Index

academic and clinical writing on dying: and anger, 101; and depression, 96; focus on sadness and loss in, 12; focus on suffering, 56; limitations of, x–xi, 2, 7, 12; onlooker’s perspective as characteristic perspective of, 7; and relationships, 119; and suffering, 16–17; and waiting for death by dying person, 135, 145; and waiting for death by loved ones, 131

acceptance of death, 85–87, 90; controversy surrounding, 85; vs. denial, 86; vs. helplessness, 84; as joint effort with love ones, 90–91; loved ones’ difficulty of accepting, 85, 86–87, 88–89, 90–91; and openness to new experience, 208; prevailing “war on disease” paradigm and, 84, 85–86; and resistance to pressure to continue fight, 85, 86, 88–91; Saint-Exupéry on, 178; and social isolation, 173–74; in suicide, 90

Adunsky, Abraham, 189

afterlife: and deathbed visions, reality of as issue, 201–4; possibility of as unknown, 167

aging: dying from, and definition of dying process as issue, 8–9; as slow social death, 78

AIDS patients: acceptance of death in, 86–87; physical suffering in, 18; psychological suffering in, 22; social suffering in, 28–29; stigma attached to, 28; waiting for death in, 132, 143–45, 146

Ainu people of Japan, 133

Alighieri, Dante, 149

aloneness: as condition of modern existential malaise, 169–70; hallucinations in, 176–80; negative perception of, 169–70, 180–81; perception of, as culturally determined, 180–81; protective power of devotion to cause or belief system in, 176

aloneness in dying: and bodily decay, people’s aversion to, 174; bystander indifference and, 174; and development of new self, 205–6; difficulty of overcoming, 170; experience of difficulty of comprehending, 181; and fear, experience of, 48; hallucinations in, 180, 185–86; inability of others to fully empathize and, 172, 173–74, 175, 181, 182–83; individualism of modern culture and, 172; Internet communication with other dying persons as remedy for, 181–84; modern medical care and, 172; at moment of death, fear of, 175, 183; as occasion for transformative experience, 206–7, 212; perception of as negative experience, 169; physical isolation and, 181; positive consequences of, 211;
preference for in some individuals, 184–85; process of social disappearing and, 169, 170–71, 172–75; and retreat to inner resources, 175–76, 180–81, 185–86, 206–7, 214; sources of, 172; writings on, 171

aloneness in mortal suffering: case studies, 20–22, 23–24; reality check prompted by, 31–32; Saint-Exupéry on, 15–16

ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis) patients: anger in, 105–6; hope experienced by, 110–11; inner transformation in, 214–15; physical suffering in, 18, 21; sadness in, 98–99, 110; waiting for death in, 137

Altman, Leon, 139

Alvarez, Al, 73–74

Alzheimer’s patients: anger in, 102; fear generated by diagnosis, 37; psychological suffering in, 22, 27; waiting for death in, 132

Amato, J. A., 16

Aminoff, Bechor, 189

anger, 101–7; in animals, 108–9; bursts of, 25; causes of, 101–3; complexity of underlying feelings in, 107–8; frustration as cause of, 101, 102, 103–4; guilt created by, 106–7; hope and love experienced in context of, 110–11; at injustice or offense, 102, 103, 104; as legitimate criticism, 103; literature on, 101; at loss, 101–2, 108–9; at loss of control, 104; at loss of former life and status, 104–5, 105–6, 108; messages sent by, 102; as occasion to reevaluate self and social relationships, 111; positive consequences of, 211, 213; as response to pain, 102, 103; rituals of healing from, 101; and sadness, as linked emotions, 94, 100–101; self-directed, 107; as source of power, 103; thought of lost future and, 93; at treatment by medical staff or caregivers, 104–5; at unfairness of life, 101, 106; variations in expression of, 102; at wait for death, 136

animals: fear of death in, 50; and human self-knowledge through comparison, 157; instinct for survival in, 59, 149; pain-based anger in, 102; response to threat of death, 2–4; sadness and anger in, 108–9; separation as cause of anguish in, 95. See also nature, death in

Anita (AIDS patient), 197

Ann (hospice patient), 137

anticipatory grieving, life story review as, 159–60, 162

apathy, as result of physical suffering, 19, 21

Ape Language (Savage-Rumbaugh), 109

Aristotle, on courage, 57

The Art of Loving (Fromm), 121

aspirations of dying persons, 59

audience (onlookers), dying in front of, 60

baby boom generation, aging of, and normal dying process, importance of understanding, xi–xii

