

#TalkingAboutDyingMatters



Dying
Matters

Awareness Week

4 – 10 May 2026

How you can get involved

hospiceuk.org/dyingmatters

Contents

Introduction	3
How you can get involved	4
Events toolkit	5
Books (and more) to help you explore conversations around death and dying	6
Materials to support your event (printable)	7
Materials to support your event (downloads)	8
Support and advice	9





Introduction

Thank you for supporting Dying Matters Awareness Week 2026.

Every year, people around the UK use Dying Matters Awareness Week as a moment to encourage all communities to get talking in whatever way, shape or form works for them.

In 2026, Dying Matters Awareness Week will take place from Monday 4 to Sunday 10 May. The theme this year is: Talking about Dying Matters.

Why Talking about Dying Matters

The mission of Dying Matters is to break down the stigma and taboo of talking about death and dying. But sometimes, it's hard to know where to start.

27% of people find it hard to talk about death with family or friends, and 30% bottle their feelings up. If we don't talk about death and dying and bereavement, it can be harder to cope when we experience it.*

Death, dying and bereavement affect us all. This Dying Matters Awareness Week we're focusing on the importance of conversations about death and dying – with family, friends, employers, anyone in your life – helping you to get the conversation started.

Because Talking about Dying Matters.

About Dying Matters

The Dying Matters campaign, run by Hospice UK, aims to open up conversations about death, dying and grief.

With our community partners across the country, we help people talk about death in a way that works for them, start conversations they might have been avoiding, and get over their worries about saying the wrong thing.

*This research is from polling commissioned by Celebration Day in 2025.

How you can get involved

Host your own event: a free toolkit

It's more important than ever for us to come together and talk about death and dying.

One way that you can do this is by holding an event during the week. And the good news is that anyone can do that, including you! You don't need any experience – just a passion for helping others talk openly about death and dying.

To help you think about what your event might be and how to organise it, we've got a **whole host of resources** on our website. These will also help you plan the details and with things like how to promote it in your area. You can also find some handy tips on page 6 of this resource pack.

If you do hold an event, you can **submit the details on our online form**, and we'll add it to our **'What's On'** listings page for free.

Remember, the more **Dying Matters Awareness Week** events that our communities hold, the more you'll be helping break down the stigma of death and dying, and helping people talk openly and honestly about it. And the more who do that, the less who'll be afraid of it.

Going to an event in your area

You might simply prefer to attend an event this year that someone else has organised. As event organisers send us their listings, we'll be updating our **What's On page**, with events on a Google map, and listings by region.

But if you'd prefer to stay in the comfort of your own home, there will be plenty of events taking place online – you'll be able to join from your phone, tablet or computer.

→ [Explore what's on this year](#)

Spread the word

We can't do any of this alone.

By spreading the word, you will be helping us create an open culture in which we're comfortable talking about death, dying and grief.

We will be sharing practical advice, conversation starters and human stories to our Dying Matters social media accounts from Monday 4 - Sunday 10 May.

Sharing your stories and experiences can help create spaces for people to talk openly, share their own thoughts and feelings, and support each other on social media.

→ [Facebook](#) → [Instagram](#)

Join our Dying Matters community:

→ [Register today](#)



Events toolkit

Whatever the nature of your Awareness Week event, the idea is to simply get people talking.

This year we're encouraging people to explore how we talk about death and dying – but if a different topic or theme works better for your event, that's great!

A Dying Matters event can start off as something really simple, such as printing off and sharing some of our resources in your workplace, with a local business or perhaps your local library.

Events don't have to be anything formal (although they can be). People have done all sorts of things in the past, ranging from holding a death café or meetup to simply chat about death and dying, to setting up an information stand in their local community centre, putting up a poster in their café, or holding an online discussion.

Community organisations, libraries, NHS departments, hospices, funeral directors, authors, cafes, book shops, theatre companies, orchestras and choirs – to name a few – all of these, and more, held some sort of event or activity for Dying Matters Awareness Week last year.

