



From Conversation to Action

Turning your My Gift of Grace cards into documents and plans

mygiftofgrace.com/from-conversation-to-action

My Gift of Grace is a conversation game that helps you share your wishes and values with the people who care about you. Having these conversations is the most important step toward living well today and until the end of your life.

Once you've started these conversations, there is more you can do: naming a healthcare proxy, filling out an advance directive, creating new traditions for you and your loved ones, and preparing a memorial service that reflects who you are and how you want to be remembered. Filling in paperwork and making end of life plans can be scary, but doing it with your loved ones can be a meaningful experience if you talk about what is important to you.

Preparing to use this guide

My Gift of Grace can be played two ways: with everyone sharing one deck, or with each person playing with their own deck. To use this guide, we recommend that each player use their own deck so that they can write their answers directly on your cards. Once you've written your answers, use this guide to create your plans and continue these important conversations.

Contents

Naming your Healthcare Proxy	page 2
Guiding your Healthcare Proxy	page 2
Filling out your Advance Directive.....	page 3
Prompting Goals of Care conversations	page 3
Getting to know a caregiver.....	page 4
Planning a Memorial Service	page 4
Developing a new tradition	page 5
Additional information on using My Gift of Grace questions.....	page 5

A box full of answers to some of the most important questions of our lives

The idea for a box of answers to important questions came from my grandmother, Ruth Deats. Ruth lived with Parkinson's Disease for 25 years, and before she died in 1994 at 75 years old, she did something many people do: she made plans. My grandfather Paul never knew it, but Ruth had left a folder in her desk marked "Memorial" with a set of songs, quotes and notes about how she wished to be remembered. Her memorial service included every one of the elements she chose, and it made remembering her all the more meaningful because she helped us understand what was important to her.

This is just one of many things my grandmother taught me, and when we began designing My Gift of Grace, we integrated the idea of a box full of answers into the game from the very first prototypes. Writing down what you want in life and how you want to be remembered can be incredibly powerful. Sharing what you write with the people you care about can help you and your loved ones understand each other more deeply. And if there's something more important than that, I haven't heard of it.

— Nick Jehlen, lead designer, My Gift of Grace

Naming your Healthcare Proxy

Your healthcare proxy is the person who makes decisions for you if you are unable to communicate for yourself in a healthcare crisis. *If you are able to communicate, your proxy would not make decisions for you.*

The answers to these questions lead directly to naming a healthcare proxy. Once you've determined who your proxy should be, ask their permission, and then work with them to fill in your healthcare proxy form.

Healthcare Proxy forms vary by country and state. A web search for "Healthcare Proxy" and your state or country will help you find more info, or ask your healthcare provider.

Question cards that help you choose your healthcare proxy: 7, 22

QUESTION 7

Name the three-person committee who should be consulted on any decisions made about whether to continue life-saving care if you can't communicate.

QUESTION 22

Imagine you were lost at sea and your family had to pay for the search to find you. Who should make decisions about how long to search for you?

Guiding your Healthcare Proxy

Naming your healthcare proxy is a good first step, but in order for your proxy to make decisions for you, they need to understand your wishes and values.

We suggest taking them to lunch, for a walk, or to a comfortable place to sit, and then go through these cards with them. Asking your proxy for their answers to these questions can also help you understand each other better.

Be sure that your discussion with your healthcare proxy includes questions about whether they are comfortable honoring your wishes. If they are not, consider choosing someone else as your proxy.

***Questions to talk about with your healthcare proxy:
7, 8, 11, 21, 22, 23, 36, 40, 44***

Examples of questions to talk about with your healthcare proxy →

QUESTION 11

In order to provide you with the best care possible, what three non-medical facts should your doctor know about you?

QUESTION 23

If you could control only one thing about the place where you spend your last hours of life, what would it be?

QUESTION 40

When you think about care at the end of your life, do you worry more about:

- not getting enough care
- getting overly aggressive care
- other _____

Filling out your Advance Directive

An Advance Directive is a legal document that can be used to communicate your wishes in a health crisis. Advance Directives are only used if you are unable to express your own wishes.

