

# Book News

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We'd like to introduce Jerral Sapienza and his new book, *Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying*. This important new hospice resource is one you surely will want to know about for your patient family referral resources, volunteer support staff and training teams.

## Whispers of Inspiration from a Magical Book

Sapienza is a blend of poet and keen social scientist, writing from personal experience as long-time hospice volunteer and caregiver. Fifty-two "whispers" speak the heart of the book's message, each one offering a level of support and inspiration which allows caregivers to feel supported, informed and immediately useful in the process. This can greatly reduce the amount of time and effort required by staff to support the caregiving process, while patient care and family satisfaction is increased. This resource is truly a "map and compass for the soul," working its quiet magic at the bedside while informing, supporting and preparing the family and caregivers for the reality and possibilities of the end-of-life care process and options.

Facilitator and Student Guidebooks are available online for using *Urgent Whispers* in a seven-week (14-hr) course, an excellent training and debriefing plan for new volunteers.

### What People are Saying about Urgent Whispers

**Profound:** *A profound guide for entering the territory of "sitting with death."*

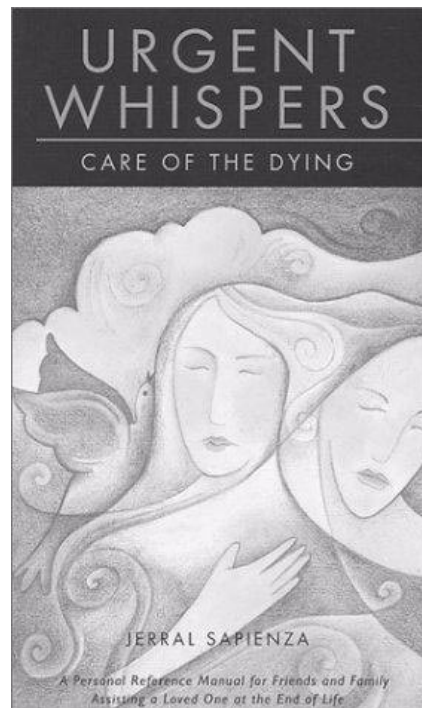
**Insightful:** *Poetic and insightful, it leads readers through the natural progressions of end-of-life care.*

**Navigation:** *Jerral provides a guide for how to navigate when we might otherwise be lost.*

**Thought-provoking:** *Thought-provoking ideas shared of life and death.*

**Guiding:** *A map and compass for the soul; a primer on basic ABC feelings and reactions sitting through a vigil.*

**Sensitive:** *A sensitive, compassionate guide to end-of-life care.*



### *Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying*

by Jerral Sapienza; LLX Press; 152p; \$14.95

ISBN 0971710708 paper; ISBN 0971710759 spiral coil.

At booksellers nationwide. Distributed by Baker & Taylor, DeVorss.

Questions or comments about the book?

Interested in hosting Jerral for a site visit or training?

See us on the web: [WWW.LLX.COM/UWHospice](http://WWW.LLX.COM/UWHospice)

Phone (541) 345-8522 or Email [Whispers@LLX.COM](mailto:Whispers@LLX.COM)

**Stimulating:** *Stimulates an introspection on how death and dying are a part of our daily lives.*

**Well written:** *Incredibly well written discussion and an invaluable resource for attending the dying.*

**Recommended:** *Highly recommended for anyone in search of guidance towards the final journey.*

**Comfort:** *A great source of comfort, helps people know they can "do something."*

**Uplifting:** *Uplifting and soothing answers to questions people have at these times.*

**Online Support Resources:** Other reviews and more online at: [WWW.LLX.COM/UWHospice/](http://WWW.LLX.COM/UWHospice/)

With the aging of the Baby Boomers and their parents, there is a growing interest and greater need to understand more about helping out at the end of life. Agencies across the country are offering training programs for helping address the community interest and needs for learning more, often with the help of community outreach and organizations who can partner to help. You may wish to contact those in your area, to share information and let them know about *Urgent Whispers* if they haven't already heard. These professionals can be key contacts to assist in promoting attendance for your training programs and can often help out with resources, too.

