

The Dying Person's Bill of Rights

- ☞ I have the right to be treated as a living human being until I die.
- ☞ I have the right to maintain a sense of hopefulness however changing its focus may be.
- ☞ I have the right to be cared for by those who can maintain a sense of hopefulness however changing that may be.
- ☞ I have the right to express my feelings and emotions about my approaching death in my own way.
- ☞ I have the right to expect continuing medical and nursing attention even though 'cure' goals must be changed to 'comfort' goals.
- ☞ I have the right not to die alone.
- ☞ I have the right to be free from pain.
- ☞ I have the right to have my questions answered honestly.
- ☞ I have the right not to be deceived.
- ☞ I have the right to die in peace and dignity.
- ☞ I have the right to participate in decisions concerning my care.
- ☞ I have the right to have help from and for my family in accepting my death.
- ☞ I have the right to retain my individuality and not be judged for my decisions which may be contrary to the beliefs of others.
- ☞ I have the right to discuss and enlarge my religious and/or spiritual experience whatever these may mean to others.
- ☞ I have the right to expect that the sanctity of the human body will be respected after death.
- ☞ I have the right to be cared for by caring, sensitive, knowledgeable people who will attempt to understand my needs and will be able to gain some satisfaction in helping me face my death.

That most difficult thing

That most difficult thing –
To see something
From someone else's point of view.

To let go of ourselves enough
To be able to care,
To let go enough
To be aware,
To let go enough
To sit still and listen
Intently –
Taking it all in

The problem,
The person,
The background,
The others involved –
Our own prejudices

To get inside someone else's skin
And feel what they feel,
Their joy, their sorrow,

As though it were our own –
To know.

- Ken Walsh

(taken from the Welfare Volunteers Course Handbook,
Community Welfare Training Institute, Watsonia, Victoria)