

**Advance Care Planning:  
It's About the Conversation!**

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**Honoring Choices Virginia**

*The mission of Honoring Choices Virginia is to promote the benefits of and improve processes for advance care planning in health care settings and in the community.*



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**Today's Topics**

<b>1</b> <b>Discover</b> advance care planning	<b>2</b> <b>Reflect</b> on your values and beliefs	<b>3</b> <b>Select</b> your health care agent	<b>4</b> <b>Express</b> your wishes	<b>5</b> <b>Share</b> your plan
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### What brings you here today?

What do you understand about advance care planning?

What fears or concerns do you have about this type of planning?

If you have completed an Advance Directive in the past, what do you hope the document would do for you?



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### Advance Care Planning is:



- **Planning ahead** for future health care decisions
- **If a sudden, unexpected event** (like a car accident, sudden illness, or crisis with ongoing chronic disease)
- Left you **unable to communicate** and make your own health care decisions
- **And others would need to make decisions** for you.



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### Three points to consider:

Choosing	Discussing and deciding	Identifying
Choosing a decision-maker (health care agent)	Discussing and deciding on your goals of care in the event of a severe accident, sudden illness, or other serious medical crisis	Identifying any personal, cultural or religious beliefs that may affect treatment decisions



We'll explore these in more detail, but first ...

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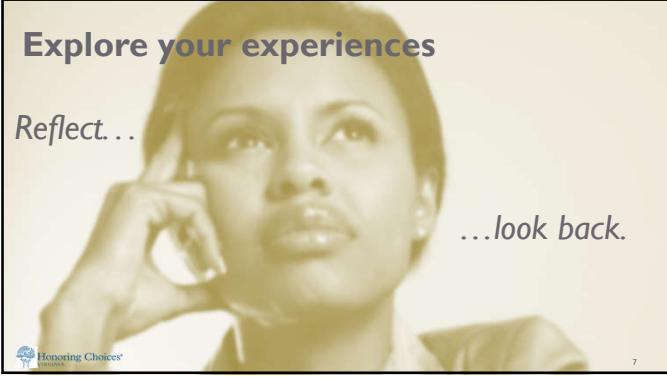
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**Explore your experiences**

Reflect... *...look back.*



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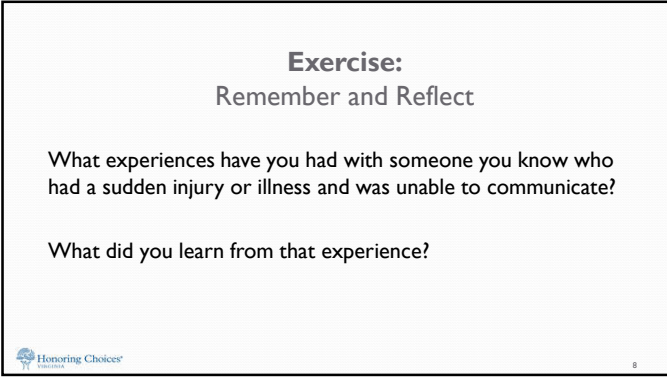
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**Exercise:**  
Remember and Reflect

What experiences have you had with someone you know who had a sudden injury or illness and was unable to communicate?

What did you learn from that experience?



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**Living well**

What experiences or activities are most important for you to live well?




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**#1:**

**Choose a decision-maker (health care agent)**



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**Responsibilities may include:**

- Making choices about medical care
- Reviewing and releasing medical records
- Arranging for medical care and treatment
- Making decisions on living situation
- Deciding which health providers can provide treatment


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**Ask yourself:**

- Have I asked this person if he/she is willing?
- Have I talked with this person enough so that he/she understands my preferences, values and goals?
- Will this person follow my preferences, even if they differ from their own?
- Can this person make decisions in sometimes difficult or emotional situations? And can they stand up to the pressures of other people?


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**Reflect:**



Why did you select this person?



Be ready to share with the prospective agent why you trust them to speak for you.

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**Asking a prospective agent**



*"I was thinking about what happened to \_\_\_\_\_, and it made me realize..."*



*Even though I'm okay right now, I'm worried that \_\_\_\_\_, and I want to be prepared."*



*If I get sick in the future and can't make my own decisions, would you work with my doctors and help make medical decisions for me?"*

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**#2:**  
**Explore your goals for medical care**



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### Exploring goals of treatment

Consider this situation:

You have a serious accident or sudden illness that leaves you unable to communicate. You are receiving all the medical care required to keep you alive, but the doctors believe there is little chance (less than 5%) you will ever recover the ability to know who you are or those around you.

**In your own words, what does this situation mean?**



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### What would you want?

Assume you would be kept comfortable, no matter what treatments you would want or not want.

**Would you want life sustaining treatments to continue?**

or

**Would you prefer care focused on keeping you comfortable without using medical interventions to keep you alive?**



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#3

### Explore religious, cultural or personal beliefs

- What helps you when you face serious challenges in your life?
- Do you have beliefs that might influence your preferences for using life-sustaining treatment interventions?
- Do you need to discuss these beliefs or clarify any concerns with others?



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### Next steps



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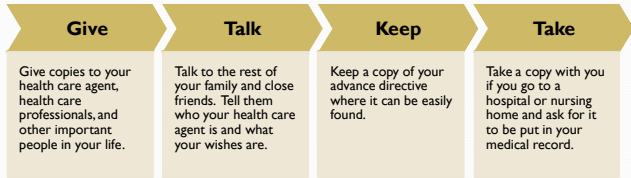
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### Then...



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### Review periodically



Advance care planning is a continuous process, not a one-time event.



Wishes may change as circumstances of life change.



Review your wishes every time you have a physical exam.

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## And...

Whenever any of the "Five D's" occur:

- *Decade*
- *Death of a loved one*
- *Divorce*
- *Diagnosis*
- *Decline*

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