## Community Outreach Links

- ✓ Home Care and Visiting Nurses and Caregivers
- ✓ Retirement and Senior Center staff and support
- ✓ Family Mental Health Psychologists
- ✓ Therapists specializing in Grief and Grieving issues
- ✓ Medical and Nursing Oncology and Geriatrics
- ✓ Palliative Care and Psychiatric Nursing Practitioners
- ✓ Hospital Chaplains and Pastoral Care teams
- ✓ Hospital ER, ICU and Trauma unit support teams

Some reviews, feedback and informal commentary we have received from professionals in the community follow::

### “ ER / ICU Nurse and Conscious Dying Practitioner

If I had never been at the bedside of a dying person and was committing to stay there through their moment of death *Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying* is the bitter-sweet guide that I would want as a map to guide me. It is a primer on basic ABC feelings and reactions for both the dying and the person sitting through a vigil of death. It is uplifting and soothing and answers those questions anyone would have at this time. The book is a source of comfort because you have a guide in the “doing.” People need to know they can “do” something.

What I like about the book is its basis of truth and reality for the first time experiencer. A common, all too sad fact in our day and age, we collectively as a world and nation know so little about the dying experience. This book is so helpful for this person and can also refresh the experienced person to grow and appreciate the basic uniqueness



of each death experience. All the basic questions families, friends and lovers ask are answered. It opens the door for more to come after that if the family / friend is able to run that course.

I promise you: the book will be picked up and read later. Maybe not in a week or a month or even three months or six months. But it will be re-read. Bereavement done healthfully is a re-remembering to gain functional integrity. The book plays a significant role in this. The griever is the lover, lovers are grievers, and going over the same stuff is part of the process of their healing. *Urgent Whispers* is so fine for that!

— Mary Helen Madrid-Null BSW, RN, CCRN.  
Director, Founder The Mary Helen Madrid Institute  
and NOT ALONE Bereavement Support Services  
30 years now in Conscious Dying, ICU / ER.

### Physician and Surgeon

*Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying* written by Jerral Sapienza, is an eloquent dissertation on death and dying. As a physician, I have been exposed to patients dying, but Jerral's perspective expressed in *Urgent Whispers* added a new dimension to this subject for me. I had, perhaps like many others, often considered death as “something out there” that happened to others but never really took my own mortality all that seriously. Not only did I find that *Urgent Whispers* provided a sensitive, compassionate guide for attending someone dying, but it also stimulated in me an introspection on how death and dying are an integral part of my daily life.

Jerral has obviously had significant personal experience with death and dying, as well as studying the subject extensively. *Urgent Whispers* is an incredible, concisely composed discussion which I found invaluable which I highly recommend.

— Stan L. James, MD

❖  
Congregational  
Care Director

Your book was received well here— everyone that has a copy and everyone that attended our Continuing Education classes where your book was used enjoyed it, thought it was quite insightful and obviously written from the point of view of a person who had been there.

... The instructor originally had a lesson plan but after beginning the class, he just let the class go at its own pace. There are some times that they spend the whole time period (2-1/2 hours) on a single page of the book!

There has been some incredible discussion— thought provoking ideas shared, life / death experiences shared, that type of thing. It will probably take several more months just to get through the book the first time since this class only meets on a monthly basis.

Keep pursuing your dream. You are gifted!  
Blessings, and Keep up the good work!

— *Nadine Korhonen*  
*Congregational Care Director*

❖  
Clinical Psychologist

What a blessing: *Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying*. How often I listen together with patients who are facing their own death or the death of someone close to them. When I do, Jerral Sapienza's book is in my heart and on my mind, always close. Jerral provides a guide for how to navigate when we might otherwise be lost.

