

Synopsis

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Finding peace with death and dying in everyday life

By Lea Rose

Alison's pale yellow skin, deep sunken expression and skeletal body is reflected by the terror in her eyes. I take her into my arms. Holding her with all the love I have, I enter into a kind of stillness where time stops and silence becomes our support. Alison and I respond to each other, connecting with human love and without words, I let her know she is not alone. Without words, I let her know she is understood. Through my calmness I encourage her not to be afraid.

What Alison needs right now is not me, a stranger, but her loving parents. However, denial is destroying their ability to be with her as they scream at me to find a cure. Why can't they see that Alison is only hours away from dying! Instead, this young teenage girl, dressed only in a pair of white underpants, is left emotionally alone and dying, in the back seat of her parent's car.

Together we can make a difference

Adults and children are frequently dying in fear and emotionally alone. Families are suffering from disconnection and despair. Society has not tackled this important issue upfront by providing the relevant knowledge and education in schools and tertiary institutions.

Lea Rose writes from her twenty years of experience as a clinical counsellor and psychotherapist, supporting adults and children to die well in the home or hospital. Lea is the founder of the *Living and Dying Well Counselling Centre* in Melbourne Australia.

‘Society is ready for change. Families need unity and skills to essentially transform our relationship with death and dying. I am passionate about effecting this change’.

Education and communication are paramount. Do you know and understand the stages of dying? Could you care for your loved one to the end of their life? Do you have the emotional resources to cope with grief and loss? Death is a natural part of life for all of us. Approximately 56.7 million people die each year worldwide; 156 thousand each day; and 108 each minute. Death is real. With this in mind - wouldn't it make sense to be educated?

Let's talk about it is the essential book on death and dying to transform the way we die. Lea's unique and innovative approach educates us on; finding the courage to face our fear of death; empowerment for making conscious choices; creating a care team of family and friends to support real connection; and the true value of communication through open discussions in our own family. Gripping true stories are included to personalise the experience of death, to break down barriers and negative associations.

Let's talk about it covers other essential topics including; understanding the four stages of dying; knowing what it takes to be a carer and how to create a care plan; a vital program for uniting a care team of family, friends and medical professionals; learning how to care for your family member at home, hospital or care facility; accessing 'hospital in the home' services; what to do when faced with the ethical question of whether a family member should be told they're dying; how to develop communication skills for emotional connection and support; understanding pain management and treatments; having the courage to write your own will and funeral plan; as well as understanding the impact of grief and strategies to cope.

Let's talk about it teaches us that you can develop an open attitude to death and dying which you never thought possible and you can make a real difference to your own life and to those around you. Just as we want quality of life, we must also insist on *quality of death*.