



Hospice Voices: Lessons for Living at the End of Life

Eric Lindner

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As a part-time hospice volunteer, Eric Lindner provides companion care to dying strangers. They're chatterboxes and recluses, religious and irreligious, battered by cancer, congestive heart failure, Alzheimer's, old age. Some cling to life amazingly. Most pass as they expected. In telling his story, Lindner reveals the thoughts, fears, and lessons of those living the ends of their lives in the care of others, having exhausted their medical options or ceased treatment for their illnesses. In each chapter, Lindner not only reveals the lessons of lives explored in their final days, but zeroes in on how working for hospice can be incredibly fulfilling. As he's not a doctor, nurse, or professional social worker, just a volunteer lending a hand, offering a respite for other care providers, his charges often reveal more, and in more detail, to him than they do to those with whom they spend the majority of their time. They impart what they feel are life lessons as they reflect on their own lives and the prospect of their last days. Lindner captures it all in his lively storytelling. Anyone who knows or loves someone working through end of life issues, living in hospice or other end of life facilities, or dealing with terminal or chronic illnesses, will find in these pages the wisdom of those who are working through their own end of life issues, tackling life's big questions, and boiling them down into lessons for anyone as they age or face illness. And those who may feel compelled to volunteer to serve as companions will find motivation, inspiration, and encouragement. Rather than sink under the weight of depression, pity, or sorrow, Lindner celebrates the lives of those who choose to live even as they die.

Hospice Voices: Lessons for Living at the End of Life Details

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From Reader Review Hospice Voices: Lessons for Living at the End of Life for online ebook

Jael says

I love all kinds of fiction and I have just as much affection for non-fiction -- perhaps even more. With fiction, I use my imagination to bring characters to life. With non-fiction, I'm fascinated how other people live, work, love, socialize, etc. I think all non-fiction gives you a different perspective on life.

When I got the pitch for Hospice Voices, by Eric Lindner, I was intrigued. I know some of my family members have been in hospice care, but I can't say that I know much about hospice care. How does one cope being around people who are near death? Given the subject matter, I assumed this would be a sad sad book but I was wrong. Eric Lindner's book doesn't dwell on death, instead it celebrates the lives of the people he met.

Read the rest of my review at: <http://www.asiturnthepages.blogspot.c...>

Teddy says

When I was approached to review Hospice Voices, I jumped at the chance. Since I have been a social worker for many years and worked in group homes while attending university, working or volunteering in a caring profession was something I could personally relate to.

Many would read the title and that Eric volunteered in Hospice and conclude that this book would be depressing. Let me tell you, it is not. Sure, it is sad when the people, Eric spent time with died but they died with dignity. Something hospice makes possible. Eric talked about the orientation process he went through. It was explained that most people who are dying are lonely. Their friends don't know how to talk to them so often don't visit them at all. The hospice volunteer helps this immensely.

Eric came to really care about the patients and families he has worked with and has kept in touch with many of the families even after the passing of his patients. He, the families, and the patients, themselves are great examples for the enduring human spirit. Eric learned important lessons for the people he spent time with and has passed those lesson on in this very touching and beautifully written book.

While reading this I realized the I was a hospice volunteer without realizing it. When I was young, in 9th and 10th grade, I use to visit a neighbor of ours. Here's a little background. When I was little I use to ride my bike around the block. I was to little to go somewhere on my own so I just went round and round the block. An elderly couple, the Johnsons' use to sit outside and watch me and smile and wave when I passed them. I always smiled and waved back. One day I decided to try to talk to them and they were so sweet.

After Mr Johnson passed I kept in touch with Mrs Johnson. When I was in 9th grade I noticed that Mrs. Johnson wasn't sitting outside any more and saw a woman I didn't know going in and out of her house. I brought my concerns to my mother and she told me that Mrs. Johnson was very sick and wasn't going to get better. I started going to her house every single day after school to visit. It turned out the woman I saw going in and out of the house was Mrs. Johnson's sister and she moved in to take care of her sister. They both seemed so happy to see me and I them.

Eric made me realize that I was helping them through their loneliness. I am 99 percent sure that I was their only visitor. When Mrs. Johnson died, I was so sad. Her sister sold the house and moved back to where she had been living and I never saw her again but I still think of them often.

I want to thank Eric for the gift of friend ship he has given people over the years and his gift to me. Hospice don't have enough workers or volunteer workers. If you are a individual who can look at it as a positive thing, consider becoming a volunteer. I am willing to bet that you will receive as much as you give. It is clear

that Eric has. I highly recommend Hospice Voices!

Stacie says

Eric Lindner is looking for a way to give back and decides in 2009, to become a Hospice volunteer. In HOSPICE VOICES, he shares his experiences, his conversations, and the lessons he learned in his time with those at the end of their journey. The book begins with the story of Lindner's first patient, Bob Zimmerman. He was fortunate to have his first patient be someone he was truly able to share some memories with. Throughout the book he then shares about other patients who made an impact on his life and what they taught him about living and about dying.

