knitting. He bursted out in tears, yelling, "I don't want to die, I won't be able to come back". He then said he couldn't breathe, I tried to calm him with eye contact and counting together...it didn't work. He then projectile vomited all over the place! The barfing made him stop thinking about death. I've been researching this ever since. Help?

[to post comments](#)

Sometimes..

Submitted by Concerned Child (not verified) on 29 January, 2010 - 16:17

Sometimes; some children will get the wrong idea about death. When they are young, they dont understand. Those children that are actually reality based know that it is a part of life, and its not something to look forward to or something to be afraid of. You just have to wait until children grow up a bit and learn about life and death and the reasons for it. You cannot force a child into being mature about the situation and you cannot force a child to understand, but if you dont let them grow up at their own pace, well, they might be bombarded with messages of death and dying, that arent necessarily true. You just have got to understand we grow up at OUR OWN PACES! Dont tell us about death and dying; we frankly don't need that.

[to post comments](#)

Myself and my son fear of death

I (aged 32) have had a fear of death (when? family members? will I know? is there anything on "the other side"? etc.) for approximately ten years. Over the years I was put on and off anti-depressants throughout this time, never actually getting to the root of the problem that was triggering my panic attacks and depression. I am not religious and have talked to a counselor and friends - which helped sometimes. At the moment I am doing well and am looking forward to things happening in my life. I also find that "mindfulness" (living in the now) helps. I have always thought I shielded my son (aged 12) from these feelings and thoughts. Until recently. He has come to me several times crying and upset about dying and him not wanting to. He does have a belief in "god" but is now questioning this, which I understand is normal. As I have these exact same feelings I am finding it extremely hard comforting him and would I would love some advice. There are no definitive answers and I know that no one knows the answers but maybe some suggestions of books that would be suitable for him.

[to post comments](#)

12 year old daughter scared about death

Submitted by Jan from Aus (not verified) on 1 June, 2010 - 04:02

Thank you for this very helpful site! I don't feel so alone reading how others are feeling. I have 2 kids. A 15 y.o. son and a 12 y.o. daughter. We are a close family. Since my daughter started her period 3 months ago, her whole personality has changed. It hit like a tonne of bricks!!! She used to be very affectionate, would talk often, and want to do things together, but now wants her own space (which is understandable at this age)and doesn't want to spend much time with us anymore. She starting becoming lazy and was detaching herself from the family. She had suffered terrible panic attacks a few months ago, crying her eyes out as she is scared of us dying and that she will be left alone in this world when we are gone. I couldn't get her to school some mornings and she wasn't eating very well. It is great if your child can openly talk to you about their fears and concerns though. She had been bottling her emotions for some time and I now understand how she is feeling. My daughter is questioning why we are born, but then why do we die...what is the whole purpose of being here in the first place? Where do we go after we die? My daughter was a very clingy child when she was little...many school days she would be beside herself because I was not there with her, and we had about 9 years if disturbed sleep with her screaming through the night wanting someone to be with her. My son is the opposite though. He has sailed through out his 15 years without too many problems, apart from the normal mood swings, etc that teens go through. I make sure my daughter is not subjected to the news at dinner time...it is all such sad and depressing news lately...I do feel my daughter is drifting away from me slowly which is a normal cycle as they grow older. This is something I have to accept, but I know we will have many happy years ahead once she overcomes this fear of death and becomes more accepting of things. She is seeing a counselor at her school and is also starting to see another counselor outside of school.I highly recommend this to any parent as sometimes your kids need to speak to someone outside the family.I have also been giving my daughter natural supplements from a natureopath to help calm her and support her body. I know part of this is hormonal changes and now that she is getting older, she is realising her own mortality.It is part of growing up but kids still need that extra support to reinforce them for the rest of their lives.

[to post comments](#)

Hi, I have an 8yr and like a

Submitted by Christina (not verified) on 12 July, 2010 - 06:37

Hi, I have an 8yr and like a week ago he started to freak out about dying.He starts to cry and breathing really fast.I ask him what is wrong all he ever says is that he thinks about when he dies that he sees him self in a coffin laying there my eye closed not breathin my heart not moving Im dead.It scared the hell out of me I dont now what to do any more.I took him to a counseler the other day and she says its just somthing that he will get over soon, but i dont now im a scared the he will get sick of feeling and thinking about him dying.Then end up god for bid doing somthing stupid.I just dont now what to do if there is anyone that could maybe help please do. Thank you for taking the time to read this, to who ever dose.To all of you that write what you think about death I really hope you find what you looking for take care and god bless us all hopefully.....

