

To begin the evening

To start the evening, let's bring a sense of gratitude to the table and acknowledge our ancestors. Let's do a quick around the table introduction, to be completed with a "raise of the glass" to someone who is no longer with us, someone you admire deeply... and in no more than twenty words, share why you admire them. If you would prefer to light a candle in their honor, we have found that to be meaningful as well, some people do both.

- What do you want your epitaph to be? (Subject to changing your mind, of course.)
- Name the 3 person committee you would want consulted on any decisions about whether to continue life-prolonging treatments, like mechanical ventilation.
- Who would you want to chair that committee?
- Have you informed these people and put it in writing? If not, what's stopping you?
- If you could design your funeral, wake, or memorial, tell us what it would be like?

When we finally know we are dying, and all sentient beings are dying with us, we start to have a burning, almost heart-breaking sense of fragility and preciousness of each moment and each being, and from this can grow a deep, clear, limitless compassion for all beings. – Sogyal Rinpoche

- What stands in between you and a clear, felt sense of compassion for all living beings before you are on your deathbed?
- If you had one day to say you were sorry to anyone you wanted before you died, who would be first on your list?

An Additional Idea for Dialogue

If you want to dig deeper into the conversation, use the final portion of your evening to discuss how you want your own life to end, and how you would like to support the end-of-life wishes of those you love and care about.

End every dinner with:

An Appreciation in the Round. This is a simple game to complete the conversation and the dinner. Someone begins by selecting a person on their left, and sharing one thing they admire about that person—the circle continues until everyone has been admired once. We suggest that after the Round you break from the table, lounge on couches, or look at the stars, as a way to further sink into the connections and awareness experienced.