

**BEGIN THE CONVERSATION • ORG**  
TM



It's a gift.

[www.BeginTheConversation.org](http://www.BeginTheConversation.org)

**PREPARE**

**BEGIN**

**DOCUMENT**

**EDUCATE**

**COMMUNICATE**

**In life we prepare for everything**

College, marriage, a baby, retirement

But we rarely begin the conversation about the end

Begin to **LEARN, PREPARE, ACT, CHOOSE, TAKE CONTROL**

Take the first step

**EMPOWER - DON'T WAIT - IT'S TIME**

**BEGIN THE CONVERSATION.....It's a Gift.**

“ I recently graduated from high school and am looking forward to going to college! I’m scared about leaving home, but I am excited about discovering life beyond my hometown. Before I started packing for college, my parents sat me down for a talk. We discussed money and safety tips, and then had a talk about balancing my social life along with my studies. My parents also asked me what I wanted if something happened and I couldn’t make healthcare decisions for myself. At first I thought, ‘I’m too young to talk about this,’ but I realize it was a great conversation to have.”



1. List five items on your bucket list:

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2. List two items from above and make a plan to accomplish them during the next 12 months:

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3. List three people who aren't family members you would want notified if you were facing a serious medical condition:

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"I don't have a bucket list because it is my dedication to live every day of my life there. I don't have a bucket list because I'm doing it that day. I don't want to go to bed and say, 'Oh, I wish I had done this.'" - Melissa Etheridge

“As I look back, I realize my father gave us a gift when he was dying. He had enough time to understand his healthcare options and to make decisions about the medical care he would receive during his illness. He asked my aunt to serve as his healthcare power of attorney, to honor his choices and to ensure our family’s traditions and beliefs were respected. It’s a difficult time when your parent dies, but his gift to us made it easier because we knew we were fulfilling his wishes.”



1. If you couldn't speak for yourself, do you have someone to represent your healthcare wishes to make sure they are carried out? Who is it, and why have you chosen that person?

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2. Have you communicated your healthcare plans and choices to your designated healthcare power of attorney? What are those plans?

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3. Do you have a healthcare power of attorney form that meets your state's requirements? Where is it stored?

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A majority of people say they don't want their family to be burdened by having to make difficult medical decisions, but most have not communicated their wishes to their loved ones.



“When I became pregnant a few months ago, everything changed. I realized my husband and I needed to make some decisions, in case, heaven forbid, something happened to me as a result of an injury or illness and I couldn't communicate my healthcare choices. I began the conversation about my advance care plan options with my doctor. Then my husband and I talked about everything. Knowing that if anything happened to us our children would be taken care of has given us peace of mind and one less thing to worry about.”



1. What changes could happen in your life that would require you to make healthcare choices (having a baby, divorce, death of a loved one or a serious health diagnosis)?

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2. If you were to become seriously ill, what would be most important to you?

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3. What possible treatment options have you and your doctor discussed? What types of treatments would you want to receive or refuse if you are injured or ill? Have you completed a living will?

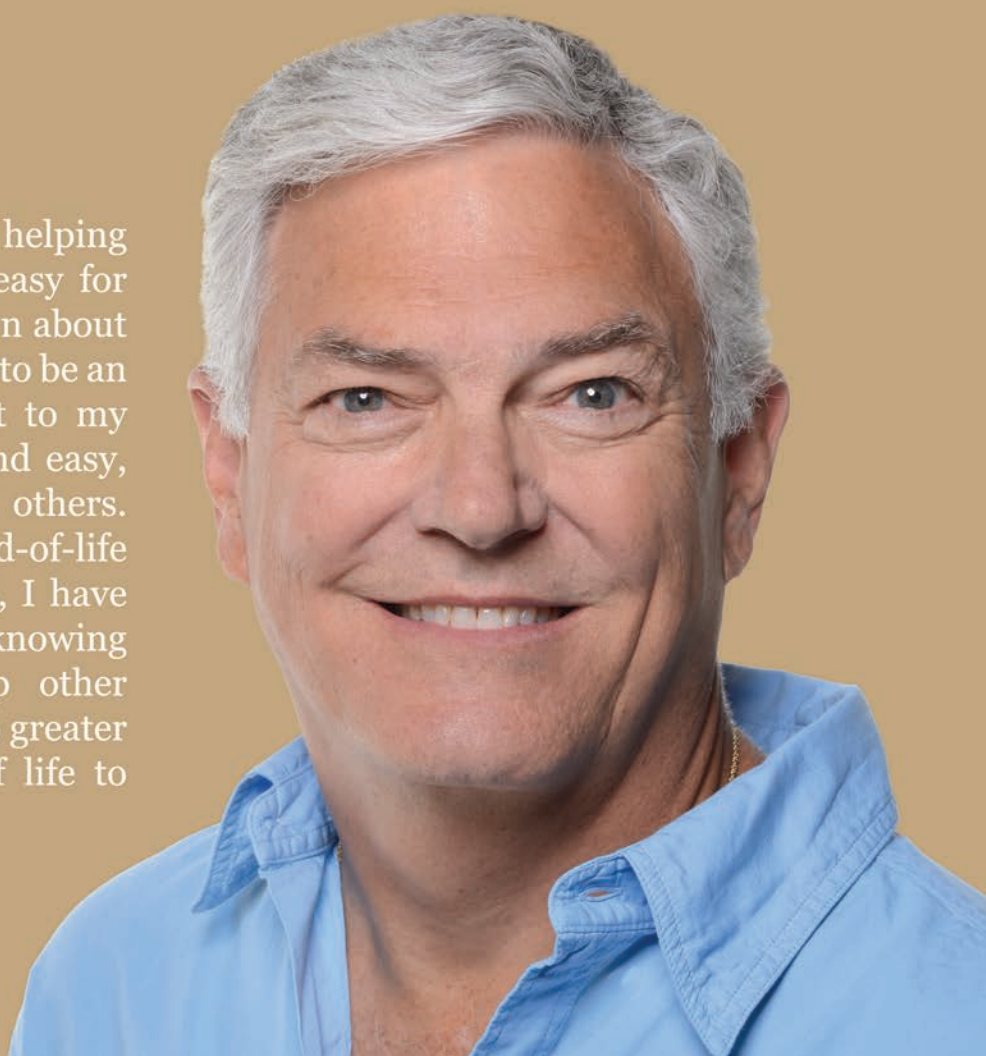
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Advance care planning builds trust and teamwork between patient, doctor, and healthcare agent, respects the patient's choices, reduces uncertainty and anxiety, avoids future confusion and conflict, and permits peace of mind.

