

My Story, Not Yours

Category: Healing

written by Mary B. Wiecezak | May 16, 2022

I entered her room and introduced myself in the usual fashion. Jennie and Mike welcomed my visit. I explained that I wrote “patient stories” at the hospital and asked if they would enjoy telling me about themselves. They readily agreed.

Mike explained that Jennie’s vital organs were shutting down. Together they agreed to hospice care for her that morning.

Jennie was at peace with her decision, although Mike was visibly anxious. He began chattering about their background as a married couple, their children and grandchildren, their former occupations and hobbies. However, he seemed unable to stop talking about himself.

Throughout the interview, Jennie remained peaceful and calm, although at times, she seemed to smile and laugh at Mike’s anecdotes. Finally, with a determined look, she firmly said to him: “Will you be quiet! This is supposed to be my story, not yours!”

We all had a good chuckle. In all my years of volunteering, this was the first time I experienced such joy in the room of a dying patient. Jennie was at peace. And this would help Mike through the difficult days that were to come. It was my privilege to spend quality time with them both. Their gift to me was greater than any I could have ever given them.

Jennie died a few days later. Her “patient story” would be a memory for Mike to cherish.

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