Alternatives to involuntary Death
Timothy Leary
Ronin Publishing
(Print and Ebook available)

Death is the ultimate taboo. We are happy to discuss sex, our private relationships, politics and social issues but when the subject of death is brought up friends and family go quiet, it is also a good way to bring an active dinner party to an immediate end, it is a true conversation killer.

*Instead of treating the last act in your life in terms of fear, weakness, and helplessness, think of it as a triumphant graduation.*

**Timothy Leary**

*Design for Dying*

Leary, celebrated sixties counter culture figure, father of psychedelics and exponent of cyber-culture, gives us a different perspective on this significant subject. He explains how a society which is based on collectivism and a fear of individualism uses the fear of death as a means of control. In our modern world religion certainly plays its part; if you do not behave in this way or that and donate and support their "pyramid insurance" scheme, you will not make it to a specific afterlife location. Worse, you may even end up in a place of eternal punishment.

These models of control are based on removing the right of an individual to makes decisions about the use of their own mind and body. These battlegrounds tend to be found in such arenas as cognitive liberty (i.e. the use of drugs), sex and death.

In this fascinating work, edited by Beverly Potter and published by Ronin Publishing, Leary argues for taking active control of our own personal death process. The book is nicely published, well-illustrated and packed with pithy and significant quotes from a variety of authors.

Leary states by discussing the way in which we are disempowered by religion and not allowed to control our own death and then discusses ways in which we can gain control through a variety of means. Leary is not only a humanist but someone who believes in an open exploration of any subject. Accordingly he takes a scientific approach to the subject but offers a wide range of alternatives.

Since science has not, as yet, developed the means to extend life indefinitely some of the solutions offered include: Life extension diets and drugs, life extending lifestyle changes, cryonic suspension, mummification and various others. He also discusses options currently at the edge of modern science including uploading our memories to a computer network, into a cyborg or having ourselves cloned.

Leary also discusses pre-death preparation, preparing our own funeral, recording life stories and the use of various techniques to stimulate the death transition.

There is also an interesting section on Andy Warhol and his choice of cryonic suspension. There are various methods including whole body or just suspending the head.

This is an excellent volume which takes a proactive approach to death. While modern man has taken control of many aspects of his life, it seems death is the final frontier and Leary, once again, had admirably led the way.

**Ronin Publications**

Web: [http://www.roninpub.com/](http://www.roninpub.com/)
Design for Dying was published in the United States in 1997, a year after Timothy Leary died. Although most of the book is written from Leary's point of view, R. U. Sirius played a major part in editing it, shaping various essays and notes of Leary's into a coherent text. Sirius's voice is as prominent as Leary's. The book resembles a casebook in form, with three major sections labeled "Living," "Dying," and "Designer Dying," and an addendum. In Design for Dying, his newly released book, Leary shows people how to die happily and well. "There are common-sense, easy-to-understand options for dealing planfully, playfully, compassionately, and elegantly with the inevitable final scene," he states. "Face it. At this point in human history, we're all terminal. It behooves us to focus some time and energy and courage on regaining personal and group autonomy over the dying process. Talking about death is the last taboo in our society. Design for Dying is a series of eight short courses that can help you prepare for the end of life. It can help you overcome anxieties and work through important choices about your own death and dying. It includes content and activities for you to do at your own pace. Design for Dying is for individuals or for groups exploring end of life questions. It can be used by people working on their own or by mental health professionals working with clients. What are the Benefits? Discover 51 Dying designs on Dribbble. Your resource to discover and connect with designers worldwide. Dying. Inspirational designs, illustrations, and graphic elements from the world's best designers. View Reflecting on oneself. Directed by John Peyser. With Mike Connors, Gail Fisher, Barbara Rush, Dennis Patrick. Newspaper publisher Darrell Bigelow has political ambitions, but is concerned about the extramarital activities of his wife, Rebekah. Bigelow hires Joe Mannix to "bring her home," and Mannix is soon able to track her down. But his easy success in closing the case soon leads Mannix to suspect that Bigelow's story was a cover-up, and that he used Mannix for a different, and much darker, purpose.