

Vancouver Hospice Society Volunteer Connections Meeting: Sept. 15, 2011
 Facilitated by Dr. Catherine Hajnal

Box Exercise:

What happens when you find out you have a terminal illness?
 How does your life change?
 Does life feel smaller or larger in the coming days?

Our intention for today is to give ourselves a chance to think about how our lives might change so that we can be more empathetic with what might be happening for a hospice client and their family and friends. It is also an invitation for you to consider what changes you might want to make in your life right now with the recognition that we are all “terminally ill”.

Reflections:

From: The Five Secrets You Must Discover Before You Die
 By: John Izzo, Ph.D. (Berrett Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2008)

Secret	Exploration
Be True to Your Self (reflect more)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I following my heart and being true to my self? • Is my life focused on the things that really matter to me? • Am I being the person I want to be in the world? <p><i>Live with intention.</i> <i>Live life awake.</i> <i>Continually examine your life.</i></p>
Leave No Regrets (risk more)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps would I take in my life right now if I were acting with courage, not fear? • How am I responding to the setbacks in my life right now? <p><i>Fear most the regret of having not tried.</i> <i>For fear of rejection, or failure, or because we are not sure we can succeed, we die with our book, our dreams, our story inside us.</i> <i>Perhaps what often determines our happiness in life is the step we take after a setback.</i></p>
Become Love (love more)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did I make room for friends, family, and relationships today/this week? • Did I spend time with people who lift my spirit? • Did I act with love toward myself today/this week? • Did I engage in negative self-talk/self-hypnosis? • Am I planting flowers or weeds in my self-conscious mind? <p><i>Love as a choice.</i> <i>First, love your self.</i> <i>Make love a priority.</i> <i>Choose to see others with kindness.</i></p>

<p>Live the Moment (enjoy more)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did I fully enjoy whatever I was doing this week or day? Was I really “here” or just showing up? • What am I grateful for about today/this week? • Did I live in the present today/this week, or did I let tomorrow or yesterday steal the day’s happiness? • Did I wake up this morning with thanks for another day? <p><i>Judge my life less. Enjoy it more.</i> <i>Every day is a gift.</i> <i>Living as if it were your last sunset.</i> <i>The present moment is the only moment.</i> <i>Pay attention and experiment.</i></p>
<p>Give More Than You Take (return more)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did I make the world a better place this week in some small way? • Did I remind myself this week that I am making a difference even when I don’t see it? • Was I kind, generous, and giving this week? <p><i>Leave this world better than you found it.</i> <i>Find self and lose self. See that we are connected to something much larger, something that had a life before us and will have a life after us.</i></p>

If you could give only one sentence of advice to those younger than you on finding a happy and meaningful life, what one sentence would you pass on?

Are you heeding your own advice?