



What Dying People Want: Practical Wisdom For The End Of Life

By David Kuhl

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Facing death results in more fear and anxiety than any other human experience. Though much has been done to address the physical pain suffered by those with a terminal illness, Western medicine has been slow to understand and alleviate the psychological and spiritual distress that comes with the knowledge of death. In *What Dying People Want*, Dr. David Kuhl begins to bridge that gap by addressing end-of-life realities--practical and emotional--through his own experiences as a doctor and through the words and experiences of people who knew that they were dying.

Dr. Kuhl presents ways of finding new life in the process of dying, understanding the inner reality of living with a terminal illness, and addressing the fear of pain, as well as pain itself. He also offers concrete guidance on how to enhance doctor/patient relationships and hold family meetings, and provides an introduction to the process of life review.

It is possible to find meaning and peace in the face of death. *What Dying People Want* "helps us learn to view the knowledge of death as a gift, not a curse." (*New Times*)

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The introduction in this wise book mentions something that author David Kuhl learned from his years of working with the terminally ill: "I didn't know how to talk to them about dying." In *What Dying People Want*, Kuhl shares his education on this topic by focusing on the daily experience of patients who are learning how to broach such discussions with their caregivers and families while coming to terms with their own mortality.

Heart-wrenching personal stories are intertwined with practical suggestions, and specific instances are frequently used to illustrate techniques, processes, and the importance of telling your story, rather than assuming your family already knows it. Kuhl focuses particularly on coming to terms with one's past. Discussions of family histories, lifelong priorities, and difficult choices are emphasized as tools for making peace among family members and with one's own conscience.

The daily life of pain management and support groups is also covered in detail, and Kuhl offers plenty of suggestions on how to begin that difficult conversation in which death is first acknowledged as a rapidly approaching fact. Written for patients and caregivers as well as friends and family, this useful guide will help everyone involved navigate the twists and turns of terminal illness. --*Jill Lightner*

From Library Journal

Drawing from case studies that he conducted as part of the Soros Foundation's "Death in America" project, Kuhl provides a balanced perspective on caring for the terminally ill. An M.D. himself, he acknowledges that doctors sometimes have poor interpersonal skills, and he offers helpful insight into why this is so and how patients can foster better communication. Besides discussing the physician's account of the clinical aspects of the dying process, Kuhl sensitively examines the harder-to-define psychological and spiritual issues. Unfortunately, he often focuses too much on certain patients whose stories are interesting but perhaps less applicable to the average person. Written for a general audience, this book will also fit well into medical libraries and other healthcare collections. Kuhl's research makes a good companion to Cynthia Pearson and Margaret L. Stubbs's *Parting Company: Understanding the Loss of a Loved One*. [The Soros Foundation, named after Hungarian American philanthropist George Soros, is a group of nonprofit organizations dedicated to creating and sustaining open societies around the world. Ed.] Annette Haines, Art & Design Field Lib., Anne Arbor, M.

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Review

"[A]n all-encompassing guide for people with a terminal illness and those who know someone who is dying." -- *New York Times*

Users Review

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Teresa Ealy:

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