The Bad Home (anon.), 104–5

Barbato, Michael, 101, 107

Barrett, William, 197–98

Bassett, Jan, 19–20, 93–94

Bauby, Jean-Dominique, 7

Beauvoir, Simone de, 174

Becker, Ernest, 39–40, 44

belief system, protective power of, in aloneness, 176

Bergman, Klara, 37

Berman, Merill, 140

Bible, on aloneness, 169

bitterness revival, life story review and, 160–61, 162
Block, Susan, 126
Bosanquet, Mary, 26
Boston, Patricia, 103–4
Bourke, Joanna, 46, 47
Bowker, J. W., 16
Bowlby, John, 96–97
Bracha, H. S., 3
Brad (dying person), 134
Bradford, Caycie, 138
Brain tumors, physical suffering in, 18
Breast cancer patients: hiding response in, 79–81; physical suffering in, 19–20; psychological suffering in, 26, 27–28; and sadness, sources of, 93–94; social suffering in, 29
Brodkey, Harold, 22, 132, 143–45, 146, 147, 208
Brontë, Emily, 90
Brown, Norman O., 44
Burger, Christopher, 26
Bushmen of Africa, 133
Butler, Robert, 150–51, 171
Cancer: “orphan” types of, organizations devoted to curing, 76; stigma attached to certain types of, 28; war metaphor guiding treatment of, 75–77
Cancer patients: acceptance of death in, 85–86; aloneness of dying in, 173–74, 182–84; anger in, 106; courage in, 66–69; fear generated by diagnosis, 37, 38, 39, 40–41; fighting spirit, impact on survival, 82; hiding response in, 79–81; hope in, 115; incidence of depression in, 95; life story review in, 152–53; physical suffering in, 18–20; psychological suffering in, 23, 24–25, 26, 27–28, 38; and relationships, strengthening of, 122–23; sadness in, 99; social suffering in, 23–24, 29–30; transformation in, 192–93, 194
Caring for a Dying Relative (Doyle), 127
Carroll, Lewis, 187
Carson, Henry J., 79–81
Casson, James, 26
Castaways, hallucinations in, 176–78
Cause: devotion to, protective power of, in aloneness, 176; willingness to die for, 63
C: Because Cowards Get Cancer Too (Diamond), 66–67
cells, programmed death in, 4–5
Chemotherapy: physical suffering in, 18–20; psychological suffering in, 24–25
Chomin, Nakae, 219–20
Chow, Grace, 173–74, 175, 176
Cissy (dying person), 142
Civil War, U.S., courage of dying soldiers in, 61–62, 66
Coleman, Peter, 150, 158
Common view of death: as completely negative, 1, 2, 219; and hope for quick end, 7; as overly-simple, 8
Concentration camp inmates: aloneness in dying in, 174, 185; courage in dying in, 69, 71; life story review in, 155, 156, 162; and relationships as source of hope, 117; waiting for death in, 140
Consciousness, evidence of continuation until moment of death, 194–95
Control, loss of. See powerlessness, experience of
Coontz, Phyllis, 140
Coping ability, hope and, 115
Corinthians, First Epistle to the, 120–21
Courage: bad types of, 57–58; definition of, 57–58; as facing of fears, 55, 58, 62–63; as misused term, 70; philosophers on, 57–58; as risk tolerance, 70–71; types of, 56, 57
Courage in dying: in cancer patients, 66–69; as effort to preserve identity and values, 57, 59, 71, 212; everyday
forms of, as underappreciated, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69–70; examples of, 55–56, 59–70; in executed criminals, 60–61; expressions of as culturally learned, 67; in facing difficult tasks of illness, 58–59; in internment/death camp inmates, 69, 71; as less evident than moments of fear, 59–60; in ordinary people, 65–70; in sea captains going down with ship, 60; in September 11th attack victims, 64–66; in soldiers, 61–64; in suicide attackers, 63–64; and survival, 69, 70–71, 213; time bought by, 71; as under-studied, 55–56; useful aspects of, 71. See also resistance to death

Cowan, M. A., 85–86

Craib, Ian, 37, 38, 48, 49–50, 51–52

Crane, Stephen, 193

crisis of dying person, and development of new self, 205–6

Crossing Over: Narratives of Palliative Care (Barnard et al.), 150

Cruz, Victor Hernandez, 186

crying, as manifestation of sadness, 97–98

Darwish, Mahmoud, 38, 89–90, 113, 130, 163, 209

David (dementia patient), 143, 146, 208

Dawn (dying person), 142

deathbed visions of, 195–99, 208

dead body, watching over (wake), 131, 139

death. See acceptance of death; desire for death; distance from threat of death;

other specific topics

“Death and Co.” (Plath), 73

dead relatives, deathbed visions of, 195–99, 208; vs. hallucinations, 196; opiate sedation and, 195, 198; prevalence of, 185–86, 190, 195; reality of in experience of dying persons, 203–4; ultimate reality of, as issue, 201–3

The Death of Ivan Ilyich (Tolstoy), 131

death row inmates: aloneness in dying in, 174; final moments of life in, 188–89; isolation of, 138, 140; life story review in, 156; physical suffering in, 20; psychological suffering in, 21, 24, 26, 138; waiting for death in, 137–38, 140–41

