

We fear death, but what if dying isn't as bad as we think?

July 26, 2017

The Guardian:

“The idea of death, the fear of it, haunts the human animal like nothing else,” wrote Earnest Becker in his book, *The Denial of Death*. It’s a fear strong enough to compel us to force kale down our throats, run sweatily on a treadmill at 7am on a Monday morning, and show our genitals to a stranger with cold hands and a white coat if we feel something’s a little off.

But our impending end isn’t just a benevolent supplier of healthy behaviours. Researchers have found death can determine our prejudices, whether we give to charity or wear sun cream, our desire to be famous, what type of leader we vote for, how we name our children and even how we feel about breastfeeding.

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But we don’t need to worry so much, according to new research comparing our perception of what it’s like to die with the accounts people facing imminent death. Researchers analysed the writing of regular bloggers with either terminal cancer or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) who all died over the course of the study, and compared it to blog posts written by a group of participants who were told to imagine they had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and only had only a few months to live. They looked for general feelings of positivity and negativity, and words describing positive and negative emotions including happiness, fear and terror.

Read the whole story: [The Guardian](#)