

# 生命提昇

2013年7月  
(逢單月月初出版)  
雙月刊  
第十八期

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Nearing The End of Life:  
A Guide for Relatives and  
Friends of the Dying





# Nearing the End of Life: A Guide for Relatives and Friends of the Dying (10)

By Sue Brayne and Dr Peter Fenwick

- The Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited hereby acknowledges the kind authorization, with a written permission, by the two authors to publish their following two publications in our English and Chinese bilingual magazine "Life Enlightenment" for a wider circulation to the general public, namely:
- (1) Nearing the End of Life: A Guide for Relatives and Friends of the Dying;
  - (2) End-of-Life Experiences: A Guide for Carers of the Dying.

## Short Introduction of Both Authors

### Sue Brayne MA, Post Grad Dip Couns, PGCE



Sue Brayne originally qualified as a State Registered Nurse. She went onto train as a **Life, Death, and Transition Facilitator** with the Elizabeth Kubler-Ross Foundation. After completing an **MA in the Rhetoric and Rituals of Death** in 2001, Sue began working with Dr Peter Fenwick as a Honorary Researcher into end-of-life experiences. She has several academic papers published on end-of-life experiences and provides educational workshops for carers, relatives and friends on the dying experience and spiritual aspects of the end-of-life care. Sue is also a psychotherapist, specializing in **trauma and bereavement work**, and is a trained **Further Education teacher**.

### Dr Peter Fenwick BA (Cantab), MBBChir (Cantab), FRCPsych



Dr Peter Fenwick is a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and has worked mainly in the field of **neuropsychiatry and epilepsy**. He has held Consultant posts at St Thomas's Hospital, the Westminster Hospital and for many years at the Maudsley Hospital and Kings College Institute of Psychiatry, the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford, and now at the Department of Neuropsychiatry at Southampton University. Currently, he is the Honorary Clinical Consultant neurophysiologist at Broadmoor Hospital, and Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Psychiatry, University of Southampton, UK. He has a long standing interest in End-of-Life Experiences (ELEs), as well as in Near-Death Experiences (NDEs), and featured in the first UK documentary film shown on NDEs in 1987. He is now leading a multi-disciplinary project, researching End-of-Life Experiences and their importance for the dying and the bereaved.

## Suggestion For Friends

It is important for you to be able to say your goodbyes to your dying friend. Even so, for some families it can be difficult to accept friends being present during the dying process. Other families will be delighted and relieved to have you there. You may need to feel your way through this.

Providing the right kind of support to relatives of the dying is important, as well as being non-judgmental about how relatives and other friends may be emotionally affected by what is happening. It's little acts of kindness that count, and will be remembered.

### What to do:

- Check with family if it's okay to say your goodbyes in person. You may want to do this on your own, or while family members are present. Just let them know what you would prefer.
- If you are able to, offer to sit with your dying friend. This can be very comforting for families. **Be sure you feel able to provide this support**, as being with someone who is dying can be hard emotional work.
- Send regular short texts or emails to relatives, without expectation of an answer. It is comforting for the family to know you are thinking of them.
- Offer to baby-sit, cook meals for the family, or to fetch and carry youngsters to and from school. You may be needed to take other relatives to see the dying person.
- Don't take offence if you are not wanted! The offer of unconditional help is often enough.

### What not to do:

- **Don't send Get Well cards** when you know someone is dying. It can be very upsetting for relatives to read them.
- **Don't expect relatives to spend hours on the phone talking to you.** They will have enough to do caring for their dying relative.
- **Don't expect** relatives to engage in conversations that do not revolve around the dying person, or the care they are getting.
- **Don't ask** questions of a dying person who is too ill to respond. It can be stressful for them to try to communicate with you.
- Don't be falsely jolly. Be sensitive and **be yourself**.