DeBaggio, Thomas, 22, 27, 37, 102, 132, 153–54

dementia patients: life story review in, 153–54; physical suffering in, 18; transformation in, 192; waiting for death in, 143, 146. See also Alzheimer’s patients

denial, as over-used word in health care, 86

denial, as response to threat of death, 40, 43–44; vs. acceptance, 86; vs. hiding response, 79–81; as transitory reaction, 80

The Denial of Death (Becker), 39–40

depression: definition of, as issue, 95–96; incidence in cancer patients, 95; literature on, 96; vs. sadness, 94–97. See also sadness

Des (elderly person), 42

desire for death: as act of courage, 59; in elderly, 42–43, 50; fear as cause of, 37; instinct for survival and, 59; in mortal suffering, 19–20. See also acceptance of death; euthanasia; suicide

Desperate Journeys, Abandoned Souls (Leslie), 177–78

developing nations, and deathbed visions, 195, 198

diagnosis of fatal disorder: fear generated by, 37, 38, 39, 40–41; as occasion
Earl (ship), 60
Ebola patients, experiences of nurses of, 135–36
egotri centrism, and perceived fear of dying, 44
e Elderly: acceptance of death in, 87; anger in, 106; and fear of death, 41–43; life story review in, 150–51, 160–61, 164; peaceful vs. difficult deaths in, 189; perception of non-aging self in, 78; physical suffering in, 18; resistance to death in, 77–79; social suffering in, 21. See also nursing home patients
Elias, Norbert, 171–73
Eliot, T. S., 38
Ellis, Carolyn, 123–24
emotions: in animals, 109; catastrophic states, in response to awareness of impending death, 22–26; distress, hiding of, 81; meltdowns, 22, 24–25; movement of through stages, 41, 80; new emotional territories, discovery of, 32–33, 41, 213; suffering as occasion for emotional check, 32–33. See also acceptance of death; aloneness in dying; fear of death; psychological suffering; sadness; other specific emotions
empathy: impossibility of, and aloneness in dying, 172, 173–74, 175, 181, 182–83; possibility of, 17–18
emphysema, 123–24
Entwistle, Mary, 47
Escape from Evil (Becker), 39–40
escape from reality: dangers of, 162; and fantasy as coping mechanism, 142, 146; as purpose of life story review, 155, 156, 161–62, 162–63; retreat to inner resources, 175–76, 180–81, 185–86, 206–7, 214
ethnocentrism, and perceived fear of dying, 44
Euahlayi people of Australia, 133
eulogies, tradition of evaluation of lives and, 161
euthanasia: and aloneness in dying, 185; as resistance to death, 74–75
evaluation, persons facing: courage in dying, 60–61; and perception of time, 207. See also death row inmates
exhaustion, and transcendence of fear, 67–68
existentialists, on courage of being, 57
existential questions, arising of with imminent death, 93
existential test, mortal suffering as, 33–34
fainting response to threat of death, in animals, 3
Faith (cancer patient), 134, 191–92
fantasy, as coping mechanism, 142, 146
Faust, Drew Gilpin, 61, 66
fear: academic studies on, 55–56; courage as facing of, 55, 56, 58, 62–63; culturally-learned expressions of, 67;
diagnosis of fatal disorder and, 37, 38, 39, 40–41; techniques for coping with, 52–53
fear of death: desire for death caused by, 37; difficulty of identifying specific fears, 36–37; elderly and, 41–43; as fear of dying in unfamiliar circumstances, 44–46; as fear of losing valued facets of self, 49–51, 170; as fear of unknown, 35–36; limited number of dying persons experiencing, 38, 39–43; manifestations of, 37–38; medical technology and, 45, 47–49; modern unfamiliarity of death and, 44; as more visible than courage, 59–60; as multiple, underlying fears, 36–37; as natural animal reaction, 39, 89; as occasion to reconceptualize life, 51–52, 53; physiological responses to, 37–38;

positive consequences of, 211; as product of power relations, 46; religion as ally in overcoming, 46–47; strength to confront, as surprise to dying persons, 215; subsiding of after initial shock, 41; transcendence of in soldiers, 62–63; various means of coping with, 39–41. See also courage in dying
feign/fright response to threat of death: in animals, 3; in humans, 6–7
Fiester, Richard, 79–81
fight-or-flight response, 3; elaborations on in higher animals, 3; modern medicine’s emphasis on “fight” half of paradigm, 75–77; as temporary, 84
fight response to threat of death: adopting, for sake of others, 126–27; in animals, 3; modern medicine’s emphasis on, 75–77; and patient hiding of emotional distress, 81; and patient survival, impact on, 82; as temporary, 84. See also resistance to death
First Epistle to the Corinthians, 120–21
The Five Stages of Grief (Pastan), 100
Flight 93 passengers, courage of, 64–65
flight response to threat of death: in animals, 3; as form of resistance, 75, 79–84; as natural, reasonable response, 75; as temporary, 84
Frank (hospice resident), 21
Frankl, Victor, 33, 34, 71, 103, 117, 155, 162, 169, 185
Fraser, Giles, 192
Freeman, Mark, 151
freeze response to threat of death, in animals, 3
Freud, Anna, 174
Freud, Sigmund, 174
friendships, deepening of, in dying persons, 119, 125–26
Fromm, Erich, 120, 121
Fromm-Reichmann, Frieda, 171, 176
future of dying person: anger as loss of, 93; life story review and, 166–67, 213; perception of, 213–14, 214–15; sadness at lost of, 93, 94, 98, 99; as unknown, 167