[to post comments](#)

death

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 29 July, 2010 - 12:44

I'm 12 and I think about death a lot. I have mixed feelings about it knowing at the age of about 90 (hopefully,) I will be so tired I'll just want to drift off to sleep and welcome death. Unfortunately I still have at the back of my head the thought of what It'll be like? And leaving behind everyone I care about! What I like to think about is that they'll be tired and welcome death in their sleep too.

[to post comments](#)

help me please

Submitted by richardhart on 7 August, 2010 - 09:24

im not sure if my last post worked if it did im sorry.

i dont know how to put this in order so im just going to spill... im sorry...

when i was younger say elementary school - 6th grade, i used to have a hugef ear of my mother dying, i would do tihngs like, bring her home every drawing i made.. even little doodles.. bring her funny sticks.. i guess i did it because i wanted her to see it before she died.. i used to have to come home from school all the time because i would randomly start crying, finaly it went away...

i am now 20, soon to be 21 in january, and it has come back full blown. for the past two or three months i have been getting little to no sleep, this time however its about my grandmother.... she is only 70, but shes in good health, i dont know why im like this, just reading some of this stuff made me tear up, my fiance wanted me to lay down with her, i turned off the tv, and for about two hours i just layed there.. its like every time i lay down it pops into my head.. its haunting me and i cant make it stop. my grandmother is one of the most kind people on this planet, i know this is pathetic, but she still buys me food, and clothes sometimes, and i feel like im not good enough to even be related to her.... im in school... but i dont have a job, i still live with my mother and stepfather... i feel worthless. i cry to myself every night, i dont even feel like a man anymore.. i have to hide it from everyone because i know they will think less of me, im just so scared, this thought is tormenting me. i dont know what caused this, but its killing me. i never have any energy. i get about 2 hours of sleep a night, if i sleep at all. im scared to tell my fiance even. im just so scared, i dont want her to go... sometimes i think it would be best if i died first, so i woulkdnt have to witness her death, i think it would be better that way, i know i wont be able to handle it.. i love her so much. this haunting thought is tearing me and my relationships with friends, my

fiance, and family apart. im always in a fairly bad mood. i just want it to stop. im so scared, and im so tired of thinking about this but nothing hlep it.. always returns to me... sometimes ill be havinga really fun time, or in a good mood... and it comes out of no where. i just want it to stop.. so i can live my life... i dont want to lose her.. please help.. i know this is pathetic.. but i dont know what else to do.. i have been too scared to tell anyone, and i just tonight deided to reach out on the internet.... i know this is taking childrenseriously, however i was a child when it started.. .so im not sure if it belongs here. im sorry if it dosnt, if not, any other sights people know of?

[to post comments](#)

10 year old scared of dying

Submitted by emma miles (not verified) on 23 August, 2010 - 11:47

my 10 year old is scared of dying he wants to live forever. He wants to know what happens to your body when you die and cant understand what the purpose of dying is? I go through all the right reasons with him but it doesnt reassure him and hes still unsettled. This always happens just before he goes to sleep he tells me over and over again that he loves me. Last night he became very upset and started to shout out that he didnt want to die and how he wishes he could stop thinking about it. he convinced hes the only child whoever thinks like this. I hate to see him upset this has been going on and off for a year now.

[to post comments](#)

my son is afraid of death

Submitted by mei (not verified) on 13 September, 2010 - 21:00

Hello,

I saw your post. My son has the same problem recently. He is 9 years old now. He talked to me almost every night recently with tears in his eyes. I am a single Mom. He is really worried what will happen to him if I die. I told him I am healthy and I won't die until I am 80 or 90 years old. But he still worried. Is your son OK now? I don't know what I can do to help him get out of this situation. Please help!

[to post comments](#)

Fears of death during childhood

Submitted by Lisette (not verified) on 8 February, 2011 - 05:47

I'm not sure this really belongs here but it did begin with a fear of death when I was a child, and it still concerns me both in terms of how it might still effect me now, and if I ever have children of my own. So here is my very long tale of childhood fears:

Starting when I was seven I began to have an intense fear of dying. It was a terrible, all consuming kind of fear, and I used to try to find ways to distract myself. I would plan ahead, thinking, 'okay, well I got a new bunny so that will distract me for a few weeks and then we're supposed to get a puppy and that will help me not think about it for a few more weeks and then we're moving so I won't think about it and then it's-" and on and on and on.

I can't even imagine what precipitated this, my grandparents didn't die until I was 9 years old, although this did seem to make my fears get considerably worse, escalating to a fear of getting cancer, even though neither grandparent or any relative had died of cancer, I would check my skin all over for anything odd every night, paranoid about every single freckle or mosquito bite.

