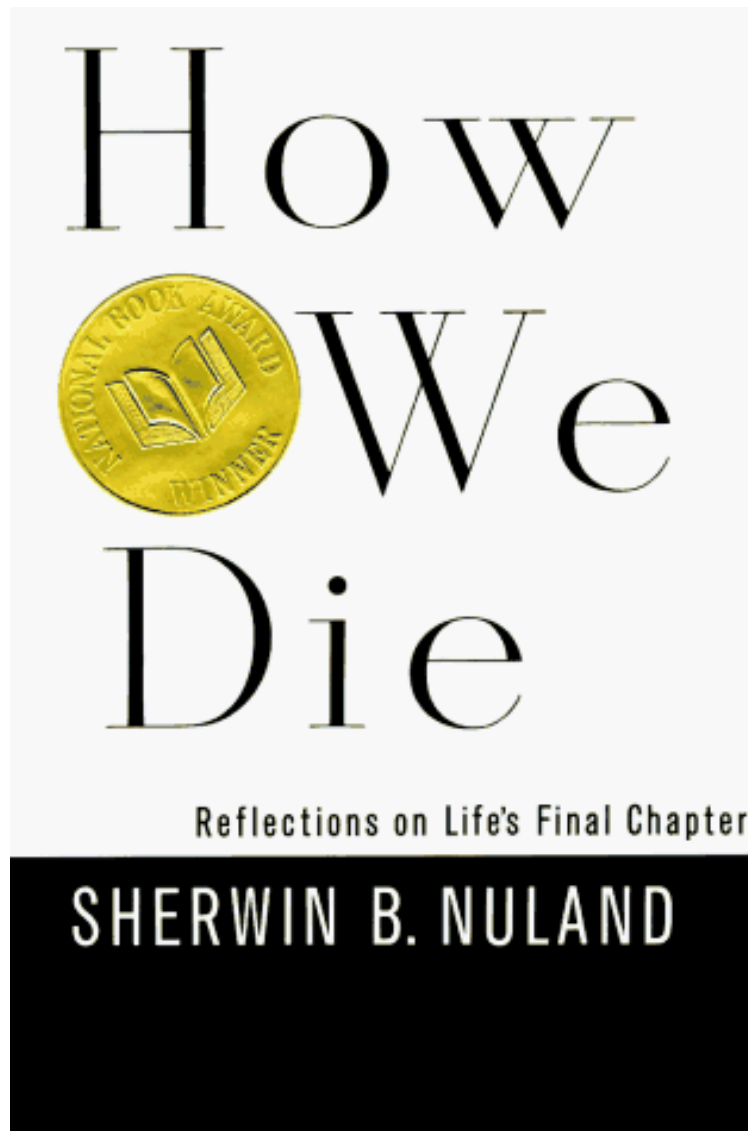


[Get free] How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter

How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter

Sherwin B. Nuland

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Sherwin B. Nuland : How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Truly Informative and Inspiring
By Customer
This book was truly informative and inspirational for me. It was not gruesome or overly descriptive - and didn't need to be. Dr. Nuland writes in layman's terms. This, alone, made it easy to follow. His real life examples made the book tough to lay down... I have found new respect for doctors by reading books like this one. For example, I was truly moved and inspired by

Dr. Nuland's first "medical experience" in responding to a patient who suffered a series of severe strokes. At the tender age (already wearing a white medical coat) Dr. Nuland found himself alone with this patient. Without hesitation he opened the man's chest and gave him external heart massage! While the patient died what moved me was that, at the age of 22 years, Dr. Nuland somehow knew the right protocol... His dedication to his profession and his focus on patient care is wonderful. I often think about myself and the decisions I made "way back when..." and how my life turned out. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Essential reading for those working with dying persons By Ronaele Whittington This Nuland book was referenced in *When Breath Becomes Air*, a recent best seller. Nuland includes the physiology of the body shutting down, as well as a reflection from two decades ago about the compassionate side of dying. Somehow I had taken for granted the hospice and palliative care movement. Nuland rightly points out the potential for caregiver disconnect just when a dying person needs consistent, beside human beings. I see this book as a must-read for paid and volunteer caregivers with dying persons. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A-M-A-Z-I-N-G By C. S. This book entirely changed my expectations surrounding death and what it means to die with dignity--whether dignity is even attainable for the vast majority of individuals. But even more than that, it gave me an invaluable insight into the minds of physicians when Dr. Nuland explains disease from a doctor's perspective, as a 'riddle' that requires solving. Read this book for your sake, but also for the sake of everyone you love. It will change the way you think about disease and dying, no doubt about it.

