

Living While Dying – Rob Olmsted, Lathrop Wellness Director

An event we are hosting next week with our partners at the Cooley Dickinson VNA and Hospice lead me to today's topic. It may seem odd to speak of decline at a time of year where we experience growth in its greatest glory in the world around us. Some would suggest that there is never a good time to discuss death and dying, and urge me to beat the drum about the possible and the uplifting. And yet many others feel that meeting things straight on, sharing their fears and coming to a place of acceptance allows them to live more fully now. Most tread a path somewhere in the middle.

My perspective is influenced by the works of Rudolph Steiner whose dissertation centered on the work of Goethe, German poet and "scientist." The primordial "ur-plant" of Goethe is a vision of the plant simultaneously in all of its phases: seed, shoot, bud, flower and husk. In this season the experienced eye sees the sheathed rose bud in the shadow of the recently pruned dead winter cane and as the dry rose hip that the emerging flower will become. Holding both of those visions need not lessen our appreciation of where that rose shines today.

For those who feel the need or benefit of deepening their perspective on what lies at the "end" of the human cycle there are a few opportunities coming up.



EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO
KNOW ABOUT CONSCIOUS DYING BUT WERE
AFRAID TO ASK - an intimate personal documentary

June 3 Amherst, MA, Jewish Community of Amherst co-sponsored by Cooley Dickenson VNA and Hospice- 3:30pm

Palliative Care versus Hospice Care

Thursday, June 7, 4 - 5 pm Lathrop Communities, Northampton

Tuesday, June 12, 4 - 5 pm Lathrop Communities, Easthampton

A community discussion to promote awareness and understanding of palliative care, hospice, and guidance in advance directives and end-of-life decisions. Two public events co-sponsored by Lathrop and The VNA and Hospice of Cooley Dickinson.

DEATH CAFÉ– This international organization helps people hold events whose objective is '*to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives*'. If you want to learn more look for this group on the web and reach out to Rob if you want to help organize an event for Lathrop.