

Module 1: Receiving a Terminal Diagnosis

Experience frustrations related to unsuccessful treatments, Receive a terminal diagnosis with your family present, observe your wife and daughter processing the news.

Learning Objectives

- Successfully support elders and family members through end of life conversations by recognizing the wide range of emotional responses people experience.
- Empower elder to actively participate in plan of care meetings and honor their end of life choices.
- Identify situations and conversations which may require a higher level of support from a social worker or end of life specialist.

Discussion Questions

1. How did you feel while embodying Clay?
 - a. Why did you feel that way?
2. What emotions did your wife and daughter express during the doctor's appointment?
 - a. How did their emotional reactions make you feel?
 - b. Have you had a similar experience with family members during end of life conversations?
3. Did you feel that the doctor was speaking to you or about you?
 - a. After embodying Clay, what is something you wish the doctor had done differently
4. Being told you have 4-6 months to live, what would be your top three priorities? (e.g. comfort, time with family, travel, time with pets, etc.)

Who is Clay?



Clay Crowder is a 66-year-old veteran with stage IV, terminal lung cancer. He is coming to terms with the reality of his diagnosis with the help of his wife and two daughters. In retirement he has been trying to quit smoking and enjoys time in nature, riding his motorcycle, and grilling out with family and friends.

People You'll Meet



Mi Kong is Clay's devoted wife and mother of Leslie and Grace. She is working on accepting Clay's diagnosis and being an effective advocate.



Leslie is Clay's younger daughter. She is extremely optimistic and is having difficulty accepting her dad's terminal diagnosis.



Grace is Clay's older daughter. She is detail oriented and wants to understand exactly what is happening with her dad's care.



Dr. Chatterjee is the oncologist. She helps Clay and his family manage expectations and offers supportive care options.



External Resources

Non-Embodied Labs informative links and activities

Module 2: Dynamics of Hospice Conversations

Experience a trip to the emergency room, learn about hospice services and observe family dynamics as your condition worsens.

Learning Objectives

- Provide insightful information to elders and families regarding benefits of hospice care and understanding what it means for each elder to have a “good day.”
- Recognize that additional treatment is not always beneficial and promote elder choice in end of life planning.
- Successfully communicate with families who may be experiencing strong emotions and identify community resources that may be beneficial.

Discussion Questions

1. How did you feel in the emergency room? Why?
2. Yvette had a very delicate conversation with you and your daughter. What communication techniques did she use to both diffuse the tension and support you both?
 - a. Have you ever met a family member who was resistive to hospice?
 - i. How did you respond?
 - ii. After embodying Clay, what (if anything) would you change about that interaction?
3. What significance might the blue heron have?
 - a. Have you ever had someone describe things/people that are not there toward the end of their life?
4. What are some symptoms you experienced as Clay, particularly in the latter part of the module? (Physical, emotional, and spiritual)
 - a. How can a home hospice team address these symptoms?



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Yvette is an emergency room nurse who shares her personal experience with home hospice.



Mr James is a hospice social worker. He offers in-home support and care coordination to Clay and his family.

Module 3: Final Days of Life

Experience the final days of life, visualize the physiologic response to pain medication and physical manifestations of the dying process. Spend time with your family and observe post-mortem care.

Learning Objectives

- Recognize signs of the active dying phase and non-verbal indications of pain.
- Provide compassionate end of life care and support for family members.
- Continue to treat the body with respect and preserve dignity while performing post-mortem care.

Discussion Questions

1. What did you notice about your body prior to receiving pain medication?
 - a. What changed once pain medication was administered?
2. After embodying Clay, what do you feel are the most important elements of care in the final days of life?
3. What has your experience been with death?
 - a. Have you performed post-mortem care before?
 - i. After embodying Clay, what (if anything) will you change regarding your post-mortem care practices?
4. What are some ways you can offer support and comfort to those who are experiencing loss (both during the dying process and after)?



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Mimi is a hospice nurse who is supporting Clay and his family in their home during his final days.