I kind of fell in and out of it over the next three or four years, I would be fine for a few weeks, sometimes even months, and suddenly I would have this overwhelming wave of depression, and I can remember thinking 'now I can't be happy anymore', it would last for a few weeks, maybe longer, and then it would fade out. It made me feel isolated, and odd, and even though I've always been close with my parents, I never really felt like I could talk to them about it, I might have said something about it once when I was very young, but I think they gave me an understandably simple, comfort the child type of answer, and it just didn't cut it. Which obviously didn't cut it for me, because it kept going for years after that. I mentioned it to my sister once when I was thirteen and she thought that was really odd, and didn't believe me (she said I never seemed depressed).

I became anorexic when I was fourteen and had started public high school (my father traveled a lot for business before that and we never lived in one place very long, so we'd been homeschooled until I was fourteen), I danced ballet (it was a good enough distraction that I became obsessive about it, and anorexic on top of that). I wasn't interested in boys (or girls) and was afraid of getting older than fourteen, I didn't even want to turn 15, I wanted to be young and safe forever. I was the quiet one in class, and a straight A student (so that probably only added to the parents' inability to see something was wrong), I had two friends, both from my gym class, I hated the boys because they harassed me, which I never told my parents because I was embarrassed, but my gym teacher found out and called them, they pulled me out near the very end of the first semester.

So I was back home, with a tutor, and still dancing and definitely anorexic (I didn't improve or get any worse in my behaviors after I was home again), but since I was around my family now day in and day out, my parents began to notice something was wrong. By 15 I was 5' 5" and 98 pounds, and they got me help, and that was good, but then bad, actually, because then I gained a huge amount of weight from the time I was 15-16, I'm very fine boned, and carrying 145 or so pounds wasn't comfortable in the least, my skin was terrible, and with no energy I no longer had the distraction of ballet or the comfort of obsessively controlling my food. But I still did well in school, and never mentioned the random bouts of depression and the really odd fear of dying (because it seemed too...abnormal, and I think if I was ever going to say anything it would have to have been before I'd been in highschool, where all your fears of how abnormal and possibly messed up you are get confirmed by all manner of unpleasant children).

I graduate high school when I was sixteen, and went for two years to a state school so I could commute, still gaining more weight, and then to a private university when I was eighteen, some seven hours from home. The fears didn't come back as frequently, or as strong after I was seventeen or so, but I suffered a different form of depression there, I think because I tried to fit in, when a part of me really didn't want to (I naturally preferred to study than party, and I felt I couldn't relate to kids my own age, and was more comfortable during conferences with my professors than hanging out with other students), but I did make an effort, and to make matters worse, people began to ask if I'd ever had a boyfriend, and I would get odd looks when at 19 I was still saying, no I hadn't, so I tried to like a boy and it really didn't work for me (I still don't know if he did like me, because the reason I tried to like him was because my roommate said he liked me...but I was never really outside myself enough at the time to read other people), and the majority of his friends and my roommates' friends, didn't like me (they thought I was weird, and one made a comment once very loudly to another "How did she even get into this school?", which did nothing for my intellectual self esteem which has always been far too near to shredded), during sophomore year, my grades went from a 4.0 to a 2.0, and I felt isolated and over summer break told my parents I didn't want to go back. We had recently moved to another state, even further from my university and the idea of being stuck, alone, unable to make it home for certain breaks more 1000 miles from home and my parents and siblings was terrifying.

I ended up taking a semester off and waiting tables, still having bouts of depression, occasionally once again having a crippling fear of dying and would feel scarcely there at work (I would have this odd feeling of just observing, not really as if you weren't in your body, but as though you weren't a part of this thing that every other human being on the planet was a part of, if that makes sense, I used to think of it as feeling as if you'd already died, and you weren't able to really interact with them). finally, after a series of fainting spells and suffering a tachycardia that landed me in the hospital, I was diagnosed with Celiac Disease, and was treated. I lost weight (I'm a very healthy 120-125) and started dancing again (I teach ballet to six year olds :)), starting going to the state university and commuting from home, began writing, graduated with my Lit degree, and recently started a masters in medieval literature.

In the past three years since I was diagnosed, I haven't had any bouts of depression, although I still struggle with occasional, random paranoid thoughts where I'll suddenly think I might die young from horrible disease, and occasional minor episodes of minor depression that aren't related to dying so much as, "what if life isn't all that I want it to be" or "what if I die before I can learn and see everything", to some extent, a more sophisticated version of my childhood fears of growing old and then dying, but not nearly as frequent or as severe or long lasting. I no longer need a distraction from them, I just tell myself, "well then, who knows? so finish your novels, read that book on Old Welsh folklore, and study as much as you can in however much time you have".

