Peace at Last:
Stories of Hope and Healing for Veterans, Families, & Ourselves

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When the power of love
Overcomes the love of power
Then, and only then,
Shall we have peace.
-Anonymous

World Peace

Peace for Veterans

Forgiveness at the Wall
INTERVENTIONS: Combat Vets

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(Integrative Letter Writing: Peace within Ourselves

Successful Suffering?
Grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
The Courage
to change the things I can,
And the Wisdom
to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time.
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace.
(-Reinhold Niebuhr)

Never too Late to Say, “I’m Sorry.”

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("Burning Vision", Artist: Tommy Bills)

--Henri Nowen
(Wounded Healer)
Beholding Peace at the End of Life

Display Rack in Waiting rooms
Together, with their families, we help people die healed.

Death is part of the healing process.

Current Death Rate?
1 per person

Healing vs. Curing?

7 Tasks of Living and Dying Healed
Forgive me
I forgive you
I love you
Thank you
Good-bye
Let go
Open Up
“Pretend like you died today. What would be left unsaid and undone?”

What if dying isn’t the worst thing that could happen?

Prognosis is important because we live our lives differently when we are given one.

Outcome Measures

“I’m packed up, prayed up, and ready to go”.
- Hospice patient

“I had supervised Hospice for years, but I had no idea what they really did. On the outside looking in, Hospice felt like a stone I carried in my pocket, weighing me down. Then, I became the Medical Director for Hospice. What I discovered was that stone was really a precious gem. Hospice saved my life.”
- John Frutchey MD
Chief Geriatrics & Extend Care
Bay Pines VAMC

A Room with a View
A Team of Care

“When are the girls coming back?”

“I want to go to church.”

Church came to you...
Singing “How Great Thou Art”

Chaplain Dan praying...

“Is he married?”

Singing “I come to the garden.”

“Good-bye calls with Morgan, Susie, Natalie, Teresa, Ben, Jeff, Ferol, Sheryl.”

“This is just beautiful.”
Drawing Pictures for Mimi

“I’m so lucky.”

Singing a Song to Mimi

“You’re going to make a good nurse.”

“I’m so lucky.”
“This is so good that I’m not going anywhere.”

“I love my Indian friend. She visits me every week.”

“This is so great.”

Nurse sleeping on the job...

“I’m so happy.”
“We'll never find another friend like Lorraine.”

Our Chief Cook...

“...and Nurse.”

“You've got such a great family Debbie.”

She died peacefully.
It was a good ending.
It was healing for all of us.
You only get to die once.
Don't miss the opportunity to be present.

Suffering Redeemed...
Suffering Waiting to be Redeemed

Redeem your suffering and experience healing in your life.
Then you will have Peace at Last.

Forgiveness at the Wall

HEALING PROCESSES:
Abiding: Opening up to things we'd prefer to run from
Reckoning: Confronting difficult issues honestly and courageously
Beholding: Shifting/ Breakthrough Hope for a different future without fear.

Lorraine Acompora
LPN

Personal Reflections

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Deborah L. Grassman
Paradox

Talking about death gets us freed up rather than running from it and letting fear control us.

Dying People are fertile ground for healing.

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves”.

Viktor Frankl

(Corollary: If we are unwilling to change, we will vainly attempt to change unchangeable situations)

“Sorrow is better than laughter, because a sad face is good for the heart. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning.” - Ecclesiastes 7:3-4

“I don’t want to take their hope away.”

How does lying to people increase their hope?
Are there adverse effects to enabling denial?
How many here hope to be prepared for their death so nothing is left unsaid or undone?
How many here hope to die healed?
Are these hopes legitimate?
When someone is nearing the end of life, which is a more legitimate hope: to prepare yourself and your family for your death or to pretend that death is not going to come?
End-of-life Strategy: What’s Yours?

We all have a chronic, FATAL illness...