In person events

- **Think about a good venue for your event.** You may work in a hospice, library, GP or healthcare centre or other community space – but if not, think about whether you could approach someone who would have a space for you to use.
- **Be clear on the audience for your event,** and how you'll reach them.
- **Provide some refreshments,** if you can. This is a good idea – there's nothing like a cup of tea and a biscuit to encourage people to have a chat!

Online events

- **Technology:** think about which platforms you want to use to host your event online.
- **Double check:** make sure you are well prepared to check the technology is working!
- **Encourage joining in:** think about how you encourage people to join in, whether that is through a little game, a series of questions, or breaking people into smaller online groups.
- **Timings:** think about the best time for your event based on who you are hoping will attend.
- **Don't be worried if your event is small.** Lots of people register for online events and then can't make it on the day – but sometimes a small group is even better for starting conversations.

What now?

Post on social media using the hashtags **#DMAW26** and **#TalkingAboutDyingMatters**

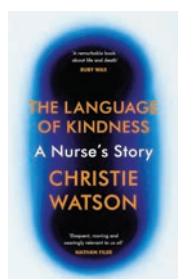
Are you in Scotland?

Good Life, Good Death, Good Grief are running a Demystifying Death week from 4 - 10 May 2026.

Books (and more) to help you explore conversations around death and dying

Death, dying and grief occur repeatedly in fiction, allowing us to explore them through the mind's eye of characters; non-fiction offers us a variety of insights into living and dying, grief and mourning, written by individuals describing their own experiences and by experts offering a summary of current wisdom.

Our recommendations this year come from contributors including Dying Matters supporters, hospice professionals and academics.



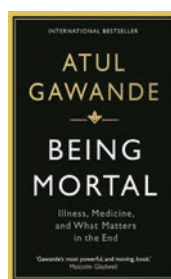
The Language of Kindness

by Christie Watson

“I had the pleasure of working with Christie during the pandemic and was bowled over by this honest account of her experiences as a professional and a daughter. I hope that this book will help you to reflect on personal experiences and losses, fuelling

conversations just like it did for me.”

Dr Lucy Pain, Palliative Medicine Consultant



Being Mortal

by Atul Gawande

“Being Mortal is a beautiful philosophical exploration of modern medicine's loss of focus on 'what matters in the end,' and a plea to his fellow American doctors to discuss dying honestly and prioritise comfort when death can no longer be postponed.”

Dr Kathryn Mannix, former palliative care doctor and author of *With the End in Mind*



Living with the Dead

by Professor Laura King

“The dead are everywhere in family life. From a great-grandmother's recipe, and an old photo of a family on a beach, to a much-told story of fleeing a home, families are made by their pasts. This book charts the way families create afterlives for their ancestors, asking who and what gets to be remembered, and why.”

Chris, Dying Matters Supporter



Podcast:

Part of Life

“A positive and honest space to discuss all things relating to death and dying. From the latest in scientific research and professional resources, to wellbeing support and compassionate conversations, Part of Life aims to destigmatise death to make the most of life.”

Molly, Dying Matters Supporter

[→ Listen Here](#)



Granpa

by John Burningham

“A picture book for younger children (and all of us) remembering happy times with Granpa, now that he has died and his chair is empty. A great way to engage in family discussion about the death of a person we love.”

Natalie, Dying Matters Supporter

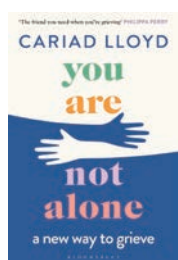


Film:

The Book of Life, & Coco

These films focus on the *Day of the Dead* (Día De Los Muertos), a Mexican holiday reuniting the living and dead. They spark conversations about talking openly about death, remembering others through shared stories; and becoming more at ease with dying.

Dr Jane Lavery, Associate Professor in Latin American Studies at the University of Southampton



You are not alone

by Cariad Lloyd

“Cariad shares her learnings over the 20+ years she's been grieving. Parts of the book have you ferociously nodding! It really makes you feel exactly what the title says, that you are not alone.”