“I’m a volunteer, and I love helping others. That’s why it was easy for me to begin the conversation about organ donation. I signed up to be an organ donor during a visit to my local DMV. It was quick and easy, and is my final service to others. And by talking about my end-of-life wishes with my loved ones, I have helped them find peace in knowing how much this can help other families. For me, there is no greater gift than giving the gift of life to others.”



1. Have you talked to your loved ones about your organ donation wishes? What are your plans?

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2. Do you have an organ donor designation on your driver's license or have you registered online at [donatelife.net](https://donatelife.net)?

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3. Most organ donations are anonymous, but if you could tell your organ recipient one thing, what would it be?

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When you register at [donatelife.net](https://donatelife.net) your organ donation wishes are stored in a secured online database; however, it is still important to discuss your wishes with your loved ones.



“I’m 77 years old and take care of my husband. When we found out he had a year to live, we began the conversation about what will be important to him as the end draws near. We discussed his healthcare options and our doctor helped him complete a Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (MOST) form so we know he’ll get the treatment he wants. We also agreed we would use hospice services. Now we can concentrate on making the most of our time together.”

1. If you found out you only had a year left to live, what would you change about how you are living your life?

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2. Have you completed a Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (MOST) form? Have you discussed your wishes with your family?

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3. If your healthcare treatment has distressing side effects, would you choose to stop treatment and focus on pain relief and symptom management instead? Would you like to receive hospice care?

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Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (MOST) is based on the Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) model, which helps ensure end-of-life wishes are honored throughout all settings of care. Learn more at [www.polst.org](http://www.polst.org).

# DON'T

- Communicate your healthcare choices
- Understand your options by talking with your doctor

# WAIT

- Discuss your decisions with loved ones
- Put your plans in writing

**TAKE CONTROL**

**CHOOSE**

**LEARN**

**EMPOWER**

**IT'S A GIFT**

# RESOURCES

## MORE TOOLS TO BEGIN THE CONVERSATION:

AARP: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org) *search: end of life conversations*

About.com: [www.about.com](http://www.about.com) *search: end of life decision making*

Advocate for Hospice: [www.capwiz.com/nhpco/home](http://www.capwiz.com/nhpco/home)

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality: [www.ahrq.gov/consumer](http://www.ahrq.gov/consumer) *search: advance care planning*

Aging with Dignity - Five Wishes: [www.agingwithdignity.org](http://www.agingwithdignity.org) *click on: Five Wishes*

American Bar Association's Commission on Law & Aging: [www.abanet.org](http://www.abanet.org) *search: consumer's toolkit*

Caring Connections: [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org) *search: planning ahead*

Consider the Conversation: [www.considertheconversation.org](http://www.considertheconversation.org)



## MORE CONVERSATIONS CONTINUED:

AARP: [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org)

Aging with Dignity (Five Wishes): [www.agingwithdignity.org](http://www.agingwithdignity.org)

American Bar Association: [www.americanbar.org/aba.html](http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html)

Consider the Conversation: [www.considertheconversation.org](http://www.considertheconversation.org)