Gardner, Iain, 86–87
Geertz, Clifford, 17
Gracie (cancer patient), 68–69
gray power movement, 78
Gregory, D. M., 27
grief: anticipatory, life story review in dying persons as, 159–60, 162; as more visible than courage, 59–60. See also sadness

habit, erosion of in dying persons, 13, 85; and fear, 56. See also identity
Haight, Barbara, 160
hallucinations: in castaways, 176–78; vs. deathbed visions, 196; diversity of types and interpretations of, 179–80; in hermits, 178–79; in near-death experiences, 179; in tribal rites of initiation, 179–80. See also deathbed visions
Harrington, Melissa, 65
head injury, and painless state of shock, 6–7
heart disease, fear generated by diagnosis of, 40–41
Helen (cancer patient), 191–92
Helm, Ethan, 77
helplessness. See powerlessness
Herbert, George, 69
hermits, hallucinations in, 178–79
Hettee (elderly person), 78
hiding of distress, as form of resistance to death, 81–82
hiding response to threat of death: in animals, 3; as common, 81–82; in humans, 79–82
Hinton, John, 69, 190, 194
HIV. See AIDS patients
Hope, Bob, 131, 139
hope, definition of, 115
hope in dying persons: and coping ability, 115; in death row inmates, 140–41; experiences of within sadness, 110–11; impossibility of fully knowing future and, 113, 114, 116; irrational bursts of, 22; maintenance of by majority of dying persons, 113–14, 115, 116; objects of, 115–16; powerlessness and, 84; redirection of, 110, 113, 115, 116–17; relationships as basis of, 116–18; and survival, impact on, 71, 82, 83–84, 114
hopelessness: as attachment to lost form of hope, 110, 116; and suicide, 110
Hopi people, 133
hospice, number of patients dying in, 171
hospice patients: anger in, 101, 107; apathy in, 22; fear in, 37; and hope, 113; life story review in, 165; and pain management, 171; range of experiences of death in, 188; transformations in, 192–93; waiting for death in, 137, 165
hospitals: aloneness in dying in, 174, 181; anger at treatment by, 104; number of persons dying in, 171; pleasant and unpleasant death experiences in, 189; and war metaphor of medical treatment, 75–76
Howdle, Bill, 182–84
Hu, Kent K., 76, 86
humor: as method of coping with fear, 52, 53, 124–25; in response to psychological suffering, 29–30
hunter-gatherer cultures, abandonment of elderly and dying in, 133–34
Huxley, Aldous, 185
Hynes, Walter, 65
hypochondriasis, 81
identity: change in, with process of dying, 151, 205, 206, 207, 215; changes in, necessity of coming to terms with, 11; courage as effort to preserve, 57, 59, 71, 212; death as threat to, 17; life story as, 150, 151, 217; life story review as effort to maintain, 152, 153–54, 156; loss of, sorrow caused by, 83; resistance to death as effort to preserve, 71–72, 89, 81–82, 82–83. See also self-knowledge

Illness as Metaphor (Sontag), 75
India, deathbed visions in, 197, 198
individualism of modern culture: and aloneness in dying, 172; and life story review, 163, 164
initiation ritual, Melanesian Islands (New Hebrides), 51
inner life of dying person: as complex and difficult to discern, 187; mixture of elements in, ix; retreat to, 175–76, 180–81, 185–86, 206–7, 214
inoculation through experience, as method of coping with fear, 52
instinct for survival, and response to death, 59, 149
Internet, communication with other dying persons on, 181–84
internment/death camps. See concentration camp inmates
isolation: as existential quality of humans, 170; vs. solitude or loneliness, 170. See also aloneness