My thoughts are these: children can definitely be far more rational in their fears than you think they might be, and the fear does need to be taken seriously. I don't lay blame for this with my parents, true, if they had taken my first tentative expressions of fear more seriously, it might not have escalated as far as it did, thirteen years of depression, even with breaks in between, is a huge chunk of time out of your life if you're only twenty-four. At the same time, I don't know how large a part Celiac played in it, it certainly can cause major depression in some sufferers when they continue to consume certain foods, but it's the consciousness during childhood that throws me, and that is primarily why I want parents to realize their child might think far more rationally, and have underlying reasons for their fears of dying, even to the point of devising complicated ways to cope when they're no more than seven, and hiding depression extremely well.

At the same time, I don't know if a parent really could notice it, I grew up in a very close family, it wasn't as though our parents paid no attention to us, or we weren't exposed to a large enough number of doctors, music teachers, athletics, etc. that another adult wouldn't have noticed if something was outwardly 'off' about one of us. I also am not convinced Celiac was the main reason, as one of my two brothers also suffered major bouts of depression from the time he was fifteen until about three years ago, he was tested for Celiac, and he doesn't have it, and he's now enjoying college, playing soccer and happy.

He was also bullied in high school, badly, to the point that I'm not sure he's even told me everything, saying he wants to forget it. He and I are the two that were bullied, our older sister, and our younger brother were not, and are I think more easily adaptive and enjoying of social interactions. The brother who also suffered from depression is more social than I am, I no longer fear interacting, and enjoy my job and school, but I still can't 'relate' (I can't find a better word, it's not 'interact' because I deal with fellow students and undergraduates every day and don't feel uncomfortable, but if offered the opportunity to get together with a group, I find it unappealing) to people my own age, outside of my own siblings and two or three friends that I've known since I was probably five and still get together with on occasion.

I've still never been even close to having a relationship with anyone (I've been asked point blank if I'm a lesbian) I finally moved beyond not having any attraction to anyone to realizing that I do feel strongly attracted to men, and not at all to women, which seems surprising because I have a terror of relationships and a deeply rooted distrust of men; I might not fear dying, but I do fear betrayal, rape or any other manner of things that I seem to associate with men, and know that emotionally I couldn't handle the typical relationship with its potentially short lifespan. I still suffer from extreme low self esteem, both physical and intellectual (even in graduate school I'm always afraid the next paper will be the one that brings me crashing down, trashing any confidence I'd amassed that I just might be the smallest bit intelligent in my field), and I want a relationship, but at this point I feel I come with far too

much baggage, I have no ability to relate to those within my age range, and the idea of having to eventually admit to any serious partner that you're twenty four and potentially a really mentally messed up virgin is far too daunting.

To summarize the entire long winded tale: children are much brighter and aware than you think (yes, even my parents, who had us learning Latin and reading Descartes at six didn't think to give the answer to the fears of dying a greater deal of thought), and the emotional repercussions of not having these fears taken seriously, and addressed in a sophisticated way, can be unforeseen (I'm not certain how much of my initial fears might have been evidence of something else, and possibly the major depression, negative associations with men in high school, and undiagnosed Celiac emphasized, or maybe created, I haven't a clue, any underlying personality issues).

Take your kids seriously, they're not stupid, and I don't believe a pat answer about heaven if you're a christian, or cryogenics or "life ends with death" if you're atheist will cut it. They wouldn't have worked for me, partly because both are very much based on the parents personal belief system (christianity has no proof and is based on individual faith, atheism has no proof, as it asserts the nonexistence of something based on the proof that there is no proof of something that by its very nature cannot give physical proof of its existence, both require the faith of the individual: the christian must have faith that what he can't see or prove is there, the atheist must have faith that things you cannot see or prove are certainly NOT there) neither of these will help a child who is both intelligent (beyond the: daddy says so therefore it is true, stage) and wrestling with the concept of death itself. I would advise: open the discussion wider than you thought you might have to, make it philosophical if necessary, consider, and invite them to consider, all that we know and all that might be, and perhaps end with the words of Aristotle (or, if your child can better relate, they were also given to Peter Pan), and remind them that, if nothing else: to die, will be an awfully big adventure. For, who knows, no matter what your religious or lack of religious belief is, it will be something never experienced before, and none of us can truly know what, if anything, or if everything, lies beyond.

[to post comments](#)

I find you fasinating

Submitted by J (not verified) on 21 March, 2011 - 23:59

I find you fasinating lisette. Hah. I was so caught in your story. I'm 19 and have had very similair feelings in almost all areas of my life that you've described..but I can tell you're far more intelligent and thirsting for life than I am. My biggest distraction from death was my obsessive thoughts of inadequacy and basically being up my own ass...comparing myself to others..nothing productive..and something I'm ashamed of..and I'm scared to lose my intense selfabsorbtion cause then death and life is staring me in the face..but its completely detached me from everyone in my life and left my boyfriend feeling disconnected from me. I have no idea how to connect to people ..I just force myself to hold the chaos in my head back so I can try an not be the most awkward human on earth. I'm open to all possibilities of death because we as humans have no choice ..I think that's the most comforting thing about death..all that is certain is that its not BAD..that's a human made concept..the only thing I stress about is if ill be with my boyfriend in death..and if one of us dies and the other falls in love again..who will we be with in death which is funny cause I'm not religious and don't believe in heaven exactly..I don't BELIEVE anything..I just live and hope my dead loved ones somehow exist somewhere but can accept if they aren't..its just odd I stress about something like that..in death I doubt it'd even matter anyway..but I want my love to transcend death desperatley

