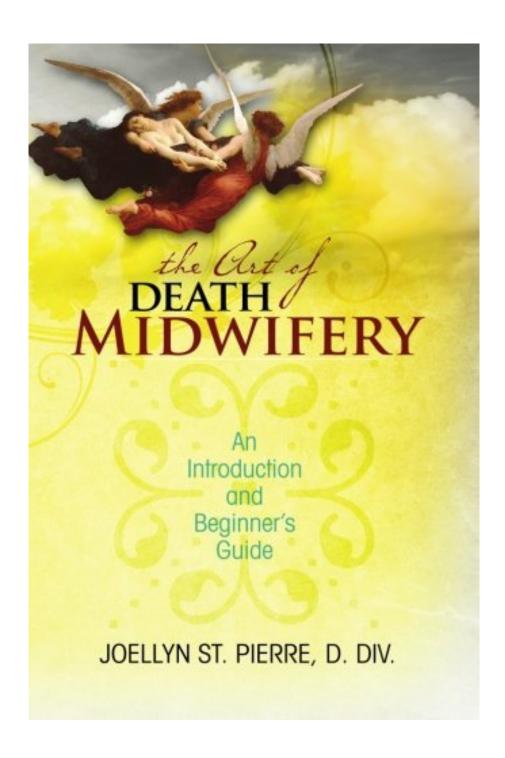


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Review

Winner of the 2009 National Best Books Award (death and dying)

Doctor of interfaith Divinity and 18-year death midwife St. Pierre introduces the practice of assisting the dying as they transition from the physical world to the nonphysical. The book serves as a guide for professionals who frequently encounter death: nurses, hospice workers, etc., as well as those preparing to serve someone close to them during the last days. St. Pierre stresses the ability to sit with acceptance and love in the presence of pain and suffering and to honor the choices and belief systems of the patients. She also teaches methods of matching their states of consciousness to stay connected throughout the experience. Allowing for patients' different backgrounds, the author includes prayers, breathing and meditation techniques from various spiritual traditions as proper preparation for the role as conduit for divine energy and of the creation of a sacred space. A brief discussion of brainwave frequencies and the 13 phases of death--charted as "the Deathing Spectrum"--help to demystify the process, as do stories from St. Pierre's years of personal experience. Her tales of communication from beyond the grave may compromise her credibility for some, despite the bit of scientific support she gives for communication with the unseen world. References to death guides from myth and religion build appreciation for her profession, but it is when the author describes the intimate loss of loved ones (dogs, parents and best friends) that she connects readers on an intimate level with gritty, nearly uncomfortable emotion. An essential read for those ready to offer time, love and service during the big transition. --Kirkus Discoveries

About the Author

Joellyn St. Pierre, D.Div., is a former Broadway performer. An ordained interfaith minister, St. Pierre earned a Doctorate in Divinity with a focus on Death as a Transition. Since 1991, she has served as a death midwife with AIDS organizations, hospices, hospitals, and families. She resides with her family in Virginia Beach, VA.

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Winner of the 2009 USA Best Books Award and the 2010 International Book Award, The Art of Death Midwifery: An Introduction and Beginner's Guide, by ordained interfaith minister Joellyn St. Pierre, is a compelling and comprehensive manual for family, clergy, hospice volunteers, or medical staff engaged in the field of death and dying. In this poetic and powerful book, the author reminds us that society has thrown a veil of mystery over the process of death, thereby depriving the dying from the dignified and fearless departure they so deserve. Based on the tenet that death is neither the enemy nor a finite state, St. Pierre gives all helpmates the necessary tools to become a death midwife. That is, someone capable of acting as a spiritual guide as the dying transition from this life into what awaits them after death. Unlike many books on death and dying, this guide is leading-edge, based on the author's long experience both in lay and clergy. It is a sensitive and lyrical reminder that the dying deserve to feel empowered as they leave this life. Please join our online community at: https://www.facebook.com/theartofdeathmidwifery

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Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

An Essential Read

By Michele

I have had a long journey to becoming a death midwife, and this book is the epitome of what death birthing is about. It is highly sensitive, intuitive, and instructional for those on this path. The detail of spiritual preparation for this work is completely universal regardless of what one's outer beliefs are. I have not found any other book as saturated in truth and love aside from Dr. Lonnie Edwards' Spiritual Laws that Govern Humanity. This book must be the cornerstone of every death midwife's practice!

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

A New Approach To Something As Old As Death

By Valley Girl

To open this book is to open a jar of balm for the soul, a spiritual unguent to salve our wounds, the wounds of the living, while we sit with those who die. St. Pierre teaches how to communicate to the dying when the body is too frail for words. She presents a step-by-step program on how to hone one's subtle connection to the greater consciousness in order to respond specifically to individual people as they die. It's not a cookie-cutter death-care program. It is an indispensable book on the new science of Death Midwifery, a roadmap for those who are taking the trembling final walk with family, friend or client. In this eloquent mix of science, art and spirit St. Pierre's words heal the confusion and misunderstandings surrounding death and actively teach how to birth the death process. It will become a worn, lent and many times referenced guide. To gift this book to a friend giving end-of-life care is more than a hundred helping hands.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

If you care for those who are dying, this is a must read

By A. McArdell

As a hospice Volunteer Coordinator, I am always looking for ways to improve care for my dying patients. I train people to sit vigil with patients and was looking for a book that focused on the spiritual aspect of caring for dying individuals - and I found it. This book was very helpful for me, and I appreciated that it was respectful of all different faiths. It gave good examples on how to incorporate prayer and other rituals to bring meaning to the end of life, and to provide comfort to patients and their families (and even to myself as I care for them).

I was very pleased with this book and definitely recommend it if you are in this line of work.

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