Jacques, Noralyn Davel, 137
Jaffe, Lois, 104, 136
JAL Flight 123 passengers, courage of, 66
James, William, 114–15
Jarman, Derek, 28–29
Job (biblical character), 69
John (cancer patient), 25
Johnson, Robert, 140–41, 188–89
Johnson, Sam, 24
Jones, L. L., 61
Josephine (nursing home resident), 137
Joy, C. S. Lewis on, 129–30
Julia (cancer patient), 27
Jung, Carl, 157–58
kamikaze pilots, psychological distress of, 63–64
Kaufman, Sharon, 48, 136
Kierkegaard, Søren, 37
Klein, Melanie, 180
Kleinman, Arthur, 17
Krishnamurti, 35
Kübler-Ross, Elizabeth, 43–45, 85, 87, 100, 115, 190, 222n18

Langner, Thomas, 39–40
Lapp people, 133
Law, Phillip, 94
Lawton, Julia, 165
Leader, Darian, 35
Le-Hev-Hev, 51
Leslie, Edward, 60–61, 177–78
letting go: fear and, 56; as joint effort with loved ones, 90–91; life story review as means of, 156, 159–60; of loss, benefits of, 143, 146; of no-longer-viable forms of hope, 116. See also acceptance of death; resistance to death
leukemia patients: anger in, 104; waiting for death in, 136
Levertov, Denise, 16
Lewis, C. S., 128–30
Licence, Tom, 178–79
life: intrinsic value of, 218; shaping of by evolutionary responses to threat of death, 4, 5
life, meaning of: contribution to better world as, 118; and dying as moral test, 34; dying as occasion for reevaluation
Mayer, Michelle Lynn, 124–25
McCarthy, Susan, 109
McGraw, John, 169–70
McLuhan, Marshall, 165
McQuellon, R. P., 85–86
MDD. See major depressive disorder
meaning of dying: life story review as
effort to find, 149–51, 156–57, 158–59, 165; necessity of constructing for one-
self, 11–12; as positive, in most dying
person, 13
meaning of life: contribution to better
world as, 118; and dying as moral test,
34; dying as occasion for reevaluation
of, 11–12, 31–32, 93, 215; overcoming
separateness as, 118, 120, 121; shaping
of through acting and reacting, 33–34.
See also life story review, in dying
persons
medical technology: and fear of dying,
45, 47–49; and time required to die,
7–8; and “war” on disease metaphor,
75–77
Meg (dying person), 183–84
Melanesian Islands (New Hebrides),
male initiation ritual in, 51
memory: of fact
vs. overarching narra-
tive, 164–65; reliability of, and life
story review in dying persons, 153–54,
164–65. See also life story review, in
dying persons
Merton, Thomas, 180
Mick (AIDS patient), 107
Miller, Derek, 152–53
Miller, Marion, 21, 42–43, 49–50, 52
modern life, as unfamiliar place, and fear
of dying, 45–46
Moldova: deathbed visions in, 198; dying
persons’ acceptance of death in,
88–89; peacefulness of dying in, 194
Monsoor, Michael, 62–63
Monsters of Our Own Making (Warner),
52–53
Montgomery, James Robert, 61–62
Moody, Raymond, 6–7, 200
moral courage: definition of, 56; as recog-
nition of everyday courage, 57
morality, and shaping of life meaning
through acting and reacting, 33–34
moral test, mortal suffering as, 33–34
Moran, Lord, 62
mortal suffering: academic focus on,
56; definition of, 16; and desire to
die, 19–20; and development of
new self, 205; as emotional check,
32–33; humor in response to, 29–30;
literature on, 16–17; as moral and
existential test, 33–34; as occasion for
transformative experience, 205, 206,
212; positive consequences of, 31–32,
211; as reality check, 31–32; transcend-
ing of, through mystical experiences,
30–31; and values, review of, 31–34,
212–13, 215. See also physical suffer-
ing; psychological suffering; social
suffering
Mother Teresa, 169–70
motor neuron disease. See ALS
mystical experiences: transcending of
suffering through, 30–31; as unbidden,
209
Nardini, J. E., 69, 71
nature, death in: insight gained from, 1;
as normal part of life process, 2, 10–11;
positive purposes of, 4–5, 10–11, 13,
216, 217; purpose of, as evident from
function, 10–11; similarities to human
death, 216. See also animals
near-death experiences: deathbed visions
in, 199; hallucinations in, 179; life
story review in, 154–55, 156, 160–61;
prevalence of, 190; as reality in experience of dying persons, 203–4; reality of, as issue, 201–3; social nature of, 208
nightmares, 27–28
Nixon, Richard M., 75
Noonan, Peggy, 65–66
normal experience of dying: benefits of understanding, xi–xiii; existing accounts of, demographic imbalance in, xi; as under-researched, x–xi
Nuland, Sherwin, 76
nursing home patients: aloneness in dying in, 174; anger at treatment in, 104–5; courage of dying persons in, 69; and loss of familiar comforts, 44–45; waiting for death in, 136, 137, 140
nursing homes, number of persons dying in, 171
obituaries, tradition of life evaluation and, 161
odor, people’s aversion to, and aloneness in dying, 174
old age, dying from, and definition of dying process as issue, 8–9
Omutu, Oconga Osuwu, 21
On Death and Dying (Kübler-Ross), 43–45, 222n18