[to post comments](#)

Death

Submitted by Gaz, UK (not verified) on 20 April, 2011 - 01:17

Hi,

I come across this site because my Kid has started mentioning death alot and tomorrow I have to counsel him. Not only that this is my worst subject.

I think all of the comments here show how intelligent all these Kids are that they have realised that Death is inevitable. I myself realised when I was about 8.

Obviously this is impossible to accept, I myself can not accept death and have over the course of my life had panick attacks, and cried and screamed about it. It has made me do things to try and add more interest to my life like great challenges. I cant tell my kid that.

A wise man once said - The way of the warrior is an absolute resolute acceptance of death. Well I am no warrior, however I admire thier bravery.

One way to tackle this issue with Kids could be to try and encourage kids to try hard in life, not to get into trouble, to be healthy and to become successful - in that way they will always be remembered and will live forever. IE do the best they can and not to let wasted opportunities go and to make the right decisions.

That will give some hope, I wish I hadnt wasted so many opportunities and I am only 33.

Good luck to all you out there - I hear you. I'm not sure if these comments would help anyone but I hope so, we are all one big family and I love life.

Gaz. :)

[to post comments](#)

child fears

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 11 May, 2011 - 19:25

My son is 11 and terribly scared to go to bed . He states that he is scared of not sleeping prior to us falling asleep. We stay in South Africa and as you might be aware, safety is a big concern. He tells us that he does not know what / why he is scared and that makes it even more difficult to asiist. His schoolwork has also declined the past few months wihtout us knowing what the reason is. He is a very sensitive child from birth. I really do not know what we should do. Please help

[to post comments](#)

Hi there!! I am a 9

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 18 May, 2011 - 22:38

Hi there!! I am a 9 year old and is afraid too! And if you r worried or your son my parents or everyone tells me that it's apart of life! You should tell him or her that everyone is happier in heaven(if you don't beileve in god I don't know). And they will not feel any Pain. And let's put it this way if you get a boo boo it hurts at first and it slowly goes away that goes with someone dying you won't forget them but you can resume your life not being in sorrow but still loving them

Hope it helped!!!

[to post comments](#)

Please I need help I am a kid!!! Who has worrrys!!!!

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 19 May, 2011 - 19:53

Hi I am 9 and I am super scared to death (that is my worry) could anyone help me forget about it I told my parents and my ze grandma (the reason why I just started to think about it because she is 68) Please help me I and my grandma arevery close and with out here I am nothing (that goes with my mom and dad) So if you are a parent that has a child about the same age I would be kinda happy and I know I am not the only one. Please help me anyone??????

[to post comments](#)

10 year old and fear of dying

Submitted by xabbar on 25 May, 2011 - 18:09

I found your entry very interesting. My 10 year old occasionally will start crying for no reason and then says its because he is afraid of dying. This always happens just before bed. I figure he thinks about it much more than he shows. I used to have these fears as a child right about his age so know exactly how he feels. My mother would console me and tell me what a long and wonderful life I had ahead of me etc. but that didn't help the fact that one day I'd be dead. I tell my 10 year old the same things. What else can a parent say? He also keeps saying he doesn't want me or his dad to die and I explain that he will be a big adult with kids of his own before that happens. He is always telling me he loves me and giving me hugs etc.

It really breaks my heart that he is going through this because I can relate. I wonder if I have inadvertently transferred my fears to him. I never mention my fears or hide 'death' or any of that so if I have it has been unconsciously.

I was especially interested in this comment because I was diagnosed with Celiac 2 years ago at age 47. I was always a fearful and moody child. My parents tell me that I would cry at the drop of a hat and was afraid of a lot of things. Having researched the effects of untreated Celiac disease I know that depression and mood swings are common. I am presently having both my sons tested as it is hereditary.

Having said this I agree with other comments that some kids are much more aware than we think. I know I was as a kid. My son is smart and really good at reading people and their moods - he is truly special and it would be a shame for his childhood to be ruined by this ongoing dread. I am going to try speaking to him openly about religion, atheism and any other stuff that may be out there because even though I am an atheist I believe in something, just not sure what that is. Maybe being open with him will help.

Thanks for putting your thoughts out here, its so great to be able to read what others think - the internet is an amazing tool.

