

P03-557

ABSTRACTING THE TRIAD OF DEATH, EXISTENCE AND ADJUSTMENT TO DEATH:  
DEATH AND ADJUSTMENT HYPOTHESES

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Viewed from a naturalistic and scientific perspective, death appears to represent the permanent cessation of human existence, contributing to the widespread experience of death anxiety. The present argument attempts to deconstruct this argument on epistemological grounds by analyzing

- 1) the prevailing universal concept of death in naturalistic discourse,
  - 2) the issue of our adjustment to this presumed reality, and
  - 3) the relationship between existence and death in the context of their social evolution.
- Integrating this conceptual analysis with empirical observations, the paper then explores the contrasting postulate, namely that death may not be the end of our existence, and the moral implications of this alternative assumption. This position, termed the "death adjustment hypotheses," would seem to offer an alternative grounding for theory and research in Thanatology.