
ABSTRACT

How childhood cancer survivors form their view of life and death

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The purpose of this study was to investigate how childhood-cancer-survivors (CCS) form an outlook on life and death through their survival. We conducted semi-structured interviews for ten young adult CCSs, and analyzed their words using the TEM (Trajectory Equifinality Model). The results suggest that near-death experiences not only during their hospitalization but also after discharge, and having prepared for death as well as psychological coping with the fear of death, helped them realize that although they relied on medical staff and parents, they had to endure the suffering alone. They realized gratitude to others for their lives. Further, they were emboldened to survive by the death of their fellow patients. Psychological distress and pain suffered and experienced as children, and necessary support in the future were also discussed. As one faced his own death and heard about the death of fellow patients, it is suggested that CCSs views of life and death not only deepened their acceptance of death itself but also transformed them so they could integrate both life and death into their lives.

Key Words: childhood-cancer-survivors, life and death, TEM (Trajectory Equifinality Model)
