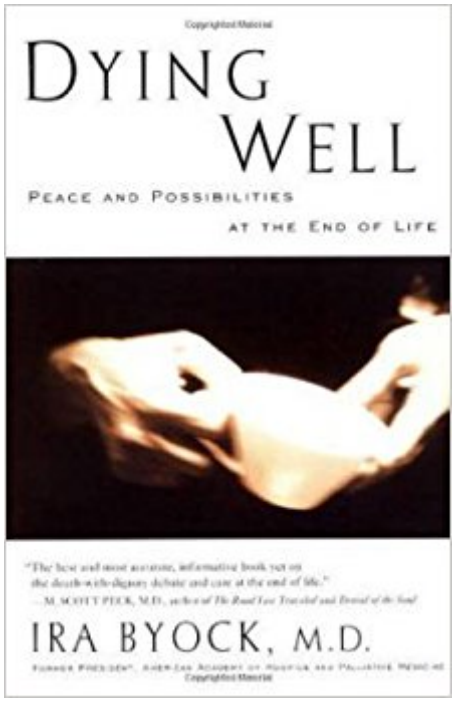
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Dying Well: Peace And Possibilities At The End Of Life



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Synopsis

From Ira Byock, prominent palliative care physician and expert in end of life decisions, a lesson in Dying Well. Nobody should have to die in pain. Nobody should have to die alone. This is Ira Byock's dream, and he is dedicating his life to making it come true. Dying Well brings us to the homes and bedsides of families with whom Dr. Byock has worked, telling stories of love and reconciliation in the face of tragedy, pain, medical drama, and conflict. Through the true stories of patients, he shows us that a lot of important emotional work can be accomplished in the final months, weeks, and even days of life. It is a companion for families, showing them how to deal with doctors, how to talk to loved onesÃ¢â ¬â •and how to make the end of life as meaningful and enriching as the beginning. Ira Byock is also the author of The Best Care Possible: A Physician's Quest to Transform Care Through the End of Life.

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Riverhead Books; 1 edition (March 1, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1573226572

ISBN-13: 978-1573226578

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 160 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #28,454 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #8 inÃ Â Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Hospice Care #23 inÃ Â Books > Medical Books > Administration & Medicine Economics > Health Policy #36 inÃ Â Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Alternative Medicine > Holistic

Customer Reviews

On his deathbed, faced with creditors and unpaid bills, Oscar Wilde said despairingly, "I am dying beyond my means!" If only the poor, beleaguered genius had read this book! None of us gets out of here alive, but reading this book will lessen your fear of the ultimate end and give you some guidance about enjoying your life to the fullest right up until your final moment. Do people really enjoy life in the face of death? People do. The stories of individuals in Dr. Byock's book will move and inspire you to change your feelings about the end of your life, and also your feelings about your life in the present. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This study of how to die well displays uncommon vitality. Byock, president elect of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Care, is a gifted storyteller. Beginning with his own father's terminal illness, he details without scientific cant the process of decline that awaits most of us. The case studies, which form the humanistic soul of this work, never devolve into the maudlin or saccharine. Life on the edge of the great crossing is explored in all its sadness and pathos, but Byock also makes room for wisdom, hope and even the joy of final understanding. By recounting the passages of patients in his Missoula, Mont., practice, Byock makes a forceful case for hospice care and against physician-assisted suicide. He demonstrates how the physical pain and emotional despair of the dying may be handled. The family constellation of the terminally ill is also analyzed, with emphasis on a hospice's ability, through its doctors, nurses, psychologists and social workers, to help those left behind. Not only is this book informative, especially the question-and-answer section at the end, it is also insightful. Readers will sense Byock's personal growth as his understanding of final issues flowers through a 20-year specialization. Byock recalls his growth from a callow resident to a concerned son and, finally, to a healer with a mission. Whether it's the middle-aged mother who must resolve disillusionment with her sister, the bitter father of three who achieves serenity or the gutsy teenage girl with a rare genetic disease, the people whose sojourns Byock recounts receive from him the dignity they merit. German rights to Kinder Verlag; author tour. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Having lost a few friends recently, i was looking for something that would connect the dots for me, loss, grieving, dying, meaning. Once ordered, i couldnt stop reading, the personal stories of loss, bereavement, grief, and how death can be transformational not just for the dying but for the survivors, are powerful stories. After wards, i think the stories remind me of our humanity, how fragile life can be, only one step away from tragedy, how we must all succumb to nature, the science of keeping dying people alive, managing pain medication. I think at the end of it all, it is about dying well, looking back at my own life, to know or at least have some sense of knowing that i did live well, not to have regrets about not having done this or that, or missed this or that, that given the time that was allotted to one's own life, that i made the best of it, good and bad, challenging or successful, and not having wasted time, or let time fritter away what could have been opportunities. Also, the book reminds me of how important family, and good friends are, that when you are suffering and dying, trying to manage through the pain and suffering, the distance between being

