



FINDING OUR WAY

Living with Dying in America

For Immediate Release

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There is a new movement in America. We are at the beginning of a cultural shift demanded by the seventy-six million baby boomers who are caring for ailing parents and approaching their own old age. They are seeing too much suffering as loved ones struggle with advanced illness and face the end of life. They are convinced *it doesn't have to be like this*. They are creating a movement toward improved care for the dying and their loved ones.

Finding Our Way: Living with Dying in America

A 15-week Newspaper Series Addresses the Growing Demand For Dignity, Pain Management, and Communication Near the End of Life

A series of groundbreaking articles called *Finding Our Way: Living with Dying in America* will be made available to all U.S. newspapers, free of charge, through Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services beginning on September 9 and continuing for the next 15 weeks, through December 16. The *Finding Our Way* series is designed to be another catalyst in the movement—a national initiative to help Americans overcome their fears, re-think the way they live with dying, and find ways to embrace dignity and quality at the end of life. It carries forward the public education efforts of “On Our Own Terms: Moyers on Dying.”

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, and Charitable Leadership Foundation are underwriting the newspaper series that is written by experts in the fields of medicine, sociology, theology, and culture. Each article addresses a specific concern, presents true stories of what has happened to people, and describes how they found help. The articles take into account cultural diversity, include recent research and statistics, and offer resources to help people “find their way” through the particular issue.

The “End-of-Life Movement” has begun to integrate information and resources with community efforts across the country. Local coalitions dedicated to improving end-of-life

care will use the *Finding Our Way* articles as talking points in public meetings, forums, and workshops with doctors, hospices, palliative care providers, clergy, psychologists, social workers, estate planners, and others. They are asking libraries and bookstores to select books based on the articles' topics and place them in "quiet spaces" next to bookshelves with a broad selection of books for all ages on various aspects of advanced illness and end-of-life topics. And they are encouraging teachers to use the articles to open classroom discussions.

Additional resources include a *Finding Our Way* website (www.findingourway.net); a noncredit web-based course tentatively titled "The American Course on Living with Dying" planned for fall 2002; and a trade book to be published in the fall of 2002.

Dr. Dan Tobin, director of the Center for Advanced Illness Coordinated Care, a nonprofit organization working with the VA Healthcare Network, Upstate NY at Albany as well as the *Finding Our Way* initiative, comments: "Americans want information and guidance at the end of life. The process begins with conversations with loved ones and with health care providers—conversations that allow us to move past fear and make decisions. The *Finding Our Way* series provides examples of courageous conversations and offers resources so that people can begin to take control."

Finding Our Way newspaper articles:

- Living with Dying in America (to be released on September 9)
- It's Time to Talk: Conversations About the End-of-Life (September 16)
- Widowhood: Building a New Identity (September 23)
- Palliative Care: Pain and Symptom Control (September 30)
- Advance Directives (October 7)
- Culture and Diversity: Breaking Down Barriers (October 14)
- Spirituality and Faith: Finding Peace (October 21)
- Last Rites: Grief, Faith and Farewell (October 28)
- Caring for Aging Parents and Partners (November 4; tie in with *National Caregiving Month*)
- Hospice: Finding Our Way Home (November 11; tie in with *National Hospice Month*)
- Nursing Homes: Maximizing Long-Term Care (November 18)
- When a Child is Dying: Learning from the Unthinkable (November 25)
- Violence and Death: Healing the "Secondary Victims" (December 2)
- Living with Loss: Swimming Against the Tide of Grief (December 9)
- A Vision for the Future: Taking Control at the End of Life (December 16)

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The *Finding Our Way* website: www.findingourway.net

Newspapers may consecutively run all fifteen of the *Finding Our Way* articles, or they may select articles to release on their own timetable. A paginated version is available for use each week or as a cumulative supplement. The newspaper articles will be posted for free access online (embargoed for publication until release dates) at:

www.krtdirect.com/dying