Donate Life America: [donatelife.net](http://donatelife.net)

Lower Cape Fear Hospice: [www.lcfh.org](http://www.lcfh.org)

National Healthcare Decisions Day: [www.nhdd.org](http://www.nhdd.org)

National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization: [www.nhpco.org](http://www.nhpco.org)

National Institute on Aging: [www.nia.nih.gov](http://www.nia.nih.gov)

National POLST Paradigm: [www.polst.org](http://www.polst.org)

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services: [www.ncdhhs.gov](http://www.ncdhhs.gov)

U.S. Living Will Registry: [liv-will1.uslivingwillregistry.com/forms.html](http://liv-will1.uslivingwillregistry.com/forms.html)

For more information on how to Begin The Conversation, please visit our website  
[www.BeginTheConversation.org](http://www.BeginTheConversation.org)

“This is something my wife and I both need to do.”

I was able to relate to the “real stories” and the presentation also helped me see this as a way to help others. I appreciated the different perspectives on the issues, and this was a great opportunity to learn about preparing for my next phase of life. - Community Member

“Thank you!”

“I will be spreading  
the word to others.”

What a great service to the community. This workshop has provided me with a new perspective and appreciation on hospice care and its purpose. My family and I will definitely “Begin The Conversation”... - Community Member

Thank you! Your speakers were very knowledgeable and compassionate and have given me the motivation I need to help me through this important process with my family. - Family Member

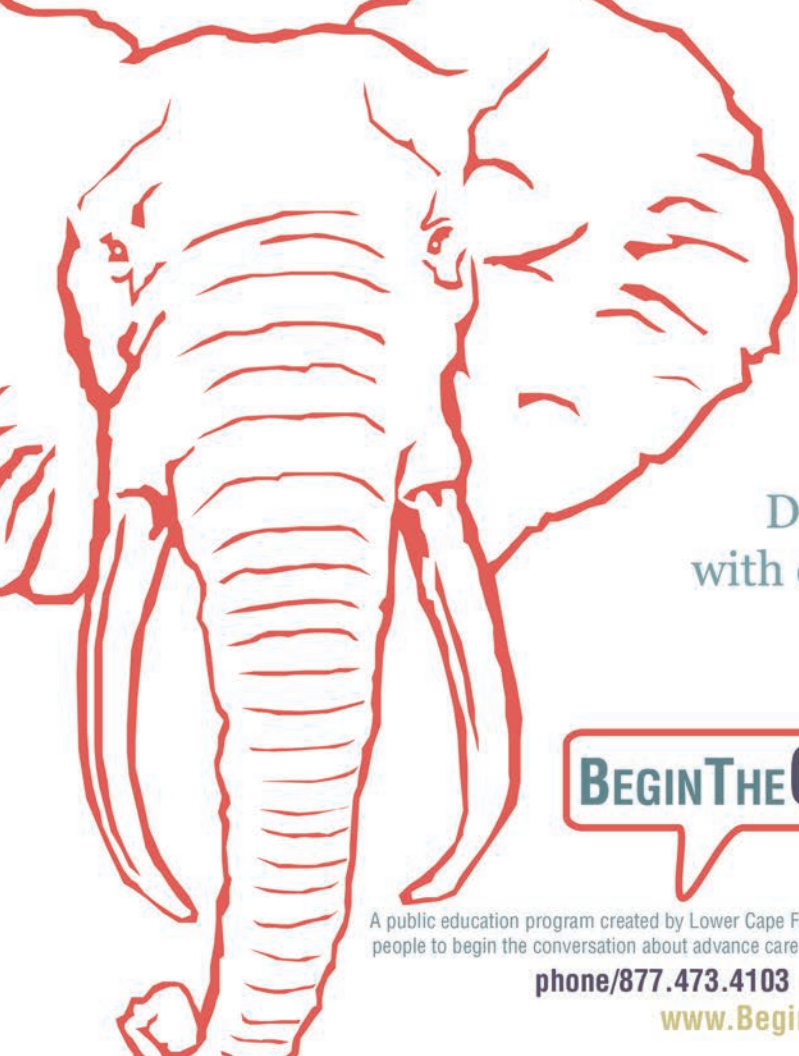
“Very much  
worth my time!”

“Excellent  
program!”

I really appreciate these conferences. The new information from both the doctor’s and patient’s perspective and connecting with others who are going through this process has been so helpful for me. It really creates a nice circle to help all of us grow, give, and do better! - Family Member

“We will begin the conversation.”





Don't be caught  
with one in your room.

**BEGIN THE CONVERSATION • ORG**<sup>TM</sup>

A public education program created by Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCareCenter in Wilmington, N.C. in an effort to motivate people to begin the conversation about advance care planning as well as to complete documentation to support their choices.

**phone/877.473.4103 • info@begintheconversation.org**

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