## SUMMARY

It's okay to be afraid of facing the death of your relative or friend. But **the gift of being prepared to face it with them is priceless.**

- Remember that hearing often continues to the end.
- Remember just how awkward many people, and even medical professionals, still are with death.
- You may be involved in difficult decisions about life-prolonging treatments.
- Try as far as possible to make sure that the dying person is cared for in a quiet and loving environment.
- Be aware that death can bring up unresolved family issues that may have lain dormant for a long time.
- Be willing to be open and receptive to your relative or friend wanting to talk about their dying process. If you feel you cannot do this, do talk to carers who can support you.
- Listen to what your friend or relative wants or needs, and try to ensure that those needs are met.
- Listen to what the dying person is describing during the last weeks and days of life, and be supportive to whatever is happening for them. It is their dying process.
- Help to create a sacred space as they enter their dying process – perhaps with gentle massage, or lighting candles, or playing beautiful music.
- If appropriate, be open to being there at the end, knowing this can be one of life's most enriching experiences.
- You may – or may not – experience strange phenomena around the time of death.
- After being with someone who has died, be aware that you may feel strangely disconnected from reality for a period of time, and that you may find yourself asking questions about your own life.
- If at any time, and especially after several months, you feel caught up with grief and unable to move forward, do seek help from a professional counsellor.

## And Finally ...

We hope this Guide may help you to face the challenges of being with relatives or friends as they journey from life into death.

It is never an easy time, and there is always much to reflect upon. But, **being present at the time of death can be a profoundly rich and moving experience, on many levels.**

We wish you well whatever you are dealing with, and hope you find **peaceful acceptance** within this extraordinary adventure.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

- Death, Dying and Bereavement.* The Open University and Sage Publishing. 1993.
- Death-Bed Visions: the Psychical Experience of the Dying.* WF Barratt. London. Bantam. 1926.
- End-of-Life Experiences: A Guide for Carers of the Dying.* Sue Brayne and Peter Fenwick
- Facing Death and Finding Hope.* Christine Longaker. New York. Main Street Books. 1997.
- Gentle Dying.* Felicity Warner. London. Hay House. 2008.
- Grief Mourning and Ritual.* Open University Press. 2001.
- Living and Dying with Cancer.* Angela Armstrong-Coster. Cambridge University Press. 2004.
- Noch mal Leben Vor Dem Tod.* Beate Lakotta and Walter Schells. Munich. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt. 2004.
- On Death and Dying.* Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. New York. Routledge. 1970.
- Recognising the Spiritual Needs in People Who Are Dying.* Rachel Stanworth. Oxford University Press. 2004.
- Sacred Dying.* Megory Anderson. New York. Marlow & Company. 2004.
- The Dying Process.* Julia Lawton. London. Routledge. 2000.
- The Natural Death Handbook.* Josephine Speyer and Stephanie Wienrich. Random Books. 2003
- What Happens When We Die.* Sam Parnia. Hay Publishing. 2007

## WHERE TO FIND HELP AND ADVICE

### Age Concern Head Office

Tel:0800 00 99 66 – open 7 day a week

URL: [www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/contactus.asp](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/contactus.asp)

### Citizen's Advice

Contact your local branch

### Clinical Nurse Specialists – palliative care

Contact you local hospice for details

### Cruse Bereavement Head Office

0208 9404818

### Macmillan Nurses

Contact your local hospice or GP for details

### Palliative Care Teams

Contact your local hospital or Health Care Authority for details

### The Natural Death Centre

Helpline: 0871 288 2098

URL: [www.naturaldeath.org.uk](http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk)

### The Samaritans

Contact your local branch

### Sue Brayne

Workshops for cares, relatives and friends of the dying experience and the spiritual aspects of end-of-life care.

Email: [sue@braynework.com](mailto:sue@braynework.com)

[www.d-word.co.uk](http://www.d-word.co.uk)

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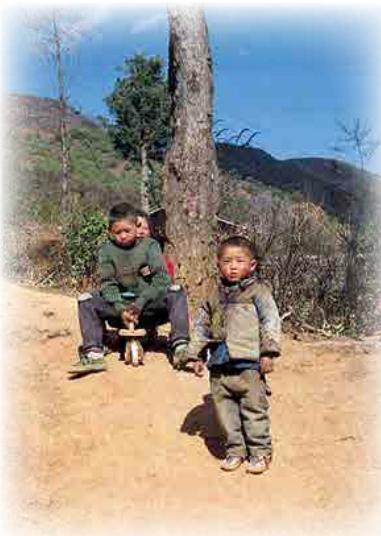