sick and death itself, that there is somebody who is willing to help, willing to step and look after you, instead of dying alone, there is someone you can talk to, chat about, share the last moments of beauty with, the simple things of existence, I think dying alone and unloved must be the most terrible death, knowing that everything you have materially dont amount to a hill of beans, when there is nobody who will miss you, miss your prescence, mourn your absence. When you are gone, you no longer exist, except only in the minds of the people, who wanna remember you, who mourn you, who miss you, you can only live on in their memories.

This book has been difficult to read, because facing death is difficult. The manner of our dying is as unique as the manner of our living, and having a choice in the way we spend our final days is important. This book gives a glimpse into the life of hospice physician, Dr. Ira Byock. In it, he shares the stories of patients (including his own father) and families who are "exploring the inherently human experience of dying."This is a GREAT read for those who are themselves dying, for people who are caring for someone who is actively dying, or for those who are searching for answers; death needn’t be a painful, lonely experience.I was often moved by Dr. Byock’s words of wisdom to his patients; that it was okay to die at home, surrounded by family, it was okay to stop eating and drinking if one wasn’t hungry or thirsty, it was okay to hold onto those the things which define us; having our nails done, wearing nice pyjamas, smelling good, craving the touch of others, being read to, participating in conversations, feeling valued.More importantly, this book showed me that there is still a possibility to learn, to heal our minds and hearts, to forgive others and OURSELVES, to express love and compassion, and to find purpose and meaning behind our lives while dying or while caring for someone who is. Spending time with someone at the end of their life, whether the person is conscious or not, is beneficial to all parties involved.Please read this book, though you may need tissues...and perhaps a glass of wine.

Excellent book about end of life decisions, care, conversations and how to love and connect. I read this for a medical social work class but it is a really interesting read if you are old, dying, or know someone who is. Written by a physician who has a real heart for his patients.

I’m the kind of person whose eyes start to glaze over if I try to absorb more than a few pages of social science/self help type writing. I was steered to this book when I was helping my mother as she died. I had so little experience with death that I worried about doing the wrong thing. As I read the stories I was drawn in, absorbing each small "message" with each story. One, about a man

whose final gift to his family was to allow them to help him as he died, touched me so deeply I read it to my mother in her last days. I wish I'd read this book earlier but I don't think it could ever be too late.

I believe Dr. Byock, MD defines death, and some of the things you go through very explicid. Which I believe is a good thing, because most medical Dr's don't want to even go that route. They don't want to "loose the battle ", when in all actual reality You're the one loosing the battle, if that's what you want to call it. He finally sees people and patients for who and what they are. I've read many of the other books mentioned in the book, so I was able to understand early on, where he was coming from. I believe A Must Read....and then for him to write down Questions and answers, and places to go for treatment is a big plus. Thank You Dr. Byock for your wealth of Information! Debbie Feighner/Fort Wayne, IN

This is written by a hospice doctor, giving us the benefit of his years of experience with the dying. The outstanding part of this book is his case study of individual patients and their families during the saga of death. Many a chapter brought tears to my eyes. And it also reads like a mystery story in that you turn the next page to see what is going to happen next. At the end of the book is an invaluable FAQ section (that was worth the price by itself).I bought the book so as to know how to better relate with relatives that have the big C. I was looking for some understanding of what they might be feeling and how to talk to them, things that I might do to ease their mental anguish rather than add to it by inept, uncaring action. This book delivers in all respects and is one you may re-read from time to time for its striking insights.All of us are in the process of dying, some of us are just closer than others - keep that in mind and buy this book.

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