***Speaking of Dying Book Selections***

Best books focusing on themes and situations depicted in the film.

Poignant, informative memoirs about aging parents in today’s health care system:

**A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents—And Ourselves**, Jane Gross (2012) – Gross, a health journalist, weaves the story of her mother’s final years and days into a moving account of the toll caregiving takes on her life and the life of her brother. Includes practical, hard-to-access, vitally useful information. An emotionally touching story and indispensable handbook for anyone facing the prospect of caring for an aged and/or dying parent.

**Knocking on Heaven's Door: The Path to a Better Way of Death**, Katy Butler (2014) – A thoroughly researched and compelling mix of personal narrative and hard-nosed reporting. Sharing her journey with her parents, Butler conveys the strain on caregivers, feelings of guilt and grief, and the confusion between saving a life and prolonging a death. Hard to put down, the book captures how flawed end-of-life care has become.

Physicians exploring end-of-life options and choices:

**Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End**, Atul Gawande (2014) – Gawande, a practicing surgeon, addresses his profession’s ultimate limitation, arguing that quality of life is the desired goal for patients and families. He offers examples of freer, more socially fulfilling models for assisting the infirm and dependent elderly, and explores the varieties of hospice care to demonstrate that a person's last weeks or months can be rich and dignified.

**The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care**, Angelo Volandes (2015) – Volandes argues for a radical re-envisioning of the patient-doctor relationship and offers ways for patients and their families to talk about this difficult issue, to ensure that patients will be at the center and in charge of their medical care.

**Patient-Directed Dying: A Call for Legalized Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill**, Tom Preston (2007) – Preston advocates for improvements in palliative care for the seriously ill and increased choice for those who are dying. Helpful stories and real-life examples.

A hospital chaplain gives clear examples of challenging medical choices:

[**Hard Choices for Loving People: CPR, Artificial Feeding, Comfort Care, and the Patient with a Life-Threatening Illness**](http://www.amazon.com/Hard-Choices-Loving-People-Life-Threatening/dp/1928560067/ref%3Dsr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1304035439&sr=1-1), Hank Dunn (2009) – A practical guide to help patients and families with end-of-life decisions, written by a nursing home/hospice/hospital chaplain. The book shares patient and family stories, cites journal articles, and gives common sense, practical advice with warmth and compassion.



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