Attempting to demythologize the process of dying, Nuland explores how we shall die, each of us in a way that will be unique. Through particular stories of dying--of patients, and of his own family--he examines the seven most common roads to death: old age, cancer, AIDS, Alzheimer's, accidents, heart disease, and strokes, revealing the facets of death's multiplicity. "It's impossible to read *How We Die* without realizing how earnestly we have avoided this most unavoidable of subjects, how we have protected ourselves by building a cultural wall of myths and lies. I don't know of any writer or scientist who has shown us the face of death as clearly, honestly and compassionately as Sherwin Nuland does here."--James Gleick From the Trade Paperback edition.

From Publishers Weekly A physician who teaches at the Yale School of Medicine, Nuland writes gracefully about a topic most of us would rather not dwell on--our impending deaths. He demystifies the process of dying by providing straightforward information on the clinical, biological and emotional details of deaths resulting from heart disease, stroke, cancer, AIDS, Alzheimer's disease, old age, accidents, suicide, euthanasia and murder or violent physical assault. Crammed with intriguing scientific findings and useful facts, as well as case histories of dying patients whom Nuland (*Doctors: The Biography of Medicine*) has treated, his report is imbued with wisdom rooted in a belief that the dignity we seek in dying must be found in the art of living life to the fullest. 50,000 first printing. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Drawing upon his own broad experience and the characteristics of the six most common death-causing diseases, Nuland examines what death means to the doctor, patient, nurse, administrator, and family. Thought provoking and humane, his is not the usual syrup-and-generality approach to this well-worn topic. Fundamental to it are Nuland's experiences with the deaths of his aunt, his older brother, and a longtime patient. With each of these deaths, he made what he now sees as mistakes of denial, false hope, and refusal to abide by a patient's wishes. Disease, not death, is the real enemy, he reminds us, despite the facts that most deaths are unpleasant, painful, or agonized, and to argue otherwise is to plaster over the truth. The doctor, Nuland stresses, should instill in dying patients the hope not for a miraculous cure but for the dignity and high quality of the remainder of their lives as well as of what they have meant--and will continue to mean--to family, friends, and colleagues. Nuland also has strong feelings about suicide and "assisted death": the doctor should be prepared psychologically and practically to help the longtime patient slip off the scene in relative comfort. William Beatty From Kirkus sA sobering look at the clinical reality of death by a physician who wants it known that ``we rarely go gentle into that good night." Nuland (Yale Medical School; *Doctors*, 1988) takes the position that if we know the truth about the physical process of dying, we can rid ourselves of both our fears and our false expectations. By becoming familiar with the common patterns of illness, he says, we'll be better prepared to make appropriate decisions about continuing treatment or calling it quits. Nuland selects several common causes of death--heart attack, old age, Alzheimer's, violence, AIDS, and cancer--and, with unrelenting honesty and unsettling detail, shows precisely what happens to the body involved. His account of the decline and death of his grandmother--with whom he shared a bedroom until he was in his late teens and she in her late 90s--is unforgettable, as is his story of his well-intentioned mismanagement of the care of his older brother when he was dying of cancer. The emotional impact of these stories is quite different from that produced by the author's coldly clinical accounts (``a specific sequence of events takes place in people who bleed to death. At first, they will usually hyperventilate..."); but by demonstrating that dying is usually a messy business, Nuland succeeds in demythologizing death. His message is that the dignity we seek in dying must be found not in our final weeks, days, or moments--but in how we've lived our lives. Strong stuff: not for those who prefer to cling to comforting illusions about life's end. -- Copyright copy;1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.