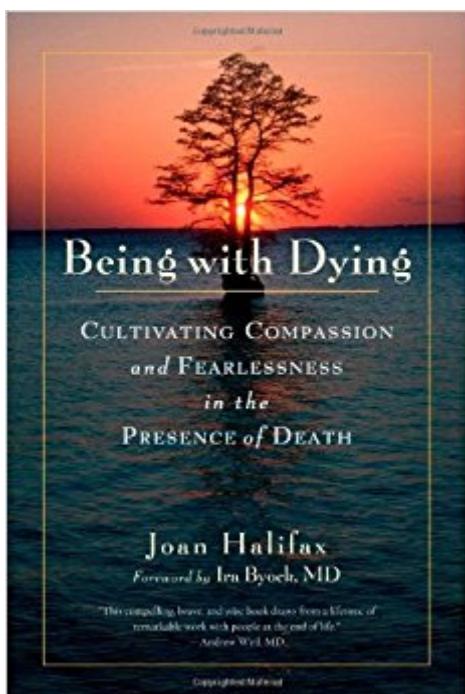


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Being With Dying: Cultivating Compassion And Fearlessness In The Presence Of Death



Synopsis

The Buddhist approach to death can be of great benefit to people of all backgrounds—as has been demonstrated time and again in Joan Halifax's decades of work with the dying and their caregivers. Inspired by traditional Buddhist teachings, her work is a source of wisdom for all those who are charged with a dying person's care, facing their own death, or wishing to explore and contemplate the transformative power of the dying process. Her teachings affirm that we can open and contact our inner strength, and that we can help others who are suffering to do the same.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In this moving meditation on palliative care, Halifax tells a story about a dying Zen teacher who confesses to his students: Maybe I will die in fear or pain. Remember there is no right way. This sentiment forms the core of a book that provides practical and philosophical guidance to caregivers. Drawing on her 30 years of experience in the contemplative care of the dying, Halifax honestly enumerates the challenges of being with the dying while exalting it as a school for unlearning the patterns of resistance... [it] enjoins us to be still, let go, listen, and be open to the unknown.

According to Halifax, bearing witness to dying can teach innumerable lessons to the living—assuming we give up our tight control strategies, our ideas of what it means to die well. Halifax is a Zen priest, and while many of her teachings derive from Buddhism, her supremely readable book will attract readers of all faiths who will appreciate her clarity and compassion and the

poignancy of these stories of ordinary people facing their final hours with quiet courage. (June)

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“A moving meditation on palliative care. . . . A supremely readable book that will attract readers of all faiths who will appreciate her clarity and compassion and the poignancy of these stories of ordinary people facing their final hours with quiet courage.”
•Publishers Weekly
“This compelling, brave, and wise book draws from a lifetime of remarkable work with people at the end of life.”
•Andrew Weil, MD
“Joan Halifax has a knack for straight talk and sublime insight.”
•a no-holds-barred approach to life,
“Joan Halifax has a knack for straight talk and sublime insight.”
•Daniel Goleman, author of Emotional Intelligence
“This book is a gift of wisdom and practical guidance for living.”
•Ira Byock, MD, author of Dying Well and The Four Things That Matter Most

Good book for those who are dealing with death and dying either from a caretaker or individual suffering from a terminal illness. As a Buddhist it reminded me that compassion and being present are perhaps the most important gifts we can give someone regardless of our situation. I am reminded that "Tonglen" is of utmost importance in the presence of those who are dying. Tonglen: breathe in the bitter and foul and breath out the sweet (paraphrasing of course!)

I purchased this book when my mother first went on Hospice care. It is very thought provoking and I was fortunate to have some of the hospice staff to talk with about many of those thoughts. However, it is not just for such times: This book can be a great help in learning to take stock of what is truly important in life - we are all dying, just do not know when. I hope when I die I can do it with grace not just for myself but for my children and this book was quite good in helping me sort through obstacles to that goal.

Joan Halifax's truly deep, profound and indeed absolutely transcendental work herein, is one of the greatest gifts available to those who are involved in this area of care. Central to this book, the importance of equanimity, wisdom used wisely upon compassion is the very basis and from which, the incredible and most experienced minds making this book clearly one of the most vital reads. Each paragraph and age takes one through the direct experience of a foremost guiding master in

the art, of Being with Dying. Utterly First Rate, More than Highly Recommended.. Thankyou, Gassho !

This book is written very well. It has great stories and perspective, helpful suggestions and thoughtful approaches when experiencing death or the dying process. I found it very helpful to prepare myself, be more present for my family and understand my feelings and those of others. It helped me to make the most of my situation and to feel good about what I was experiencing.

If you need or want to help someone who is dying, read this book. If you are concerned about handling your own death, read this book. It is filled with invaluable advice and stories to help you and the dying. We read it as a study group and the conversation was excellent. Death is part of life. Avoiding that reality will only lead to greater suffering. You owe it to your loved ones to know about dying and to prepare.

It's hard to categorize this beautiful book. It's about being a caretaker for the dying, but also about being present for ourselves in our own lives. Halifax practices zen buddhism, which I usually find remote and off-putting, but she gives the practice a real human and compassionate face. She is an excellent writer and I was sorry when the book ended. I look forward to reading her other books.

This thoughtful book is pleasure to read. I would recommend it to anyone who works in a caring capacity with the dying, as well as to those interested in thinking about their own mortality. It has a great deal of content, and I plan to read it at least once more as there is much to absorb. Halifax elucidates three key approaches to being with those who are dying: "Not knowing", "Bearing witness" and "compassionate action".

Would highly recommend this book just as good reading for reflection. Loved her thoughts, her writing style and the meditations at the end of each chapter. Even though Joan Halifax is a Zen Priest, the book is entirely appropriate for all, no matter the belief or spirituality. Several of us read the book at the same time and each person ended up with their "favorite" chapter. We are also using it as a guide for a weekend spiritual retreat.

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