# The Project on the "Life Enlightenment Hospital"

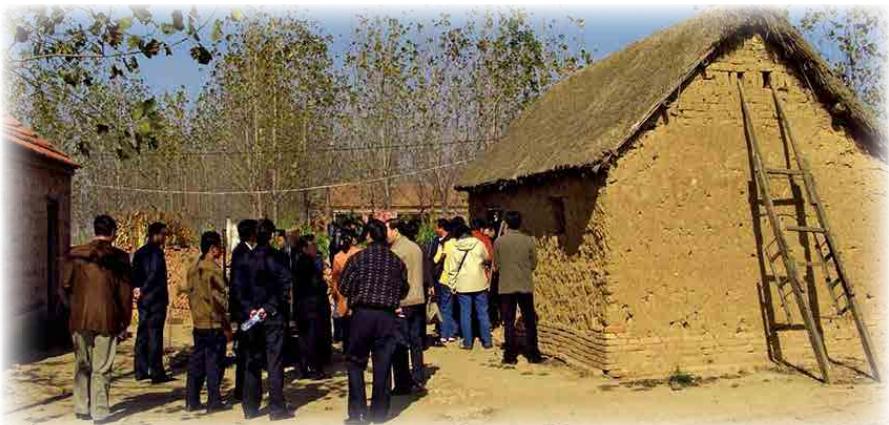
The notion and plan of the "Life Enlightenment Hospital" is a totally new, innovative and unique large project on medical services. The core of the project is initially to establish a full service private hospital with 260 beds. Besides the provisions of general medical care, it will also provide **an innovative integrated holistic caring service** that has never been provided by hospitals and other institutions before. This unique kind of "**end-of-life care**" will comprise of the following:

1. **Death Education, and knowledge on course of the after-death world** – to eliminate the patients' feeling of loss towards death and fear;
2. **Palliative care before death** – including care service for the dying persons' relatives and caregivers;
3. **An all-round "end-of-life care" and after-death services** – caring services for the dead at the crucial moments of death and dying, as well as the "guiding services for both the few hours, and (**for navigating through the critical period**) within 49 days, after death".

In fact, modern people have a very limited understanding on death.



Currently, the services provided are very incomplete and fragmented, such that it makes the dying persons and their relatives to have suffered, especially from the **flaws and faults** that are caused by the present death and dying services. The scientific knowledge on brain cognition in advanced modern sciences has unveiled the fact that "human cognition" does not necessarily occur only in the human brain. There are some cardiac arrest patients who have suffered from their health problems and had gone through the "Near-Death Experiences" (NDEs), as well as those who have revived from their deaths, due to various causes, and had also gone through the "Near-Death Experiences". These people could provide lots of relevant information in providing a clue that deceased persons could still have their "cognitive ability" even after "clinical death". **These empirical experiments, which have been conducted by world-renowned authoritative scientists with their reports published in scientific journals, have found to be strong proofs with solid scientific evidence.**





Scientists have found that about 10-15% of those cardiac arrest patients who had been confirmed as "clinically dead" (that is, the cessations of breaths, heart beats and brain functions) could be revived by "cardiopulmonary resuscitation" (CPR) from death. Their "experiences of clinical death" could provide solid scientific evidence in proving that the **human "consciousness and awareness"** continue to exist during the "state of death".

In fact, the findings of at least five scientific researches conducted independently in England, USA and Holland have shown that about 10% of those patients who have later survived, after suffering from acute cardiac arrest and were confirmed as in the "state of clinical death", were found that they still had their "continuation of consciousness" during that time period.

This "continuation of consciousness" of a person never cease even during the "state of clinical death".

This discovery has a strong and significant meaning to it, which has confirmed the fact that it does not mean that nothing will remain after death, but instead, the "continuation of consciousness" of a person still continues to keep on functioning. In fact, these relevant researches and their findings had now been published in such renowned medical journals as "**Resuscitation**" and "**The Lancet**", where availed relevant research reports.



