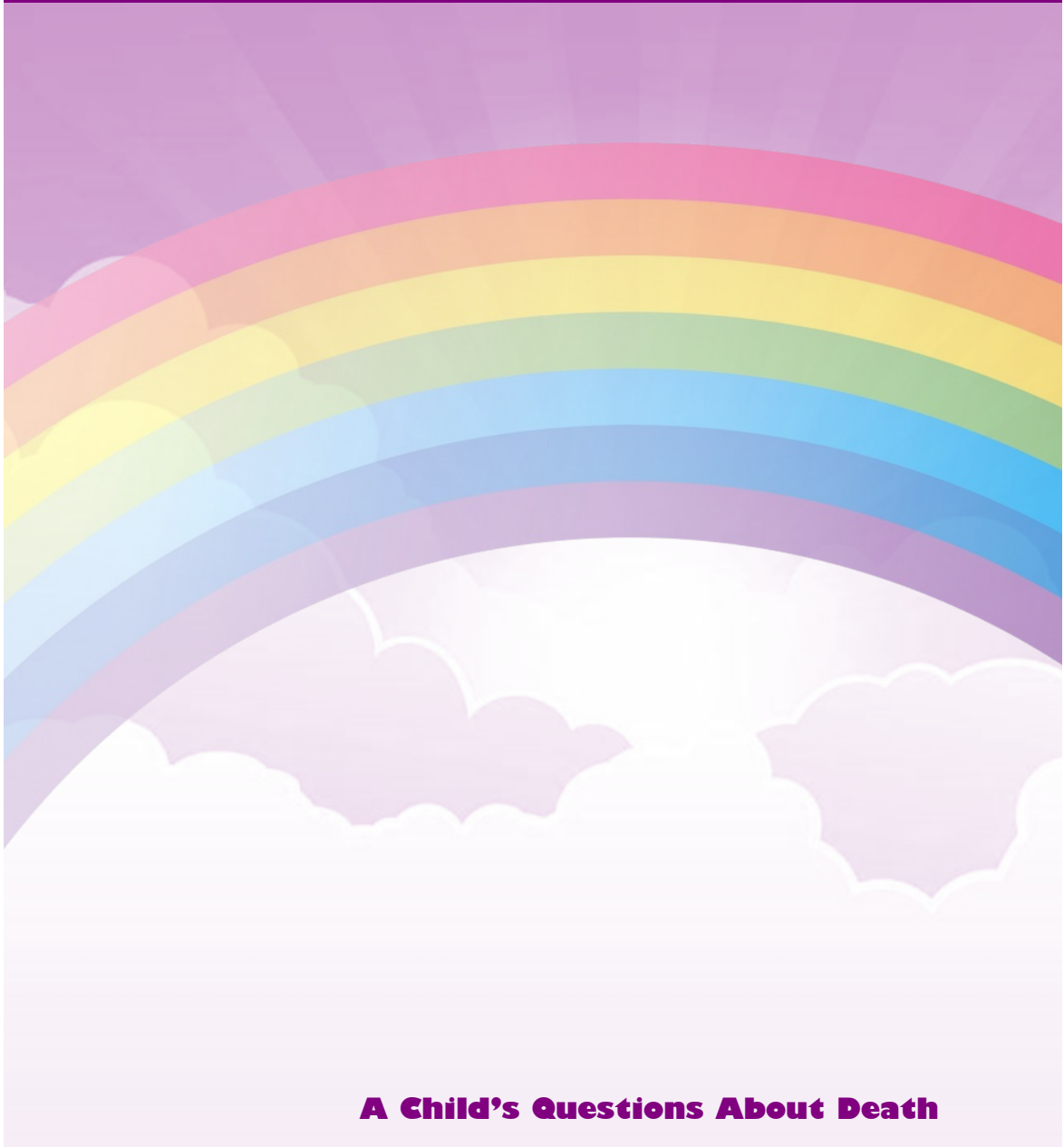


**Sayce & Bull**  
Funeral Directors



**A Child's Questions About Death**

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Death is the name we give to a very confusing part of life. We know that plants die in winter. We know that animals die too. We can understand that this is the way nature works.



