



Centered in Care  
Powered by Pride

# Meaningful Quality of Life Conversations

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# A Context: JPS Health Network



\$950 million tax-supported healthcare system serving residents of Fort Worth and surrounding communities in Tarrant County, Texas.

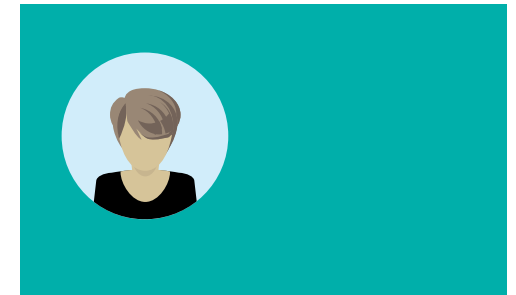
## John Peter Smith Hospital

- 121,000+ emergency room visits
- 1 million+ patient encounters per year
- Nation's largest Family Medicine Residency



*Patient Care Pavilion at John Peter Smith Hospital*

Tarrant  
County's only  
**Level I Trauma  
Center**



# A perspective

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- Every person is unique
- Every life is important
- Every relationship is different
- Death is 100% guaranteed
- It's possible to live all the way up until the moment we die
- Facing death can enhance life

# A framework

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- The truth sets us free
- (But first it tends to make us miserable)
- Timing matters
- When asking for vulnerability, it helps to go first
- Tend to arising emotions

# Conversation helpers

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- Go first or “go there”
- Name the discomfort
  - I know this isn’t a popular topic and I actually feel nervous bringing this up, but I’d like to share some preferences I have if something happens to me
- Give the reason
  - As uncomfortable as talking about this is, my hope is to make decisions easier for you, should you need this information
- Make it time bound
  - Let’s only talk about this for 5 minutes – we can revisit it later, but this gets us started.

# Conversation helpers



- This is most important to me:
  - I want extraordinary measures or I want to allow natural death
  - I want to be cremated, be buried, donated to science, be an organ donor
  - I'd prefer to die at home rather than in a hospital
  - I believe that after I die this happens...
  - If I can't say "I love you" at the end, I want you to be sure you know
- I'd love to be able to honor and respect YOUR wishes should something happen to you.
  - What's most important to you?
  - Can you give me 5 minutes?
- Plan a date for annual conversations
  - For example: Labor Day

# Light in the darkness of difficult conversations

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- We are finite creatures
- We have the opportunity to contemplate the infinite
- When facing death or experiencing death, we are on holy ground
- Facing death can enhance the experience of life