**Dr. Sam Parnia**, as Chairman of the "Horizon Research Foundation", an independent organization focused on research of the "mental states of human beings during terminal moments", has announced the launching of a large-scale research project during the "Symposium on Human Consciousness" held by the United Nations in September of 2008. This is a large-scale research experiment on the topic of "whether

there is the continuation of consciousness and awareness at the moment of death"? This research project would last for three years, and has been carried out by 25 physicians from nine different hospitals in both England and USA. This research project has sampled on researching 1,500 patients

who had survived cardiac arrest, which is led by Dr. Sam Parnia, the Honorary Senior Clinical Researcher at the University of Southampton, UK, together with **Dr. Peter Fenwick**, an authoritative Neuro-psychiatrist.

The numerous research findings of the different experiments have **confirmed that the "consciousness and cognitive ability" of human beings continue to exist even after death**. Furthermore, it has also shown that the physical bodies still have not yet died completely after a few hours to a few days, and so special caring services for them are much needed. In fact, a related large-scale study of near-death experiences has already been launched. Therefore,

the palliative care services before death, the end-of-life care services, and the “guiding services after death” are clearly all extremely important for the dying persons. If the dying person has received the necessary **“Death Education”** while one is still alive, and has learned the necessary knowledge on the operations of the **“World After Death”**, they will definitely understand the importance of the “end-of-life care services”. As a result, the society will have a huge demand for this kind of service. Unfortunately, there is still not a single institution that can provide such type of comprehensive services at the present moment. Such a fault is, indeed, a great regret for all human beings, but, at the same time, it is actually a great business opportunity. As such, in order to assist the dying persons to have real and civilized cares during their last journeys in life, the “Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited” has proposed to establish this Special Project on the “Life Enlightenment Hospital”.

### “Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation” \*

“Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited” (herein known as the “Foundation”) actively advocates the Special Project on the “Life Enlightenment Hospital”, through playing the role of a **charity body**. Upon the completion of this Special Project, the “Foundation” will re-invest all the amounts of profits gained from this operation for **other charity projects**, so that this innovative

project of great potential can help to nurture numerous other charity projects and items, with its sustainable resources to be perpetually developing, without ever drying up. The “Foundation” anticipates that this Special Project of the “Life Enlightenment Hospital” would create great demands in Hong Kong, the Mainland, and even for the whole world,

due to **its innovativeness and uniqueness** (especially on the various integral components of the end-of-life care, education on death, as well as the continuity of the holistic integrated services). Hence, upon the completion of its structure and the launching of its operation in Hong

Kong, the “Life Enlightenment Hospital” will become a unique role model of its own, so that its mode of operations would then be further extended to the rest of China, and to the global market of the whole world in a “franchise manner”.

It is estimated that the total investments for the first phase of development for the “Life Enlightenment Hospital” will require HK\$2.7 billion. As this Special Project will have new sources of income coming from its innovative services (such as the “end-of-life care”



services, etc.), therefore it is expected that the payback period for this project would be around seven years. Furthermore, the "Foundation" is exploring its feasibility on all sorts and styles of financing alternatives, which may take different formats of financial cooperation with public and/or private organizations, and direct investments of individuals, as well as loans, subsidies, and/or donations.



We strongly believe this Special Project on the "Life Enlightenment Hospital" can actually cater for the real needs of dying persons, and will really provide the real caring services for their last journeys in life while living in a civilized society, all of which will simultaneously create a whole new market. Therefore, this is, indeed, a project that is both of a charitable nature and of great commercial opportunities.