But it is much, much harder to understand why people die, especially someone we love.

When someone we love dies we may feel terribly sad and want to cry, or feel afraid, or even angry. Learning about this part of life can help us feel much better.

This small book looks at some of the questions that children ask about death.

## Why do people die?

Dying is a natural part of life.

All living things - plants, animals, even people - are special parts of God's natural world.

Nature almost always gives us long, healthy lives. Like all other living things, though, people grow old and reach the end of their life.

This is called death, or dying.



## **Why can't doctors and hospitals stop someone from dying?**

Many times they do. Yet sometimes, even though they have tried their best, someone dies.



Doctors help people live long, healthy lives. Because of what doctors have learned, people live much longer now than they did when your grandparents were children.

Hospitals help people too. Doctors and nurses work in hospitals to make sick and injured people better. People go to hospitals to become healthy, not to die.



## Where do dead people go?

Most people believe that when someone dies, part of that person lives on and goes to Heaven.

This part of us is not like a heart or brain or any other part of us that doctors have to take care of. It is the part of us that lets us feel love and happiness. It never gets sick. It never wears out.

This part of us is called the spirit, or the soul. Lots of people all over the world believe that when they die their spirits, or souls, live on.

We cannot see someone's spirit. We cannot see Heaven either. But we have faith in them. Faith is believing in something that we cannot see or measure.



## **Does death hurt?**

Doctors tell us that death is not usually painful.

Dying is almost always quiet. When someone dies in an accident, they often feel no pain at all because death comes so quickly.

When someone is sick or hurt for a long time before death special medicines can take away much of the pain.

## **When someone dies are they being punished?**

Death is never a punishment.

It is almost always natural.

Time or illness wear out important parts of our bodies.

After many, many years these parts cannot work any more.

People die when these parts - the heart, for example - stop working.

God has given us wonderfully strong bodies that usually last a long time. Sometimes sickness makes them stop working before a person becomes old.

This is not a punishment, though. No one dies because God is angry with them. A person dies when an important part of their body wears out and stops working.







## **Why did someone I love have to die?**

Why couldn't it have been someone else?

Sometimes death doesn't seem fair.

Of all the people in the whole world, why did this one special person have to die?

Almost everyone, no matter who they are or where they live, is loved by others. Almost everyone will be missed by others when they die. Right now someone just like you somewhere else in the world is asking the same question; why did someone I love have to die?



## **Is death like sleeping?**

People who are dead look as if they are sleeping but dying is nothing at all like sleep.

People - animals too - sleep to rest and stay healthy.

Sleep gives hard-working parts of our bodies time to store up strength. Think of how good you feel after sleeping. You feel good because your body is rested and ready for another day.

When someone dies, their body stops working. It is not resting. Its job is over.

## **Why do some people die when they are very young?**

Sometimes, but not very often, death comes to a child. Illness can make this happen. So can a very bad accident.

A young person's death makes us feel especially unhappy. We feel that it isn't fair.



We feel that everyone should live a long, happy life. We know that we will miss a young friend, or sister, or brother more than we might miss anyone else. We may even feel sad because we sometimes argued or fought with that child. All these feelings are normal. Every young person has them, just as you do. But you must leave room for other feelings too. Remember that you often made that child happy. Maybe you did argue once in a while. All friends do that. But all friends love each other too. Even though that child's life was not as long as yours will be, it was a mostly happy life, because of loving friends like you.

**Grown-ups are big and strong.**

**Why do grown-ups die before they get old?**



Most grown-ups are strong and healthy.

They will live until they are very old.

Sometimes, though, a grown-up's heart or other important part of their body stops working.

Being big and strong doesn't always help.

It is not the person's fault.

It is not God's fault.

It is not your fault.