Amber Jeffrey, podcast host at *The Grief Gang*

[→ Download this poster in printable format](#)

Materials to support your event

Printable resources

Use our printable resources at your event to help get conversations about death and dying started.



Let people know about your event

Print and fill out this poster to let people know about your Dying Matters Awareness Week event.

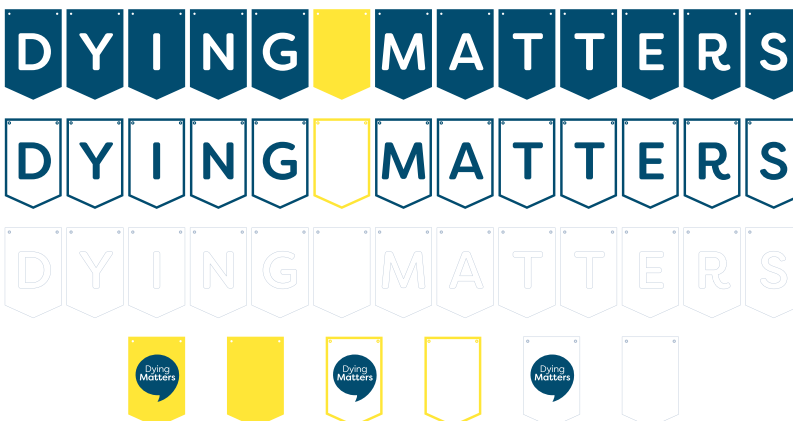
→ [Download here](#)



Dying Matters leaflets

From talking about dying with children, to understanding how to support someone through a bereavement, our leaflets are designed to help you deal with different aspects of dying, death and bereavement.

→ [Download the leaflets](#)



Make it an occasion

Here's a template for print-at-home bunting. Besides a printer and paper, all you'll need is a hole punch and some string.

→ [Download here](#)

Materials to support your event

These resources will help you talk about Dying Matters Awareness Week online.
All resources can be downloaded here.

You will also find them on the **Dying Matters website** →

→ Social media graphics



→ Social media images



→ Social headers



→ Dying Matters logos



→ Template press release



→ Social posts



Don't forget to tag **@DyingMatters** and use the hashtags **#TalkingAboutDyingMatters** or **#DMAW26**

Support & Advice

Ataloss offers a national signposting service to help bereaved people find local, specialist and national support.

ataloss.org

Child Bereavement UK provides information and support (including a helpline) when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, and when a child is facing bereavement.

childbereavementuk.org

Compassionate Employers is Hospice UK's workplace support programme, helping organisations and their employees to build an open, compassionate culture to support staff through grief, caring responsibilities, or a life-limiting illness

www.hospiceuk.org/compassionate-employers

Cruse Bereavement Support is a national bereavement charity, which provides support, advice and information to children, young people and adults when someone dies.

cruse.org.uk

The Good Grief Festival is a community of people talking about grief in a refreshing and honest way, with virtual talks, workshops and webinars held at online festivals through the year.

goodgrieffest.com

The Planning Ahead tool leads you, step by step, to think about your own values and the things that matter most to you in life and in dying. It will explain some of the treatment decisions that may lie ahead and ask you to think about whether the length of your life, or the quality of the way you live, matters more to you:

hospiceuk.org/planning-ahead

Hospice UK's guide to end of life care provides clear and concise guidance about what to expect, what to ask and where you can get support when you or a loved one are facing the end of life and bereavement.

hospiceuk.org/information-and-support/your-guide-hospice-and-end-life-care





Dying Matters

hospiceuk.org/dyingmatters



Dying Matters is a campaign run by Hospice UK.

© Hospice UK 2026. Company limited by guarantee, Registered in England and Wales No. 2751549. Charity registered in England and Wales No. 1014851, and in Scotland No. SC041112. VAT No 731 304476.