\* "Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited" is a registered charity body in the Hong Kong Special Administration Region of China. The general public can find evidence on the Hong Kong Special Administration Region Government website at URL: [http://www.ird.gov.hk/chi/tax/ach\\_search.htm](http://www.ird.gov.hk/chi/tax/ach_search.htm)

## No Restrictions on Any Religious Beliefs

Many people might have misunderstood that the all-rounded "end-of-life care services" during and after death – especially the "guiding services for both the few hours, and (for navigating through the critical

period) within 49 days, after death" – would let this Special Project on the "Life Enlightenment Hospital" to be restricted by and confined with the religious norms of "Tibetan Buddhism"? The answer is totally negative, that is, there are absolutely no restrictions at all on any religious beliefs. This is because the

"World After Death" is a kind of environment that exist in Nature, and its Law of Evolution is well beyond any religious norms. In this regard, the kind of spiritual guidance for all human beings, and even for all sentient beings, to select for the right paths, while protecting them from falling into dangerous pitfalls, when entering into the "World After Death" should be a kind of universal education and basic knowledge, and is thus not confined to any religions. As such, this Special Project on the "Life Enlightenment Hospital" is suitable for all human, and sentient, beings. Yet, on the other hand, this Special Project will not hinder anyone to conduct any kind of religious rituals and ceremonies. Indeed, it can be described as the best place of help and guidance, in terms of spiritual shelter and refuge, for all human, and sentient, beings. It is also the best place of spiritual assistance in guiding one's spiritual "life" to be uplifted, and to become "enlightened" eventually and successfully. From the deepest of our hearts, we hereby sincerely wish and pray that such a perfect kind of "Life Enlightenment Hospital" would soon be established !





# Donation Form

**"Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited" is a registered charity in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government, and all donations will be exempted from tax under Inland Revenue Ordinance 88 of the HKSAR Government.**

Please make a donation to the Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited and help to carry out

**Life and Death Education  
Various charitable activities,  
Establishment of the "Life Enlightenment"  
Hospital and its innovative services.**

## We need your donations!

**To make your donation, please complete this form and return it to: "Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited", at 4/F, Federal Centre, 77 Sheung On Street, Chaiwan, Hong Kong.**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_ Office phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a donation of HK\$ \_\_\_\_\_ for:

- All projects:
- Life and Death Education, Printing of "Life Enlightenment" Bi-monthly Magazine:
- "Life Enlightenment" Hospital Establishment Foundation:
- No need to express gratitude.

### I prefer to make payment in:

- Cash:
- Cheque(s) ( \_\_\_\_\_ Bank, Cheque number: \_\_\_\_\_ ):
- Directly deposit to the Foundation's Bank account (Please fax the deposit slip to 3157 1144, dated: \_\_\_\_\_ ):
- AutoPay (Monthly AutoPay amount: \_\_\_\_\_, Receipt will be sent in April of each year. If you choose the AutoPay method, please contact us at 2558 3680 for registration.)

**Please make payment by sending a crossed cheque, payable to "Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited", together with the filled-in form to 4/F, Federal Centre, 77 Sheung On Street, Chaiwan, Hong Kong; OR Deposit to the bank account of "Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Limited" (Hong Kong Bank: 809-523715-292). After which, please send the deposit slip and the filled-in form to our address, or fax them to (852) 3157 1144. Receipt will be sent to you afterward. For phone enquiry, please call: 2558 3680.**

## Boundless Thanks, Boundless Blessings

# 「生命提昇慈善基金會」的標誌 Logo of "Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation"



Life Enlightenment Charity Foundation Ltd  
生命提昇慈善基金會有限公司

標誌的下方是一雙手，代表人類互相守望相助，以「生命燃點生命」。正在燃點的燭光，表示人類的智慧獲得啟迪，照耀著人類的社會及其文明，引向美好的將來。左右兩旁，分別有兩個人手携手地往上提升，表示著人類整體之「生命、精神素質」得以提升，從而發揚人類的文明，促進世界社會之「和諧共融」。

The two hands at the bottom of the emblem represent the mutual care and support of all human beings through our motto of "**Life Lights Up Life**". The lamp of the lighting candle represents the enlightened human wisdom will be able to shine upon our human society and civilization, and thus will lead to a better and brighter future. On top of that, at the two sides, the two persons are united and are joining hands together for a higher elevation upward towards the sky. This symbolizes that the "quality of life and spirit" of the whole humankind would be further elevated so as to evolve our human civilization to higher levels of progression and elevation, towards a more universal "harmonious and accommodative" global community.