[to post comments](#)

Worrying.

Submitted by A worrier. (not verified) on 12 July, 2011 - 11:40

Ever since I was little, maybe around four, I'd worry about things like this, what happened when we died, where everything went, what the universe was here for. Obviously I didn't really know exactly what I was worrying about, but it was still scary.

Now I'm sixteen, and I've begun to stop believing in Catholicism as strongly. I still want to believe that there's something afterwards, but I don't entirely know what I'm scared of, or why, just that I don't want to die.

I wish I didn't worry, because it keeps me up at night, and stops me from focusing on things like school and my family and friends. I try to talk to people about it, but it never quite gets anywhere.

I wish I could know what happens after this life, that there's something there, that existence has a point.

[to post comments](#)

Thoughts of death from a 5 year old!

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 24 July, 2011 - 22:23

Hi this sounds exactly like my 5 year old son. For the last 2 days he has been physically sick at the thought of dying or forgetting to breathe in his sleep!! Don't have a clue how to handle this and don't know what to do as I just know it'll happen again tomorrow at bedtime! Any ideas??

[to post comments](#)

17year old anxiety over death.

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 25 July, 2011 - 02:39

Hi, I was wondering if there is something i can do to help this scared feeling just go away or tone down for a while? I've had anxiety about death and what the future holds for about 6 months now, and over this period of time it has come to the point where it is always in the back of my mind and i cant stop thinking about it. I have things that trigger these thoughts; like the subject of the world ending in 2012, and movies about the world ending and alien attacks. Stupid little things like this send me into panic attacks for hours. Also at night when i lay in my bed i think about death and i often start crying just by the thought of it. Also when i hear loud noises coming from outside, i cringe because my mind automatically jumps to the conclusion that it is an earthquake or something of that sort, that will kill me somehow. I am a Christian but lately i've had a little trouble with beleiving that God was real and that he will take care of everything. And maybe this is why i've been so scared. i feel really bad for having trouble holding onto my faith, and i pray every night that God will help me gain the relationship and they

security that i used to have with him, and that he will take away these thoughts...Im just sick of living in fear. I need to know if there is something i can do to make it go away?

[to post comments](#)

This is a lovely post. Thank

Submitted by rachaelln on 9 August, 2011 - 20:43

This is a lovely post. Thank you so much for it, especially the point about life being pointless without death. That is so true and gives me such wisdom to talk to my daughter about death. So many thanks for that wisdom, it was very thoughtful.

[to post comments](#)

My son is afraid of eternity...not death

Submitted by A Concerned Mother (not verified) on 19 October, 2011 - 04:01

I have an 8 year old son that cries almost every night because of fears of eternity. He is not terribly scared of dying and he believes in heaven, but gets completely freaked out over exixting FOREVER. I have tried to discuss with him that if heaven is a wonderful place, then why does eternity scare you? He says things like, "In the year 50,000 I will be still around" and then he starts sobbing. He is trying to convince himself that reincarnation is real so that he can feel better about the afterlife, but that doesn't seem to be working either. Anybody have any thoughts or advice?

[to post comments](#)

my son started showing signs

Submitted by motherchildthin... (not verified) on 3 November, 2011 - 02:28

my son started showing signs of being afraid of death/to die at the age of 4. Yes , 4 years old. if i was one to have never experienced such feelings of mortality as a child i would have never caught on. he is now 6 and its gotten worse. he reads something that happens to someone in a way that leads to death or injury leading to death and he gets emotional.he is not always like this. it comes and goes. i believe as he gets older he will become 'stronger' JUST LIKE I HAVE.

[to post comments](#)

My son is 9 years old now.

Submitted by happy21677 (not verified) on 5 November, 2011 - 13:52

My son is 9 years old now. But since the age of 4 he has had semi-annual panic attacks about death. No one in my family has died, except a goldfish. It's triggered by people talking about death, ghosts, etc. He's a very calm, intelligent, sensitive kid, but is still very social and affectionate. When he has these death panic attacks he starts screaming, "I don't want to die, I'll never come back here". One time he was so worked up, he actually projectile vomited...that was about a year ago. Last night, he started screaming, "I don't want to die". His heart was beating so fast, he lost color in his face. I held his face and started counting and told him to count with me...we counted to 100 together while hugging. At this moment (one day later) he's totally fine, playing on his scooter, but I'm traumatized and had dreams about it all last night. I want to help him...but reality is that we are all going to leave our body eventually. I'm not sure which direction to go with this. Any suggestions?

to post comments

Live Forever

Submitted by Live forever (not verified) on 11 January, 2012 - 09:38

I want to share this story with everyone who has posted so many beautiful stories on this site and want to give everyone the hope that I have given to my son.