As a previous Hospice social worker and then volunteer, I was drawn to this book. Aside from being a mom, working in Hospice was my favorite job. People always assumed it was depressing and couldn't understand how I could do my job. What I found was I couldn't wait to go to work every day. Sure, not all the patients were people that I made a connection with, much like the author, but everyone had a story to tell.

Lindner finds a way to tell their stories that help the reader imagine the people both in their younger days as well as presently. He shares their secrets with dignity and you can tell he was truly listening and cared about the patients and their families. I loved that with each patient he found a way to make a connection either through food, through a hobby, or through his talents. I also appreciated his honesty regarding being nervous about meeting a new patient. It isn't easy to go into people's homes and feel like you are intruding on their "last days". It truly is a privilege, as a volunteer, to be able to share in that final journey with the patient and their family.

There is a lot to learn from pages in this book, especially from his humbling Dos and Don'ts chapter at the end. As you read the stories you will see pain, sadness and the ever-looming terminal diagnosis, but you will also be rewarded with laughter, gratitude and surprisingly, hope.

Vicki says

I was rather hesitant about agreeing to review this book because I thought it would have me crying my eyes out and would be nothing but depressing. Was I ever wrong!

Eric takes us on his journey as a Hospice volunteer with honesty, compassion and even humor. Each patient was very different in their wants and needs, and Eric flawlessly adjusted as he went.

This book should be read by everyone. It will help you understand that one of the hardest times in your life can also be made a little easier with the help of Hospice.

Eric Lindner has a very real talent for writing, and I enjoyed this book very much.

Penny Guthrie says

Wonderful book by Eric Lindner. As a Nursing assistant that works with hospice and palliative care patients I was very happy to have received this book in the giveaway through goodreads. Right now it's on loan to a

new nurse who saw it in my mailbox and asked if she could read it next. It's amazing and I wish I had it with me right now to reread it!

Brenda says

As a hospice volunteer Eric Lindner provides companion care to people who are at the end of their life. What a wonderful thing to be able to touch someone's life in their final days, but more than that is the fact that these people touch the hospice worker in such a way that they are never forgotten. Each person has a story and Eric Lindner shares some of those stories in his book "Hospice Voices." A book that I feared might be sad but was anything but, I found snippets of humor but more than that I felt connected to each of the people that he writes about. As we read it is easy to see that the gift of giving time and a listening ear to those at the end of life is the most important gift of all.. An inspirational book that shares the importance of Hospice and the role they play during the end of someones life. Recommend to anyone looking to be inspired and uplifted!

A complimentary copy of this book was provided for review.

Jenn says

I was a little hesitant when I first opened this book. I recently lost my mother and I'm very sensitive to issues surrounding death and dying. I kept a box of tissues handy while I was reading and I'm glad I did. By the end of the book, I felt like I knew many of the people Eric worked with. I knew that they were likely to die (it was a book on Hospice care and end of life issues) but I hoped that they wouldn't.

The book was sensitively written, and the focus was not on death but on the lives of the people Eric worked with. The book gave me a new appreciation for the work that hospice volunteers do and the ways they help people facing the end of their lives. The different approaches that each person had to hospice care and what they wanted out of the experience really opened my eyes to the myriad of choices available today.

I also found myself completely invested in the author and his family. His story is woven throughout the book, and is a good view of the commitment needed to be a hospice volunteer. Throughout the book, one thing remains clear - that the volunteer gets as much, if not more, out of the experience as the people who are being helped.

I would heartily recommend this book to anyone who has an interest in end of life issues or who is considering volunteering at a hospice.

Anastacia says

Eric Lindner's book is about a few different hospice patients he worked with at the end of their lives. The people he meets up with are all memorable in their different ways.

Eric briefly starts his book with his training, and often refers back to it when he is faced with any dilemmas

(and sometimes ignores his training, as in the case when he gives a woman her meds when he knows he shouldn't have, something I think I would have done in the same situation). In between his stories of his patients, Eric also talks about his own family and his travels overseas, especially his aging parents. While I understood talking about his parents in the book, I did not like that Lindner did so. I wasn't reading a book about Lindner's life, I was reading a book about Lindner's dying hospice patients. The author often seemed to be bragging about how good his life was, about how they have so much money that they can afford to donate a lot of money to charity (the bragging really turned me off, because he was comparing how good his life is to someone who was dying (I honestly don't think he meant it that way, that was just how I felt. To clarify, I think it's wonderful the author's family does give so much back to their community, I just didn't feel it was appropriate talking about it in the course of the book).

