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## The Top 5 Regrets Of The Dying

Collective Evolution | By Joe Martino

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A palliative nurse recorded the most common regrets of the dying and put her findings into a book called "The Top Five Regrets of The Dying." It's not surprising to see what made the list as they are all things that touch each of our lives as we struggle to pay attention to and make time for things that we truly love. Below is the list of each regret along with an excerpt from the book. At the bottom is also a link to the book for anyone interested in checking it out.

One thing on regret before we get to the list. It's important to remember that whatever stage we are at in life, there is no need for regret. The process of regret is one that provides nothing but suffering for ourselves as we begin to allow the past to dictate how we should feel now. Instead, we can use the past as a reference point to understand what adjustments we would like to make moving forward. The adjustments do not have to come out of pain, sorrow, regret or judgment, but simply a choice to do things in a different way. We are learning all the time, we can very quickly slow that learning process down by getting stuck in the idea of regret. When it comes to making changes, be at peace with the past and remember that each moment is a new choice.

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

"This was the most common regret of all. When people realize that their life is almost over and look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled. Most people had not honored even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made. Health brings a freedom very few realize, until they no longer have it."

### 2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.

"This came from every male patient that I nursed. They missed their children's youth and their partner's companionship. Women also spoke of this regret, but as most were from an older generation, many of the female patients had not been breadwinners. All of the men I nursed deeply regretted spending so much of their lives on the treadmill of a work existence."

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

"Many people suppressed their feelings in order to keep peace with others. As a result, they settled for a mediocre existence and never became who they were truly capable of becoming. Many developed illnesses relating to the bitterness and resentment they carried as a result."

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

"Often they would not truly realize the full benefits of old friends until their dying weeks and it was not always possible to track them down. Many had become so caught up in their own lives that they had let golden friendships slip by over the years. There were many deep regrets about not giving friendships the time and effort that they deserved. Everyone misses their friends when they are dying."

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

"This is a surprisingly common one. Many did not realize until the end that happiness is a choice. They had stayed stuck in old patterns and habits. The so-called 'comfort' of familiarity overflowed into their emotions, as well as their physical lives. Fear of change had them pretending to others, and to their selves, that they were content, when deep within, they longed to laugh properly and have silliness in their life again."

#### Source:

[The Top Five Regrets of the Dying: A Life Transformed by the Dearly Departing](#)

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