



## **JANE'S STORY**

'When Someone is Dying Their Pace Changes'

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When someone is dying their pace changes. So it's about being sensitive to this. Most of us lives such busy lives, it can be difficult to slow down and be still enough to listen to what they may want to say.

In my own experience of being with someone who is dying, a quiet, comfortable space without time pressure helps to encourage communication.

So I think listening is key. The dying person may have difficult issues they want to discuss, or may allude to something that is bothering them. They need a relaxed environment and enough time to say what they need to.

### **What helped:**

When a close family member was dying the hospital palliative care team offered us time to be with her without interruptions from the nursing staff. This was a great gift.

The staff's honesty also helped, and there was a gentle telling of hard information. They also gave us space to express our feelings, in a non-judgmental, calm manner.

There was a sense that the staff felt that the patient mattered. This was not just one more dying person, but our relative who was important to us.

The staff were willing to give us information, and were ready to respond to our concerns. They also held the belief that we knew things about the patient that they didn't – and this information was invaluable in the way they providing appropriate treatment for her.

All this gave us a sense of working as a team for a common goal, which was the well-being the patient.

### **What did not help**

Earlier in the process, the patient was being cared for in a much larger hospital. We received some very confusing and disparate signals about her illness and potential outcome. This caused us sleepless nights.