onlookers, perspective of: obscuring of participant’s experience by, 2, 5–6, 13, 187, 216, 218; as perspective of most works on dying, 7
opiate sedation, and deathbed visions, suppression of, 195, 198
organ failure, physical suffering in, 18
organ transplant patients, experience of waiting in, 135
orphan diseases, organizations devoted to curing, 76
ovarian cancer: hope in, 113–14; stigma attached to, 28
pain: anger caused by, 102; painless state experienced in shock, 6–7. See also suffering
palliative care: literature on, focus on sadness and loss in, 12, 56; number of patients dying in, 171
palliative care patients: aloneness of, 174–75; anger in, 101, 107; hope in, 116; and pain management, 171; range of experiences of death in, 119, 188, 189–90; relationships and, 119, 126
Pastan, Linda, 98, 100
Patty (dying person), 134, 142, 146
PCD. See programmed cell death
pensioner rights movements, 78
perception, changes in, in dying person, 33, 190, 191–92, 206, 207, 208, 214, 215
Perera, Keith, 21
personality, reorganization of, in dying persons, 151. See also identity
perspective of dying person vs. onlooker, 2, 5–6, 13, 187, 216, 218
Pessoa, Fernando, 191
physical courage: definition of, 56; examples of, 62–63; as traditional form of courage, 57, 63
physical suffering: case studies of, 18–20; as one form of suffering, 16
Plath, Sylvia, 38, 73–74
political suffering, 17
positional suffering, 17
positive experiences in sudden death, 218
positive experiences in waiting for death, 136, 139–45, 145–47; vs. common negative view of death, 219; and dying as life-affirming journey, 211–17; functions of, 217–18; vs. happiness, 217; intrinsic value of life and, 218; practical implications for caregiving, 218–19; as recently-noticed phenomenon, 216;
variations in, 216–17, 218. See also
transformation within dying person
positive purposes of death, in nature, 4–5,
10–11, 13, 216, 217
possessions, distributing before death, 142
postmodern world, as unfamiliar place,
and fear of dying, 45–46
posttraumatic stress disorder, in patients
diagnosed with fatal disorders, 137
powerlessness, experience of: vs.
acceptance, 84; anger at, 104; impact
on survival, 82, 83–84; and openness
to self-sacrifice, 64; and resistance
to death, inability to sustain, 84; and
suffering, 22, 25–26
power relations, fear as product of, 46
Pratt, E. H., 197–98
premonitions of death, in Moldova,
88–89
Priestley, J. B., 78
programmed cell death (PCD), 4–5
psychoanalytic theory, on death, 40,
43–44
psychological courage: definition of, 56;
in executed criminals, 60–61; as
requirement for existing, 57;
in soldiers, 61–63
psychological reductionism, 103
psychological suffering: case studies,
21–28; emotional meltdowns, 22,
24–25; humor in response to, 29–30;
nightmares and troubled sleep in,
27–28; as one form of suffering, 17.
See also fear of death
purpose of life. See meaning of life
quick death: as common hope, 7; unlike-
liness of, 7–8
Rachman, Stanley, 41
rational humanists, views on near-death
and deathbed visions, 201, 202–3
Rawnsley, Marilyn, 68–69
reality check, mortal suffering as, 31–32
recollection. See life story review, in dy-
ing persons
reconciliation, opportunities for, in
terminal illness, 123
relatedness, loss of, in dying person’s
social disappearing, 171
relationships of dying persons: decline
of, in face of adversity, 119, 127–28;
earlier misconceptions about, 119; and
future, new understanding of, 213–14;
literature on, 119; need for offering
support to others, 126–27; as object of
hope, 116–18; and overcoming sense
of separateness from others, 118, 120,
121; and potential strain of over-solic-
itous loved ones, 128; reevaluation of,
in face of adversity, 118, 128; resistance
to death as effort to preserve, 81–82,
89; sadness at thought of leaving,
98–99, 100, 108, 110, 143; strengthen-
ing of, as source of joy, 129–30;
strengthening of in face of adversity,
118–27, 128, 212–13, 215. See also social
isolation; social suffering
religion: as comfort in dying, 46–47, 60,
86; decline of in Western societies,
46–47; and self-evaluation in dying
persons, 161; suffering and, 16; trans-
formation within dying person and,
205, 208
reminiscences, public, usefulness of, 166
remission, research on, 114
resistance to death: ability to sustain,
factors in, 84; benefits of, 82–84;
concern for loved ones and, 89, 90; as
effort to preserve identity and values,
71–72, 81–82, 82–83, 89; as effort to
preserve personal relationships, 81–82,
89; in elderly, 77–79; flight response
as type of, 75, 79–84; hiding response
as, 79–82; and modern medical treatment as “war,” 75–77; and morale, 83; as natural reaction, 39, 89–90; suicide as, 74–75, 89; time bought by, 74, 82, 83, 213. See also courage in dying; fight response to threat of death resistance to pressure to fight death, after acceptance of death, 85, 86, 88–91


