



What Matters to me.

Receiving a **serious diagnosis** can be overwhelming. It comes with difficult choices about treatments, potential side effects, and outcomes. In these moments, one of the most important things is to reflect on **what truly matters to you**—your values, priorities, and wishes for your health and well-being.

Before starting any **complex treatment**, consider having these **three key conversations**:

1. A Conversation with Your Doctor

Your first discussion should be a **fact-finding** session with your doctor. There are no 'stupid' questions when it comes to your health. Asking the right questions can help you make informed decisions about your care:

- ✓ What are the risks of this treatment?
- ✓ What side effects should I expect?
- ✓ What are the benefits of this treatment?
- ✓ Are there simpler, safer, or alternative treatment options?
- ✓ Is this test, procedure, or treatment absolutely necessary?
- ✓ What happens if I choose not to proceed with this treatment?
- ✓ Are there lifestyle changes or other ways I can support my health?

2. A Conversation with Someone You Trust

After gathering medical information, it's important to talk through your thoughts with someone who knows you well—a **spouse, partner, close friend, or a trusted medical professional**. If the conversation feels difficult, a professional counsellor may also help.

Consider writing your thoughts down in a **journal or notebook** as you reflect on:

My Health

- How do I currently understand my health condition?
- How much information do I want about what lies ahead?

About Me

- What does a "good day" look like for me?
(e.g., getting dressed, seeing friends, spending time with family, playing with a pet)
- What does a "hard day" look like?
(e.g., staying in bed, not wanting to talk, feeling pain or fatigue)
- What personal goals do I have, even if my health declines?



My Care Preferences

- How much medical information do I want to receive?
 - Just the basics
 - All the details
- How involved do I want to be in medical decisions?
 - I trust my healthcare team to decide
 - I want to be involved in every decision
- What are my biggest concerns about treatment?
 - Receiving too much medical intervention
 - Not receiving enough care
- How much treatment am I willing to undergo to extend my life?
 - I prefer comfort-focused care
 - I want every possible medical intervention
- Where would I prefer to be if my health worsens?
 - In a healthcare facility
 - At home, if possible

My Fears and Worries

- What do I worry about most regarding my care?
(e.g., pain management, being a burden on my family, the financial impact of my treatment)

My Strengths and Values

- What gives me strength during difficult times?
(e.g., family, faith, personal resilience, hobbies)
- What abilities are most important for my quality of life?
(e.g., recognizing loved ones, being able to communicate, living without severe pain)
- If my health declines, what matters more to me?
 - Extending my life as much as possible
 - Prioritizing quality of life over length of life

My Wishes and Preferences

- What do I want to ensure DOES happen in my care?
(e.g., staying independent, returning home, doctors respecting my wish for comfort care)
- What do I want to ensure DOES NOT happen?
(e.g., being alone, excessive medical intervention, experiencing severe pain)
- Who should make medical decisions on my behalf if I am unable to do so?



3. A Final Conversation with Your Doctor

Now that you have gathered **medical facts**, **reflected on your values**, and **discussed your wishes**, it's time for a final conversation with your doctor. You may bring a trusted **family member or friend** to support you.

In this discussion, you and your doctor can:

- ✓ Review your **treatment options** and decide the best course of action
- ✓ Discuss the possibility of **declining certain treatments**
- ✓ Ensure your medical team understands **your values and priorities**



Taking Control of Your Health Journey

By having these **three important conversations**, you empower yourself to make **informed, meaningful decisions** about your health. Your care should always align with what matters most to you.