I took both of my boys to visit my then terminal ill grandmother overseas last September. She passed away in November. I told my kids about the death. The younger one who was 5 started asking me questions every now and then. I didn't pay too much attention. One day, he told me he wanted to become a doctor when he grows up so that he can save lives. I thought wow! Then he brought home a Christmas card he wrote at school (he is in Prep). He wrote to my grandma and said he wished she didn't die. I was very touched.

I didn't pick up any sign along the way. I did wonder how come he was so attached to his great-grandmother whom he only visited twice, the first time he was 18 months old. It was not until last week that I realized what was going on.

I was woken up by him at 3am in the morning. He came to my bedroom and made a huge statement loudly, but calmly, 'I want to live forever!' I was half asleep and I said to my husband, 'what does he want?' My husband said he wanted to live forever. We looked at each other very confused. I took him back to bed without asking him any questions. The next morning I asked him why he came to us and made that statement. He told me because he had a nightmare and someone died in his dream. Next two days, it became worse. I only thought he was still traumatised by his great-grandma's death. I sat down with him and asked him if we could have a chat. He then asked me if there was one person, even just one person in this world who could live forever. I asked him why. He said that would give him hope. It finally made me realize why he has been behaving like this. I must have told him that everyone would die one day. Great-grandma was 90 and it was a good age. That must have shocked him so much. He could not come to the term that life has a limit and what grown ups considered a good age is such a small number.

After I told him it would be hard for anyone to live forever. He then started exploring a few other options. He asked me if he dies, is there any possibility to come alive again. I told him some people believe in re-birth. After going a bit deeper, he said he didn't think it would work. Then I explained to him some religions believe heaven. When a physical body dies, the spirit can still be alive. We might be in the heaven waiting for him to join us. He decided that wouldn't work for him either as once he goes underground, he could not be possibly see or talk to anyone. Finally, he realized there was no avenue left for him. He cried and announced, 'this is the saddest day in my life. I wished I had never been born or I had just been born and I could live 5 more years'. The rest of the day, his concerns became quite different. He concerned that the underground must be very crowded and it would

eventually run out of room. Where do I think I would be buried so that he could be buried next to me. I could not believe I was having this type of conversation with my little son!

Monday morning, he was very ill. He couldn't eat breakfast and had a major headache. I knew he was depressed by the previous day's conversation. I determined to seek a way to give him some new hope. I spoke to my colleagues and did some research on bionic bodies. I felt so hopefully. I went home and told him about what I had discovered. He looked at me suspiciously, 'are you sure Mummy?' I showed him a couple of websites. His eyes lit up. He asked my husband, 'daddy, what is the biggest number you know? One trillion?' My husband asked him why. I smiled as I knew what he was going to say, 'that will be how long I am going to live!' He ran to his brother, 'we are going to live forever!'

My older son who is a Maths genius said to his brother, 'but one trillion is not forever!'

But to me, I am happy to live until one trillion, doesn't matter in Mars or on earth with my close to one trillion yo sons and grandkids and great-great-great.....kids....

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I never write comments on

Submitted by ccc (not verified) on 26 January, 2012 - 11:10

I never write comments on pages like this but it's really interesting to see what everyone thinks.

I'm currently writing my disseration about two artists that were aware of their own mortality as both died from long term illnesses at a relatively young age. For artist of their time and age they both produced huge amounts of work and are massivly sucessful still today. Having the grim reaper hovering over their shoulders certainly spurred them on to live life to the full and pour their hearts and souls into their work.

Being aware of death to me is surely just part of life, if we didnt have a deadline would we be motivated to do everything we needed to do? Being aware that at somepoint our lives will end provides us with the opportunity to enjoy every moment and not take our limited time for granted. If in the future if we gain the chance to live for longer, great, but at the moment thats not the case so maybe one possible answer is stop worrying about death and start living.

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This happened to me when I was child

Submitted by Been there (not verified) on 18 March, 2012 - 00:56

I am 19 now but when I was a child (not sure of how old I was) I use to start thinking about death and the fact that in less than a 100 years I would be dead and everything would be over and I would never live or think or feel again at nighth when trying to sleep and it scared the living sh*t out me to the point where I would be crying my eyes out and had to get out of bed to talk to my parents. I never told them about what was happening only that I felt ill just to give them a reason for me waking them up (I have never liked to open up to anybody) - I just had to hear my mothers voice and know she was there cause I worried about my family dying at the same time. I do not know how long this took place but it felt like absolute years! It just does not seem normal for a child to think

like that, I was soo terrified and I don't why I thought about it and it can't have anything to do with my father having a heart attack and me finding him lying on the floor (he has not passed) since I had these fears and thoughts before that. I do still occasionally feel scared at night but the fear is more all over the place and not specifically a fear of dying and so on or as intense. Maybe it had something to do with anxiety because I have found out that I use to get these anxiety attacks when I was around 15 where I would lose touch of reality and feel completely desorientated in periods and I am still getting all kinds of feelings of anxiety - but I did not tell anybody so I have sort of diagnosed myself using the internet (thanks Google!), but maybe it has nothing to do with each other! Just thought I would share that, sorry for the long post, I just had to get it out, it has been on my mind lately for some reason.