Reading his words is like listening to him talk: clear, quiet, and compassionate. I refer to his book for help when I need it and I refer patients to his book when I know they need to be with the best guide, for the clarity they deserve when death is near. Reading Jerral's book is like having a good friend near.

— *Scott Pengelly, Ph.D.*

❖  
RN, Hospice  
Volunteer Coordinator

Thank you for writing the book. It is unfortunate that our culture has forgotten how to sit vigil. Your book is a skillful teaching tool to help individuals re-learn. I've no doubt it will be useful for many people.

— *Wendy Jenner, RN CHPN*  
*Hospice Volunteer Coordinator*

❖  
General  
Practitioner Nurse

*Urgent Whispers* is a book I wish had been included in my nursing school training on dealing with death. The sensitivity with which Jerral Sapienza confronts both the needs of the dying person and the caregiver offer many points to ponder for those who deal with these people.

Jerral's spiritual yet non-denominational viewpoint should make it acceptable to people of any faith. It is easy to read, yet profound. I highly recommend it to anyone in search of guidance toward the final journey.

— *Carolyn Janecek, RN*

❖  
Midwife and Hospice Volunteer

*Urgent Whispers* is a profound guide for those entering the new territory of “sitting with death.” Poetic and insightful, it leads the reader through the natural progressions of discomfort and fear— that stage of not knowing how to help— to saying good-bye, letting go, and looking honestly at our own mortality. Jerral Sapienza adds further depth by including thought-provoking questions to assist the reader in processing his or her own responses to the dying of a friend or loved one.

— *Natasha Beauchamp*  
*Professional Midwife and*  
*Hospice CareGiver*

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Jerral's earliest memories are as a toddler in and out of doctor offices and hospitals for years due to childhood epilepsy. Dubbed by his pediatrician a "Cadillac engine in a Model T frame," Sapienza was driven by an insatiable and compassionate interest in all of life around him. Socially precocious and entertainingly conversational, he often engaged his doctors in spontaneous chatter, letting them know he, too, wanted to help people when he grew up: He wanted to be a doctor.

Thankfully by his teen years Jerral's neurological disorders remitted and he applied that inquisitive mind to any and all subjects at school, several inventions, a fascination with forensics and handwriting analysis, and picking up languages with astute skill. He did not study medicine after all, but chose instead Social Sciences and Engineering. University studies for Jerral wove for nearly a decade in and out of many different disciplines, including Engineering, Computers, Poetry & Writing, Psychology, Counseling Business Law, several Foreign Languages and even Music and Ballet before finally setting its career arc into Education and Engineering.

Jerral's first encounter with caregiving was as a part of an elective research project in a Counseling Psychology course at Oregon State University. Quite intense at the time, it didn't fit neatly into any career path he could then discern, but inspired his volunteer caregiving and death and dying research



for many years to come. After he graduated with a Teaching Certificate he taught English, Writing, Drama, Computers and Foreign Languages in Oregon and Colorado for a few years before starting a High Tech consulting firm in 1987.

During the years of the AIDS crisis of the 1980's and 1990's, Jerral helped out at the bedside of many who young people who died of AIDS and several friends and family lost to cancer, ALS, Alzheimer's and other degenerative diseases. Certainly these times offered many opportunities to learn, grow and share in the understanding of what to do, what to say, how to be at the bedside of someone who lay dying. It was the lessons and joys of these times which formed the essence of *Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying*.

Sapienza's experience and interest in conscious dying, end-of-life care and mystical studies provided the foundation for a masterfully useful book. His poetic literary background helps to present the material in a non-threatening and contemplative, almost meditative style offering great peace and comfort.

Caregivers working with Jerral over the years used to ask, "How did you know to do that?" and "Where did you learn these things?" and "How can I learn more about these ways of caregiving?" A very good answer now to all of these questions is the gift and wisdom of this new little caregiving support gem: *Urgent Whispers: Care of the Dying*.

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A newsletter about the new book,  
*URGENT WHISPERS: CARE OF THE DYING*