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AWAKE AT THE BEDSIDE

Contemplative Teachings on Palliative and End-of-Life Care

"The more we care for the happiness of others, the greater our own sense of well-being. *Awake at the Bedside* supports this development of love and compassion." — **His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama**

"This nourishing book should be required reading. It envisions revolutionary change in how we care for ourselves and the world." – **Dr. Andrew Weil**

New York, NY (April 2016) – *Awake at the Bedside: Contemplative Teachings on Palliative and End-of-Life Care*, edited by Koshin Paley Ellison and Matt Weingast and to be published May 25, 2016 by Wisdom Books, is *not* a book about dying. "It's about life and what it can teach us when we are truly present for each other," says Zen teacher Koshin Paley Ellison, who co-founded New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care (NYZCCC) in 2007 with Robert Chodo Campbell. Together they have transformed the narrative around end-of-life practice on a national level. In just nine years, NYZCCC has brought contemplative care to 80,000 individuals, and has trained more than 600 physicians, nurses, social workers, and chaplains. Thirty-five medical residencies across the country have integrated their curriculum.

Paley Ellison sat at the bedside with his beloved Grandma Mimi for the last six weeks of her life. In the sacred time before her death, while sharing memories, pizza, tears and laughter, she urged him to continue his work in

helping transform end-of-life care in America. Koshin states, "She is source of everything I teach."

This unique perspective, has led to the publication of *Awake at the Bedside*, which offers wisdom and counsel for those who keep watch at the bedside. Filled with riveting and heartwarming stories of doctors, patients, chaplains, family members, and caregivers, the book is a manifesto for love and compassion. It is an indispensable resource for anyone involved in hospice work, and more importantly, it is a book everyone will need at some point in their lives, when called upon to care for a loved one.

Awake at the Bedside offers practical insight in how we can care for people in new ways. The contributors were chosen because of their impact on the way care is given. The book includes a never-published essay by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, MD, poems by Nobel Laureate, Derek Walcott, and personal essays by seminal teachers in the field, including Ram Dass and Ira Byock, MD. The book serves as a healing guide that imparts valuable lessons about relationship, grief, joy, and suffering, when sharing a sacred moment with another human being.

Equal parts instruction manual and contemplative testimony, *Awake at the Bedside* seeks to address essential questions: How do we think about death and dying? What are the current practices in palliative and end-of-life care, and how might they be improved? How can we give care without becoming emotionally and spiritually depleted?

This collection of stories and poetry reveals life experiences that reinforce the preciousness of time and the deep value of connection. These extraordinary teachers bring us into intimacy with both living and dying.

Awake at the Bedside will powerfully remind you that to be of service is to hold hands with humanity.

Koshin Paley Ellison, MFA, LMSW, DMIN, cofounded New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care, which delivers contemplative approaches to care through education, direct service, and meditation practice. His public programs have introduced thousands to the practices of mindful and compassionate care of the living and dying. More than 30,000 people listen to his podcasts each year. His groundbreaking work has been featured on PBS Religion and Ethics Newsweekly, in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, and many national publications.

Matt Weingast, MFA, began his first experiences with meditation when he was twenty. He studied and taught at UMass-Amherst, where he received his MFA in Creative Writing. He currently lives at Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, where he continues to work, study, and practice. After taking care of a dear friend at the end of his life, Matt experienced the depth of connection between meditation practice and caregiving.

Awake at the Bedside, edited by Koshin Paley Ellison and Matt Weingast

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Contributors to *Awake at the Bedside*

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About New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care

All proceeds go to benefit the work of NYZCCC. Now in its tenth year, New York Zen Center for Contemplative Care was founded in 2007 to transform the nature of caregiving through contemplative practice grounded in Zen. NYZCCC has trained over 300 caregivers through rigorous multi-year study programs, who in turn, have provided direct care and bereavement counseling to over 130,000 people. NYZCCC has also influenced 10,000 healthcare professionals through symposia, retreats, workshops and lectures. In addition, NYZCCC serves as a practice center for a growing Zen community. To learn more about our extensive offerings please go to zencare.org