Remember this too: probably no other grown-up you love will die before they become very old.

## **Will I ever again see the person who has died?**



When someone dies they do not come back to life again. This is why people become so sad when someone they love dies. They miss the person who is gone. Right now you may miss someone who has died. Maybe you will always miss them. But you will probably not always feel sad about it. You will understand after a while that the person has gone to Heaven. Some people believe that Heaven is a happy place where they will meet the people they have loved who have died. So, some day, a long, long time from now, you may be with that person in Heaven.

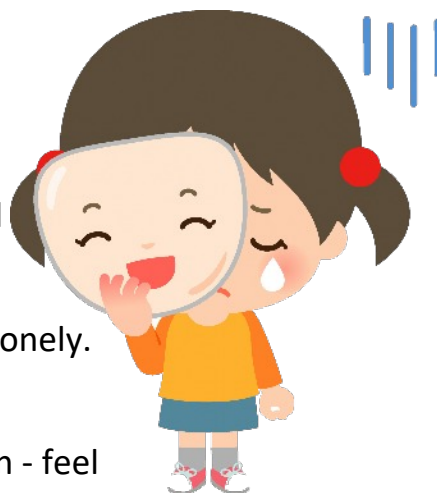
## How can I stop feeling sad?

It is natural to cry and feel sad when someone you love dies. You miss them. You may feel lonely. You may feel confused too.

Most people - not just children - feel the same way when someone they love dies.

Sadness is something like the pain you feel when you hurt yourself. At first it hurts very much. But it will hurt less each day. Sooner than you think it will be gone. Then you will be able to think about the person who has died without feeling sad.

Right now you are trying to understand more about death. This will take some of your sadness away. It helps to ask questions. It also helps very much to tell your family and friends how you feel. It helps most of all not to pretend. If you are sad, don't pretend you are not. If you aren't sad, don't try to make yourself feel that way.



## How long will I live?

No one knows how long he or she will live.

We do know that we will not live for ever. (imagine how crowded the world would be if people lived for ever!)

We know that when we grow old, death gets closer.

This does not mean that people worry all their lives about growing old and dying. As we grow older we learn more about living and dying.

How long will you live? Probably a long, long time.

Almost everyone does.



## **Do people die because they are unhappy?**

Unhappiness can sometimes make us feel sick for a while.

But almost no one dies because they are unhappy.

Remember the times when you have been unhappy? Sooner or later you feel better again. You are able to smile and laugh again.

Everyone goes through times like this.

It has nothing to do with dying.





## What Are Funerals For?

One of the nicest things about being a person is that we are able to feel love for another person.

This doesn't end when that person dies. Funerals can help us to cry and say our goodbyes to someone we love. They are for sharing loving feelings about someone who has died. They give us the chance to remember with others the goodness and joy that person brought to our lives. This takes away some of the sadness that we all feel. It also helps us understand how much others care, too.





## **What happens to a person's body when they die?**

When people die they don't need their bodies and cannot feel pain any more.

After someone dies we put their body in a coffin, which is a wooden box made especially for them. They are then taken to either a cemetery or a crematorium. These are places where we can say goodbye to the person we love. A cemetery is a quiet place where we can come and think about the person we loved. After we have said our goodbyes, their coffin is put into the ground.

Some people prefer to be taken to a crematorium after they have died. Here their bodies are made into ashes which can then be scattered in a special place.

This place might be in the gardens at the ' crematorium, or in a wood, on a hill or wherever they like especially liked to be. We i'

## **When I get older will I understand about death better than I do now?**

As we grow up we learn more about many things in life, not just death.

Think of all the things you have learned already!

As we grow up we learn more about

By the time you are a grown-up you will have learned much, much more. The more we learn about life, the better we are able to understand that part of it we call death or dying. It won't be as confusing as it is now. It won't be as hard to talk or think about.

You have already learned some important things about this part of life. You probably won't forget them. What you have learned already will help you all your life.



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