

This Free E-Book is brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Hospice Volunteer Training

By Rita Ballard, GVA, C.Ht.

Hospice Volunteer Training by Rita Ballard, GVA, C.Ht.

I thought that when I became a volunteer, it would be as simple as approaching my chosen agency, saying, "I want to volunteer", telling them in what capacities I was willing to serve, convincing them that I was a good and honest person, and it would be done. Sometimes it amazes me how simple life is – in my head, at least.

I am in my second week of volunteer training for hospice. This is something that I've wanted to do for a long time. The experience is proving to be nothing like I expected.

I thought that it would be mostly middle-aged women. Our group is composed of 8 women. Of those, half are actually middle-aged, two are in their forties, and the other two appear to be in their early thirties.

I expected a lot of informational material, given in the form of mini-lectures. Our group, however, is extremely interactive. There is definitely informational material being given, along with a lot of group dialogue. We discuss feelings and emotions surrounding the issue of death. We talk about family dynamics, and past experiences. We share our stories and sometimes, our heartbreaks. We also watch videos. These are not videos that the average person would find entertaining. These are stories about the end of life, told by the people who were dying. We also listen to various speakers, all team players in the hospice program, and we hear about different scenarios that can go on in the homes of the clients. These team members talk about what the hospice experience has been like for them as nurses, client bathers, social workers, and caregivers.

We laugh a lot in our little group; and we cry. We are free to explore the deepest and most poignant feelings that we have about death and dying. If we are going to sit with people and families in the death process, it is best that each of us know who we are at our depths. We need to explore what we have to give, and what we hope to get out of the experience. The families that hospice volunteers work with are looking for a calming influence, for some respite in the care giving, and for a little bit of comfort. As a volunteer, we are taught what the boundaries are in interacting with families, and what needs we may encounter. Through all of this training, we are constantly looking inside of ourselves to see what is

really there.

I had imagined that there was a set of "rules" or parameters that we would follow as volunteers. You can do this, but you can't do that. The only rules that we've been taught, however, are that we cannot dispense medication, and we cannot tell our clients or their families what we think they should believe or how they should act. No judgment, period. Death is a uniquely individual experience, and families process it differently according to their own personal value systems, lifestyles, and beliefs. You can no more presume to know what is best for someone in this situation than you can in any situation of life. People process events differently. The role of the hospice volunteer is strictly to be there for the family. We can basically do anything that the family needs us to do, as long as we feel comfortable doing it. If we are not comfortable with a request, we simply need to state that. As volunteers, we are not bound by things that we have to do. It is up to the family and their needs, and our own comfort levels.

I look forward to my first volunteer assignment. I have some pretty definite feelings about the death process, and I feel that we can do a tremendous service in helping others to make the transition as smoothly and peacefully as possible. I also understand that this type of work is not for everyone. I would, however, highly recommend it to anyone who feels that they could serve others in this capacity.

Rita Ballard, GVA, C.Ht. is a licensed hypnotherapist and the owner of Healer's Helper, a virtual assistance business providing administrative support services to healthcare professionals. For more information, please visit www.healershelper.com Virtually Restoring Balance, One Task At A Time!

What is hospice...and when is it appropriate for the Alzheimer's patient?

By William Hammond, J.D.

Hospice was established in the Middle Ages when shelters called hospices were available to travelers who had no place to stay. A couple of centuries later the first hospice was founded in London in 1668. The founder, Cicely Saunders, believed that these institutions geared to curing people were ignoring the special needs of the dying.

The first hospice in the United States was started in New Haven, Connecticut in 1974. From that beginning, the American model stressed hospice as a home service. Many of these hospices have helped a great number of families make their final days with their loved ones warm and memorable. Many terminally ill people and their families ask, "How will I know when it is the right time to call hospice?" There is not really an answer to this question. It all depends of individual circumstances and the stage of the patient in the illness.

The hospice staff is qualified and generally consists of a chaplain, certified nursing assistants, a medical director, registered nurse and social worker. They can assist you and the patient in many different areas: medically, psychologically, and spiritually. Some hospice agencies provide bereavement care to the family for several months following death.

Here are some of the signs that will let you know when to make your first call:

Hospice Volunteer Training

- If life expectancy is six months or less for an Alzheimer's patient. If the patient outlives this initial prognosis, the primary care physician may recertify the patient for a supplementary 60 day periods. Patients who stabilize may also come on and off hospice, as per their doctor's evaluation.
- If there are no more options for curative treatment and/or the individual does not wish to pursue further curative treatment.
- If pain and symptoms have begun to interfere with the quality of life of your loved ones and it becomes too difficult for them to stay at home without assistance.
- If adult children wish to learn more about the options for a parent's care and how to cope with the final stage, death.

When you decide to call hospice, you will not be left alone. The hospice team will support you and your needs. Chaplains present on the premises will guide you spiritually to ease the pain and suffering of a loss. Most hospices have group support meetings that will assist you.

To find a hospice in your area, here are the following options:

- The yellow pages directory : www.yellowpages.com
- Hospital Medical Social Workers: hospital social workers may provide you with a list of hospices in your area.
- You can search on Internet search engines by typing "finding a hospice in my area."
- And often the best way to find hospice care for your loved one is simply to ask your doctor. He or she

will be able to give you some recommendations.

William G. Hammond, JD is a nationally known elder law attorney and founder of The Alzheimer's Resource Center. He is a frequent guest on radio and television and has developed innovative solutions to guide families who have a loved one suffering from Alzheimer's. For more information you can visit his website at www.BeatAlzheimers.com

What is hospice...and when is it appropriate for the Alzheimer's patient?

Long Term Care Options In Florida

The Hospice–Hypnosis Connection

Dog Training Tips

Safety Training: The Need For Security

Free Government Grants

How to become a Chef!

Insider Secrets to Flea Market Profits

GUERRILLA MARKETING Volume 1

How to Gain and Retain More Customers



This Free E-Book has been brought to you by Natural-Aging.com.

[100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment](#)
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!