



Tool #4

Personal Priorities & Spiritual Values Important to Your Medical Decisions

Name & Date _____

People have personal priorities and spiritual beliefs that effect their medical decisions. This is especially true at the end of life with regard to the use of life-sustaining treatments. To make your values and beliefs more clear, consider answering the questions below. Use more paper if you need more space.

PERSONAL PRIORITIES/CONCERNS

1. What do you most value about your physical or mental well being? For example, do you most love to be outdoors? To be able to read or listen to music? To be aware of your surroundings and who is with you? Seeing, tasting, touching?

2. What are your fears regarding the end of life?

3. Would you want to be sedated if it were necessary to control your pain, even if it makes you drowsy or puts you to sleep much of the time?

4. Would you want to have a hospice team or other palliative care (i.e., comfort care) available to you?

5. If you could plan it today, what would the last day or week of your life be like? -- For example...
 - Where would you be? What would your environment be like?
 - Who would be present?
 - What would you be doing?
 - What would you eat if you could eat?
 - What would be your final words or last acts?

6. Are there people to whom you want to write a letter or for whom you want to prepare a taped message, perhaps marked for opening at a future time?

7. How do you want to be remembered? (If you wrote your own epitaph or obituary, what would it say?)

8. What are your wishes for a memorial service – for example, the songs or readings you want, or the people you hope will participate?

SPIRITUAL/RELIGIOUS MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU

9. How would you describe your spiritual or religious life?

10. What gives your life its purpose and meaning?

11. What is important for others to know about the spiritual or religious part of your life?

12. What do you need for comfort and support as you journey near death? For example, to pray with a member of the clergy? To have others pray for you? To be read to from spiritual or religious texts? To have music playing in your room? To be held?

This Worksheet adapted by the American Bar Association's Commission on Legal Problems of the Elderly from *Caring Conversations*, a workbook published by the Midwest Bioethics Center, 1021-1025 Jefferson Street, Kansas City, MO 64105