

Is it time to have “the talk” with someone you love?

I remember when I was growing up, I hit a certain age and suddenly we had these funny classes in school: the boys were peeled off somewhere, and us girls had to sit through an excruciating film about armpit hair and other mortifying developments. These classes left a lot to be desired. And I am so relieved that by all accounts, we are handling that kind of education much differently in schools now. But the fact is, those classes might not have been perfect, but they were there. Folks could get the info about a major life event from a trusted source, right there in school. Imagine if we could do that with death education too!

Why would we need something like that? Because talking about death and dying is really one of the last great societal taboos. But it is literally the one thing we all have in common. If we all had some basic knowledge about what happens when we die—not metaphysically or spiritually—just plain nuts and bolts information about the decisions that will need to be made, who does what, where and how to acquire paperwork and other practical matters like that, we would all be better prepared to deal with life’s only certainty.

Having “the talk” with our aging parents or even younger family members who might not be ready to hear it can be difficult, there’s no doubt about it. But there are ways to make it easier.

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