

Death and Dying Featuring Eileen Spillane

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By Candace Dellacona

In episode 10, "Death and Dying," The Sandwich Generation Survival Guide's Candace Dellacona welcomes Eileen Spillane, the founder of Befriending Death. Eileen discusses her background and how growing up in a family that normalized discussions around death influenced her perspective. She shares her experiences as a critical care nurse, particularly at Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, gaining a unique perspective on life and death.

Eileen explains how her encounters with death prompted her to start Befriending Death. The organization aims to facilitate open conversations about death and dying, providing people with the tools to approach these topics and make informed decisions. The episode delves into the importance of discussing end-of-life preferences early, the distinctions between palliative care and hospice, and the role of death doulas.

The Befriending Death workshops, titled "Let's Chat About Death," are discussed, covering topics such as personal relationships with death, aging, and preparation for one's own end-of-life decisions. Eileen emphasizes the need to empower individuals and patients, giving them the tools to ask the right questions and make informed choices, ultimately restoring a sense of control and dignity.

The episode concludes with a discussion of the community aspect of Befriending Death, fostering intimate conversations in a supportive group setting. Overall, the episode provides valuable insights into approaching and normalizing discussions about death and dying, acknowledging the impact of such conversations on personal and professional aspects of life.

Learn more:

Eileen Spillane: <https://www.befriendingdeath.com/about>

Befriending Death: <https://www.befriendingdeath.com/>

National End-of-Life Doula Alliance (NEDA): https://www.nedalliance.org/neda_members_by_name.html

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