Ritchie, David, 43

Rivas, Elizabeth, 66

Robert (cancer patient), 192–93

Robins, Natalie, 99, 106, 125–26, 128

role in life, death as occasion for reevaluation of, 11–12

Ros (elderly person), 78

Rose, Gillian, 87, 113–14, 117–18, 121, 128, 130, 166

Russell, C. K., 27

Saba, Fadia, 25, 99–100

Sabom, Michael, 154

sadness: and anger, as linked emotions, 94, 100–101; in animals, 108–9; complexity of underlying feelings in, 107–8; vs. depression, 94–97; disease model of, 94–95; etymology and definition of, 97; family and friends as support in, 96; focus on in palliative care literature, 12; hope and love experienced in context of, 110–11; hopelessness and, 110; loved ones’ expectations for continuing struggle and, 100; as normal response to loss, 94–95, 96, 97, 100, 108–9; as occasion to reevaluate self and social relationships, 111; physical manifestations of, 95; positive consequences of, 211, 213; psychological pain of loved ones and, 99–100; as self-limiting, 95; thought of leaving present life and relationships and, 94, 98–99, 100, 108, 110, 143; thought of lost future and, 93, 94, 98, 99; thought of past failures and, 100; thoughts of past losses and, 98; as under-studied, 96–97

Saint-Exupéry, Antoine de, 15–16, 178, 205, 207

Sand, Lisa, 174–75

Santayana, George, 83

Sarah (cancer patient), 27–28

Sartre, Jean-Paul, 174

Savage-Rumbaugh, E. Sue, 109

Scarre, Geoffrey, 57, 70

Schreiner, Oliver, 93

Schwarcz, Vera, 17

scleroderma, 124–25

sea captains, courage in facing death, 60

self. See identity

self-knowledge/self-evaluation: increase in, through dying journey, 215; Jung on, 157–58; life story review as means to, 152–56, 157–59, 160–61, 162, 164–65; and multiplicity of selves, 164. See also transformation within dying person

Seligman, Martin, 84

senses, sharpening of, in dying persons, 191–92

separation, as cause of anguish in animals, 95. See also aloneness in dying; relationships of dying persons

September 11th terrorist attacks: courage of attackers in, 64; courage of Flight 93 passengers, 64–65; courage of victims of, 64–66

Seravalli, Egilde, 126–27

ships, sinking, captains going down with, 60

shock, painless state experienced in, 6–7

Simmons, Leo, 133

sleep, troubled, 27–28

social isolation: aging as slow process of,
78; dying as process of social disappearing, 169, 170–71, 172–75. See also aloneness in dying; relationships of dying persons; social suffering social suffering: case studies, 20–22, 23–24, 28–30; definition of, 17. See also relationships of dying persons soldiers: and courage as risk tolerance, 70–71; courage in dying, 61–64, 69; life story review by, in near-death experiences, 154; management of fear in, 41; transcendence of fear in, 62–63 solitude, vs. isolation or loneliness, 170. See also aloneness Sontag, Susan, 64, 75, 77 soothing words and images, as method of coping with fear, 52 sorrow, definition of, 97. See also sadness spes phthisica, 198 spiritual awakening in dying persons, 216 spiritual courage, 57 spiritualists, views on near-death and deathbed visions, 201 stigma of disease, and social suffering, 28–29 storytelling animals, humans as: and desire for meaning, 11–12, 33, 149–50, 158; and life story as identity, 150, 151, 217; and preparation for future challenges, 150. See also entries under life story Strang, Peter, 174–75 sudden death: disorientation and shock in, 221–221n17; painless state of shock in, 6–7; positive experiences in, 218. See also near-death experiences Suedfeld, Peter, 179–80 suffering: ability to share, 17–18; grief and loss as basis of, 17; integrated nature of, 17; literature on, 16–17; of others, as source of psychological suffering, 26; Saint-Exupéry on, 15–16; as set of explanations of distress, 16; types of, 16–17. See also mortal suffering; physical suffering; psychological suffering; social suffering suicide: acceptance of death in, 90; and fear of death, 41; hopelessness and, 110; as infrequent reaction to impending death, 46; loved ones’ difficulty of accepting, 88; as resistance to death, 74–75, 89; of Sylvia Plath, 73–74; thoughts of, in cancer patients, 38 suicide attackers: courage in, 63–64; as form of resistance, 74; motives of, 64 Sullivan, Mark, 110, 116 Surprised by Joy (Lewis), 128–30 surprise of dying persons: at diagnosis of terminal illness, 206; at inability to control fear, 12; as intrinsic to dying experience, 216; at positive experiences of dying, 129–30, 139, 143–47, 214–16, 218 Swain, Paul, 200–201 Tavris, Carol, 101, 108 Tennyson, Alfred Lord, 79 thinking about death, as unique human capacity, 7 Thomas, Dylan, 78–79 Thomas, Lewis, 198 threat of death, human capacity to contemplate, 7 threat of death, response to: in animals, 2–4, 13; in humans, complexity of, 7, 12, 222n18; as ingrained product of evolutionary forces, 4, 6–7, 12; shaping of living organisms by, 4, 5 tiger attack, and painless state of shock, 6–7 Tillich, Paul, 56–57, 180 time, altered perception of: in dying persons, 137, 146, 214–15, 219–20; in near-death experiences, 154–55, 156, 160–61
time required to die: and complexity of human response, 5, 7, 9, 13; definition of, as issue, 8–10; extension of by resistance to death, 74, 82, 83, 213; focus on onlooker perspective on, 7; medical technology and, 7–8. See also quick death; waiting for death

