



Consider This. Thoughts on Living Well.



Submitted February 2022

From the Other Side

As I sit at the bedside of my grandmother, she is on her final journey out of this world and I am reminded that life goes on despite the hardships we navigate.

Golden Girls is playing in the background – a show I grew up watching with her every time I'd visit.

I am a hospice physician – my day job is helping to ease suffering and allowing for a peaceful death. Yet being on the other side as a family member is the hardest thing I've ever done.

I reflect back on my journey into medicine and how I ultimately decided on pursuing a career in hospice and palliative medicine. The experiences throughout my education colored my path to be able to navigate this exact moment. I truly feel I've been preparing my whole life for this moment – to truly advocate for my grandmother and know what to ask for, to comfort my family and gently deliver the news that she's dying, to understand what terminal delirium and agitation

look like and hope to give myself the compassion and grace I tell my patient's families to give themselves when faced with a similar situation. Yet knowing all these things, I still struggle.

I am in awe of the beauty of the gift of time. How fleeting it comes and goes. Although I am reminded daily in the work that I do that we are not promised tomorrow, this impending loss is not any easier.

Our life experiences shape us into who we become and our losses remind us of the beauty of being human, knowing suffering, and holding love and loss in tandem. I will forever be changed after experiencing this loss. I now understand even more how devastating and debilitating loss can be.

My grandmother's death will make me a better physician, mother, wife, daughter and friend. As they say, it's better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all.

Dedicated to my grandmother, Blanche Beverly Owens (1932-2022)

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Caduceus Group
Thursday evenings
7:00 pm
Zoom video conference

Weekly AA meeting for physicians will be held via zoom. For details contact Belinda Clare bclare@tcms.com or 512-206-1250.



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