Each state has its own Advance Directive forms. To be useful, yours will need to be included in your medical records and available to the people who care about you, especially your healthcare proxy. The answers to these cards will help you and your doctor or healthcare provider fill in your form and have a useful conversation about your end of life wishes, no matter what stage in life you're at now.

Have the answers to these questions with you when you fill out your advance directive, and use them when talking with your doctor about your end of life wishes:

7, 8, 11, 18, 21, 22, 23, 26, 31, 36, 40, 44

QUESTION 21

Which is more frightening to imagine: suffering the worst physical pain of your life or not getting a chance to say goodbye to your family?

QUESTION 31

How comfortable are you saying, "I don't understand" to your doctor?

QUESTION 36

Do you want your doctor to be focused on maximizing:

- the length of your life
- the quality of your life
- other _____

Prompting Goals of Care conversations

The following cards are useful prompts for Goals of Care conversations. Nurses, caregivers, or patients can use them to start conversations about a patient's hopes, goals, and expectations. The earlier you prompt a Goals of Care conversation, the easier it will be for you to provide or receive quality care.

Questions that help prompt a Goals of Care conversation:

8, 11, 18, 21, 23, 26, 31, 36, 40

QUESTION 8

If a nurse asked you whether you were a spiritual person, what would you say?

QUESTION 26

If you were diagnosed with a terminal disease, who would you turn to for advice?

QUESTION 18

If your doctor believed you had six months to live, who would you want them to tell?

Getting to know a caregiver

When you're working with a new caregiver, set aside 5 minutes each time they visit to go through the answers to the cards below. If your caregiver hasn't played the game, invite them to share their answer to the same question with you. This can help everyone quickly establish a good rapport and learn about the little and not-so-little things that make a caregiving relationship work well.

Questions that help caregivers and patients get to know each other: 5, 11, 15, 19, 21, 24, 30, 31, 34

QUESTION 11

In order to provide you with the best care possible, what three non-medical facts should your doctor know about you?

QUESTION 30

If you could write a note to the people who will care for you at the end of your life, to be delivered one year after your death, what would it say?

QUESTION 34

When was the last time you needed help from someone else? What made accepting help easier for you? What made it more difficult?

Planning a Memorial Service

After you've finished playing My Gift of Grace, you'll be left with a box full of your wishes that you can keep on a shelf, refer back to, or give to a loved one. One of the ways those wishes can be put into action is as the basis for your memorial service. You or your loved ones can use the answers below as the basis for your service and for managing some of the many decisions they will need to make after your death.

Questions to ask as you start planning a memorial service: 3, 10, 14, 15, 20, 30, 37, 41, 43

QUESTION 15

What music do you want to be listening to on your last day alive?

QUESTION 20

If only one story is told at your memorial service, who should tell it?

QUESTION 43

If someone wanted to make a donation in your memory after you died, where would you like their donation to go and why?

Developing a new tradition

Playing My Gift of Grace is a great way to help you talk about what is important to you, and to help you hear what is important to the people you care about. Working with your family and friends, come up with an activity, ritual, or tradition that celebrates what you find important in life.

Review the answers to these cards with the people you care about to start planning a new tradition: 6, 27, 33, 38, 47

QUESTION 6

What activities make you lose track of time?

QUESTION 33

If you had three months to live, what would you give yourself permission to do?

QUESTION 47

What is the last meal you want to eat and who would you like to join you?

Additional information on using My Gift of Grace

My Gift of Grace questions are written to prompt conversations, but not just the ones you expect. While most of us struggle with talking about end of life issues, we all have different experiences, fears and hopes. Playing the game can help us uncover topics that we may never have discussed before. It gives us a structure that helps everyone feel safe.

This guide can help you choose questions for creating your end of life plans as well as new traditions, but you may find that your answer to a question that isn't listed here helps you express how you feel about something important. Don't be afraid to make adjustments to the lists of questions we've suggested: Your list should reflect what is important to you.

To tell us about your experiences using the game and this guide, and to make suggestions, visit mygiftofgrace.com/contact.

For information on purchasing My Gift of Grace games individually or in bulk, visit mygiftofgrace.com/store.

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