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Awareness of Dying

Barney G. Glaser, Anselm L. Strauss

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Should patients be told they are dying? How do families react when one of their members is facing death? Who should reveal that death is imminent? How does hospital staff—doctors, nurses, and attendants—act toward the dying patient and his family?

Death, as a social ritual, is one of the great turning points in human existence, but prior to this classic work, it had been subjected to little scientific study. American perspectives on death seem strangely paradoxical—the brutal fact of death is confronted daily in our newspapers yet Americans are unwilling to talk openly about the process of dying itself. *Awareness of Dying*, using a highly original theory of awareness, examines the dying patient and those about him in social interaction, it gives us a language and tools of analysis for understanding who knows what about dying, under what circumstances, and what difference it makes.

The authors use their finely detailed observations to develop theoretical constructs that will be of use in many other interactions and situations. *Awareness of Dying* was the first study of dying in hospitals, and has proven a useful handbook for chaplains, social workers, nurses, and doctors in confronting the many ethical and personal problems that arise in the dying situation. Now available in paperback, it is destined to reach new audiences interested in this key part of all life.

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