

Encounters: “Who am I to tell someone facing disease how to feel?”

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written by Sara Kohrt | June 28, 2018



I'm caring for my sister, who's very ill. When I feel like I'm coming up short, it kind of creates a depression for me. I've learned to establish boundaries for myself, because when people become ill like that, they become bitter and mean sometimes. And I've really, really, really had to struggle.

I've been trying to help my sister, but I've also got to help myself. Some people, when they feel that they're near their end, nothing really seems to matter to them. No one knows the exact time, day or hour when you exit this realm, so you might as well enjoy yourself. If you're not busy living, you're busy dying. But who am I to tell someone facing disease how to feel? I can't.

Somehow, I understand what she's going through. I don't want to understand, because I don't want to accept that this is happening to her, or to me and my family. But I'm starting to accept that, hey, know what? I'm not going to be any help to her or to anyone else if I'm just down on myself and in the blues all the time.

Before, whenever I encountered difficulty, it used to feel like a fire alarm went off. I'd feel like running away. Things that were out of my control made me feel uncomfortable, which is kind of screwed up, because most things are out of my control. There's no textbook I can read that will say: "Step one, this is what you do. One, two, three." No. You just have to do the best you can as you go along.