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Why? can some one help me get threw this!

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 19 March, 2012 - 15:15

i am 17 and deathly afraid of dieng, every night i can not fall asleep it takes me puking and constantly going to the bath room & crying wearing myself out then finally forcing myself to sleep. I may be pregnant and my boyfriends mom said that my hormones could be messed up if i am pregnant causing alot of what i am experiencing. How can i stop this how can i "Cope" i really am just looking for help i cant talk to my own mother because she pretty much ignores me! so posting this without name really helps "vent" its hard for me not having anyone to talk to i am a very emotional person, and my boyfriend is there to a point guys are not much help.... please if you have been through this and can help me relax and cope , i will take any help it would be much appreciated !!! Thank you <3

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The point

Submitted by Rosie (not verified) on 24 March, 2012 - 11:50

I'm 17 now, I think about death everyday. I have always claimed that I'm not afraid of death, and I guess that statement is mostly true, but who on this earth isn't at least a little upset with the idea? I am not religious, so I think about existence a lot. Personally, I think when we die we enter eternal oblivion, which is probably what worries me the most. I don't want to lose my memories, and my life experiences. When I think about these things, I begin to wonder what the point is. It gets me into a terrible state. I'll just mope around the house for a few days thinking, what's the point in making myself look nice? Why should I even get out of bed if the memory of it happening will be gone someday?

All in all, I'm a regular teenager about to enter the real world. I'll be going to university next year, so I start to think about graduating university, starting a career, getting married, having kids, getting grey hair and wrinkles, and many more. And that terrifies me. Growing up always has. But, whenever I'm upset about the inevitable, I think about my life. I have had a wonderful life so far, and I know how lucky I am to have done the things I have done at the age of 17. I feel so happy when I think back to the things I've done in my 17 years, that it instantly makes me feel a little better about growing up and experiencing more things. Ultimately you're going to get memories and stories and some great relationships out of life, and that's all you can really hope for. I look forward to creating more stories that I can tell when I'm about to kick the bucket. I still worry about death, again, I think about it everyday. But I'm sure everybody does at some point. When I pass, I hope to leave a fond memories if myself. It's

important to give people your time. The people who love you just want your time and your happiness. I spend a lot of time with my family and I treasure the time we have together, because I know it's not going to last forever.

Death sucks, but you can't let it take over your life. I have spent far too many hours not giving a damn about life because of worrying about losing it one day, and as I'm writing this I'm seeing how ridiculous that is.

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I'm 15 and up until a couple

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 23 June, 2012 - 13:21

I'm 15 and up until a couple of days ago I have accepted death. sure I've had moments in my childhood when I've felt upset by the whole idea that every person reaches the same inevitable conclusion including myself. But overall I haven't found it that scary, the idea of losing my consciousness forever has never seemed a rational thing to fear, I was way more preoccupied with the possibilities of life: the humiliation, the suffering, the anxiety about things I may experience. Until recently when my anxieties have shifted and certain things have triggered feelings of meaninglessness and have caused me to look at death in a depressing way as well as life for that matter. I have spent full days worrying about death and the unknown and it has caused me not to feel motivated to complete homework and do anything. This site has really aided my anxieties and helped me have a new perspective. I wonder if thinking about death alot is particularly common in teens and children and is likely to pass eventually.

Here's an idea! maybe our society should stop tip toeing around death so we feel comfortable talking about it like on this site and just using the word death instead of 'no longer with us' or 'lost'. By the way you are not alone, most people fear death to some extent and it's evident when euphemisms like these are used to suppress everyone's discomfort .

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Death

Submitted by Hannah (not verified) on 26 June, 2012 - 04:56

Im eleven and super scared of death. I have trouble being a Christian even though my whole family is Christian. I'm mostly scared of carbon monoxide. But at the same time I think, even alot of adults have alot Of life left. I mean, my grandma has at least ninety years left, being fifty four. Just someone help ke please.

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hey ...well I worry about

Submitted by a reader (not verified) on 3 July, 2012 - 02:12

hey ...well I worry about this all the time too ! and i have been trying to find a way to not be worried about itbut I have no idea how to stop worrying abouti am not really scared of dying in my sleep but I am just scared of dying period ! But I am too looking for a way to stop having all these bad thoughtsmaybee we could help each other out some how ????? i dont knowmaybbe

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