Todeserwartung (waiting to die) syndrome, 140

Tolstoy, Leo, 131

tonic immobility response. See feign/fright response to threat of death

Toynbee, Philip, 194

transcendence: of fear through courage, 55, 62, 69; of suffering through humor, 29–30; of suffering through mystical experiences, 30–31; in transformation within dying person, 204, 207; in waiting for death, 135, 141, 146

transformation within dying person: acceptance of, and opening of new perspectives, 208–9; changes in circumstance as occasion for, 205, 206, 208; characteristic pattern of development, 204–9; as common, 205, 218; definition of, 190–91; dying person’s failure/ inability to share, 189, 205, 207; factors affecting, 189, 205; before final approach to death, 189, 191–94, 205–7; in final moments before death, 188, 189–90, 194–99; as life-building experience, 213; at moment of death, 199–201, 205; obscuring of by onlookers perspective, 2, 5–6, 13, 187, 216, 218; perception, changes in, 33, 190, 191–92, 206, 207, 208, 214, 215; as reality in experience of dying persons, 203–4; retreat to inner resources, 175–76, 180–81, 185–86, 206–7, 214; as source of consolation and hope, 219; spiritual awakening, 216; and strength, newly-discovered depths of, 215; transcendence in, 207; ultimate reality of, as issue, 201–3; as unbidden, 206, 209; as under-studied phenomenon, 205; as unrelated to religious beliefs, 205, 208. See also deathbed visions; near-death experiences

trapped feeling. See powerlessness, experience of

tribal cultures, rites of initiation in, 179–80

Trillin, Alice Stewart, 47–49, 106, 173, 175

tuberculosis, dying from, 198

Uganda, Ebola nurses in, 135–36

U.K. Centre for Policy on Ageing, 87

unexpected events, as occasion for transformative experience, 206

unfairness of life, anger at, 101

unfamiliar circumstances, fear of dying in, 44–46

United Airlines Flight 93 passengers, courage of, 64–65

values: courage as effort to preserve, 57, 59, 71, 212; loss of, sorrow caused by, 83; mortal suffering as occasion for review of, 31–34, 212–13, 215; resistance to death as effort to preserve, 71–72, 89, 81–82, 82–83

van Dyke, Henry, 70, 114, 211, 217

victim’s stance, 101

Victor (cancer patient), 103–4

vital courage, definition of, 56

vitality, as spiritual force, 114

waiting for death, by dying person: acceptance and, 134, 146; in death row inmates, 137–38; diversionary tactics in, 136; focus on others in, 145–46; in hunter-gatherer cultures, 133–34; impatience in, 134, 137, 141; as limbo or purgatory, 132, 135–36, 139, 145; literature on, 135, 145; new character
insights in, 146; as occasion for transformative experience, 206, 212–13; psychological effects of, 135–36; rising above misery in, 139; sense of destination and, 132–33; as time of active preparation, 139; Tolstoy on, 131; as under-studied, 131–32; unpleasant experiences in, 132–33, 137–38, 145. See also positive experiences in waiting for death; transformation within dying person
waiting for death, by loved ones, 131, 136, 139
wakes, 131, 139
Wallace, J. B., 163
Walton, Douglas, 57, 58
Warner, Marina, 52–53
war on cancer, Nixon’s announcement of, 75

“war on disease” paradigm of modern medicine, 75–77; acceptance of death and, 84, 85–86
Webster, Jeffrey, 160
well-being, fear of death and, 38
Wells, H. G., 103
Western societies, decline of religion in, 46–47
wonder in dying persons, 128, 129–30, 205, 216. See also transformation within dying person
Worden, Bill, 97, 159
Wordsworth, John, 60
Wright, Kristin, 134, 141–42

young people, dying: anger in, 106; sources of sadness in, 93, 98, 99–100

Zaleski, C., 154–55