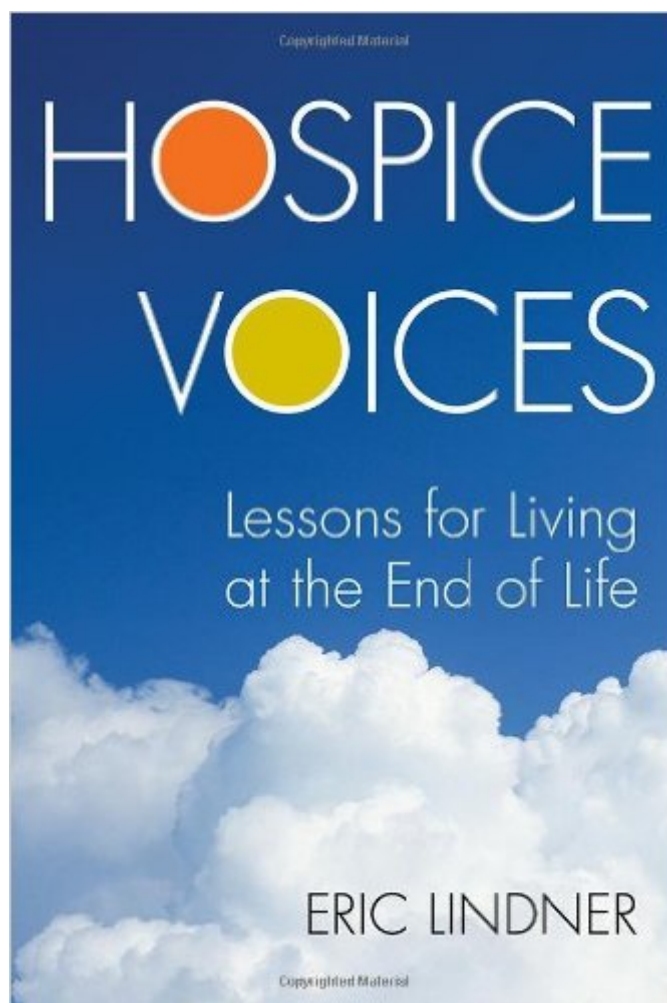


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Hospice Voices: Lessons For Living At The End Of Life



Synopsis

As a part-time hospice volunteer, Eric Lindner provides companion care to dying strangers. They're chatterboxes and recluses, religious and irreligious, battered by cancer, congestive heart failure, Alzheimer's, old age. Some cling to life amazingly. Most pass as they expected. In telling his story, Lindner reveals the thoughts, fears, and lessons of those living the ends of their lives in the care of others, having exhausted their medical options or ceased treatment for their illnesses. In each chapter, Lindner not only reveals the lessons of lives explored in their final days, but zeroes in on how working for hospice can be incredibly fulfilling. As he's not a doctor, nurse, or professional social worker, just a volunteer lending a hand, offering a respite for other care providers, his charges often reveal more, and in more detail, to him than they do to those with whom they spend the majority of their time. They impart what they feel are life lessons as they reflect on their own lives and the prospect of their last days. Lindner captures it all in his lively storytelling. Anyone who knows or loves someone working through end of life issues, living in hospice or other end of life facilities, or dealing with terminal or chronic illnesses, will find in these pages the wisdom of those who are working through their own end of life issues, tackling life's big questions, and boiling them down into lessons for anyone as they age or face illness. And those who may feel compelled to volunteer to serve as companions will find motivation, inspiration, and encouragement. Rather than sink under the weight of depression, pity, or sorrow, Lindner celebrates the lives of those who choose to live even as they die.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When I was approached to review Hospice Voices, I jumped at the chance. Since I have been a social worker for many years and worked in group homes while attending university, working or volunteering in a caring profession was something I could personally relate to. Many would read the title and that Eric volunteered in Hospice and conclude that this book would be depressing. Let me tell you, it is not. Sure, it is sad when the people, Eric spent time with died but they died with dignity. Something hospice makes possible. Eric talked about the orientation process he went through. It was explained that most people who are dying are lonely. Their friends don't know how to talk to them so often don't visit them at all. The hospice volunteer helps this immensely. Eric came to really care about the patients and families he has worked with and has kept in touch with many of the families even after the passing of his patients. He, the families, and the patients, themselves are great examples for the enduring human spirit. Eric learned important lessons for the people he spent time with and has passed those lessons on in this very touching and beautifully written book. While reading this I realized that I was a hospice volunteer without realizing it. When I was young, in 9th and 10th grade, I used to visit a neighbor of ours. Here's a little background. When I was little I used to ride my bike around the block. I was too little to go somewhere on my own so I just went round and round the block. An elderly couple, the Johnsons' used to sit outside and watch me and smile and wave when I passed them. I always smiled and waved back. One day I decided to try to talk to them and they were so sweet. After Mr Johnson passed I kept in touch with Mrs Johnson.

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