Surprisingly, the book isn't sad at all. I know I was really worried (in agreeing to read this book) that it was going to be too sad & to hit too close to home, but Eric really does a great job in balancing his visits with his patients end of life.

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I agreed to read this book as part of a blog tour in Jan 2014 and was not paid for my review. I wanted to read this book because I worked in nursing homes for a few years and saw the good in hospice

Chrissy (The Every Free Chance Reader) says

Did I enjoy this book: Yes.

It wasn't quite as accessible as I was expecting it to be: Lindner may lose a few readers due solely to his vocabulary choices, but I liked it. Like Lindner, I've spent a great deal of time helping (or trying to, anyway) families cope with exceptional circumstances. Whereas Lindner spends his time befriending those at the end of their lives, I spend mine helping those at the beginning. The basic rules appear to be the same: give what you can without imposing, fix what you can without interfering, love as much as you can without breaking the rules.

This book is about a person who's learned how to live with people who have learned how to live with the fact that they're dying. It's beautiful.

Would I recommend it: Yes. Especially if you're feeling serious, or nostalgic (or you really need a vocabulary boost).

Will I read it again: It's likely that the next time I go through a story like this it will be my own family's. I'm not in a hurry.

As reviewed by Melissa at Every Free Chance Book Reviews.

(I received a copy of this book for review purposes.)

<http://everyfreechance.com/2014/01/bl...>

Karen says

Filled with extraordinary love, truth, and hope - a must-read

I have never wanted to read about death and have conscientiously avoided it. I heard about this book because of a 2nd degree of separation with the Lindner family. I simply could not put the book down. Eric is a storyteller able to convey complex emotions of sadness, anger, love, hope and joy in a way that made me feel like I was in the room with him. I was humbled to read his personal accounts with his patients and awestruck by his willingness to share his own stories. This a book that everyone needs to read to be reminded of what it means to be human.

David Ryan says

a good read! I appreciated hearing about mr Linder's experiences of being a companion with hospice - also, since I recently went through Thyroid cancer, appreciated reading about his families emotions in dealing with his daughter's case.

Claudia says

Looking for insights to help me with my Mom who is in hospice care in her home. The anecdotal approach was helpful - all situations and patients are different. Some very simple points: patients commonly experience profound loneliness; favorite foods or a breeze coming in the window can be a delight [seemingly small things can be nourishing]; be patient...always. Entering into palliative care is a major decision for everyone involved. It is a blessing to back out of the rat race of hospitalizations, doctor visits, follow ups, surgeries, etc. and to just...be...with comfort care as the priority.

Nada says

Hospice Voices: Lessons for Living at the End of Life by Eric Lindner is not an evaluative, fact-based look at hospice care and the choices facing families and the medical profession for end of life care. It is a personal story of the relationships that hospice volunteering brought to Eric and his family and a tribute to the patients whose legacy is now captured in the pages of this book.

Read my complete review at: <http://www.memoriesfrombooks.com/2015...>

Teena in Toronto says

Eric is doing well financially and has a wife and kids. He felt the need to give back and was lucky enough to be able to become a hospice volunteer. Many people in their final days are alone, living in poverty and/or are afraid. Hospice volunteers spend time with these people hoping to make their last days happier and more comfortable. During his training, Eric learned that the average hospice patient survives three months ... patients he was assigned to slipped away within hours while others thrived for years.

In this book, we get to know Bob, Little One, Dolly, Gordon, Ellen, Howard and Cricket. And Eric doesn't just give comfort to them but also to their families. In fact, he keeps in touch with some of the families after

his patients have passed on.

I was expecting it to be depressing but it wasn't. Yes, there is a lot of death but it's not dealt on ... most are a phone call or a text. The focus instead is on learning the stories of Eric patients and the joy they receive in Eric's company as their days starting winding down.

It sounds like it takes a fair bit of time and dedication to be a hospice volunteer. I guess it depends on how many patients you have and the level of commitment you give them. Eric was taking them on errands, bringing them cookies and cakes, calling when he was out of town, sending postcards, etc. While I think volunteering would be an awesome thing to do, I don't think I could handle it emotionally ... getting to know someone only to lose them so soon.

I would recommend this book.

All book profits will be donated to organizations committed to improving the lives of hospice patients and their families.

Blog review post: <http://www.teenaintoronto.com/2014/01...>

Elizabeth7781 says

I'd like to thank Mr Lindner for opening my eyes to the volunteer role of hospice companion. I didn't realize there was a name for this, let alone such a need. His stories were sometimes humorous and almost always poignant. I found the book deeply appealing. Being there at the end of someone's life bears witness to the impact of that life. I appreciated Mr Lindner's honesty about the errors he made in addition to the small triumphs overcoming recalcitrant clients and brusque family members. The hospice companion role isn't for everyone but there surely are few roles as rewarding and soul-stirring.
