

The African-American Spiritual and Ethical Guide to End-of-Life Care

SEVENTH EDITION



What Y'all Gon' Do With Me?

(Let's talk about it.)

By Gloria Thomas Anderson, LMSW

Edited by Tracee T. Jackson





The African-American Spiritual and Ethical Guide
to End-of-Life Care
What Y'all Gon' Do With Me?

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7th Edition
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1. Why Read This Guide?

A Personal Story:

When one of my older relatives was rushed to the hospital with a serious illness, she wasn't ready to deal with the business of her healthcare issues.

Her memory had started to fade, and she was calling us other people's names without knowing.

Since 1991, the Federal Patient Self Determination Act has required all healthcare providers to ask if you have an "advance directive", and if you don't, they must give you the choice to complete one.



My relative got VERY upset when the nurse tried to tell her about this, shouting, "What y'all tryin' to do with me? Ain't nobody gon' put me in no nursing home!" Her piercing words stayed in my mind as we hoped for the best and prepared for the worse.

After she calmed down, she agreed to give one of her children Durable Power of Attorney for both her health care and financial decisions because she realized that a day might come when she might not be able to do things for herself.

I started asking other people I knew, including my parents, about what their wishes would be if they were unable to speak for themselves. I found out most did not want to think about it, let alone talk about it. Many did not understand that having dignity in dying is just as valuable as having dignity while living.

So that's why I wrote this guide—specifically for people who might be like my relatives. Regardless of age, socioeconomic status, or position, this booklet can help people of all ages and ethnicities to make the best decisions possible BEFORE hand. Life isn't promised to anyone. Nobody wants to think about leaving here, but the reality is everybody is going to—someday.

I am an African-American woman who has also experienced a life-threatening illness. I am honored to share with you what I have learned and to help others in similar circumstances.

Gloria Thomas Anderson, LMSW

Table of Contents



17 Important End-of-Life Issues You Want and Need to Know

1. Why Read This Guide? A Personal Story p. 2
2. **Your** Concerns Do Matter p. 5
3. Taking Control of Your Life and Health p. 6
4. More to Life Than Being “Alive” p. 7
5. Getting Your House in Order p. 8
6. The “F” Factor – Family, Friends and Foes p. 9
7. The Healing Balm of Forgiveness p. 10
8. What’s All This “End of Life” Stuff About? p. 11
9. Advance Directive Choices: Understanding What
They Are p. 12
10. Planning for Emergency Situations (Even for People
Who Are Not Terminally Ill)..... p. 13
11. Five Important Things to Do p. 14
12. Embracing Life... Comfort Care Options? p. 15,16
13. Three Key Influencing Factors of African-American
Healthcare Decision-making p. 17

Table of Contents



- 14. Coping and Hoping — A Spiritual Journey p. 18
- 15. Putting On Your Traveling Shoes: *Where to Go...*
Who to Talk to... p. 19, 20
- 16. Comforting Words p. 21
- 17. Your Legacy...Your Life p. 22

NOTE: Although assumptions about different ethnic groups exist, this booklet shares commonalities found among many African-American people. No two people are alike, regardless of their color or background. Even within the same cultural groups, there are differences. Every person is an individual with his or her own ways of being and ways of seeing the world.

Respectfully, this booklet offers information that can help most anyone who wants to take control of their own pre-planning options pertaining to healthcare-decision-making, including end-of-life care options.

- **Sample Form Included in Middle of This Booklet!**
Free Healthcare Directive and Durable Power of Attorney
for Healthcare Decisions (see center section)