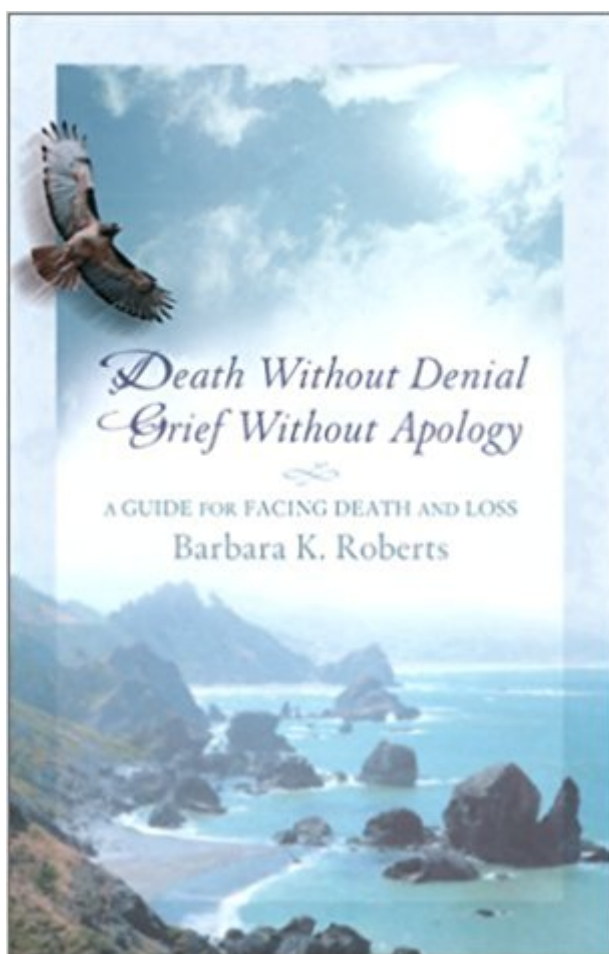


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# Death Without Denial, Grief Without Apology: A Guide For Facing Death And Loss



## Synopsis

When former Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts' husband, Frank Roberts, was dying from lung cancer, she had to look inside of herself as well as beyond herself to find ways to survive what felt unbearable. What Barbara Roberts learned during the final year of her husband's life, and her subsequent years of grieving, fill the pages of this honest and inspiring new book. At the time of Frank's cancer recurrence, Barbara was governor of Oregon, and Frank was an Oregon State Senator; both passionately committed to their work and to one another. Together they had faced many challenges, but Frank's impending death would be their final, and perhaps their most trying and enriching journey. The Roberts turned to hospice for guidance and assistance once Frank decided to stop medical intervention. This practical and compassionate guide looks at the personal as well as the societal issues surrounding death and grief. Written for both the individual facing death and for those who must grieve after a death, Roberts offers readers enthusiastic support to abandon the silence that too often accompanies impending death and those who must grieve. Chapter titles include "A Culture in Denial," "Hospice," and "Permission to be Weird."

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## Customer Reviews

Americans have a lot of attitude about grief; what doesn't work for them is labeled "morbid," "macabre," or "weird." Roberts's overriding message is that there isn't one right way to express sorrow and that people should be allowed to use whatever rituals or comforts they need, for as long as they need, without censure. Formerly governor of Oregon, Roberts tells the story of her husband's death from lung cancer simply, unhesitatingly, and without wallowing in bathos. She

chronicles Frank's last days, including their experience with hospice. Most importantly, she shares her own, very personal, secrets of how she mourned. By allowing the reader that access, she drives home her points. Recommended for public libraries and those academic libraries serving social work and thanatology programs. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Barbara K. Roberts serves on the board of trustees for several major organizations in Oregon and Washington. Ann Jackson is the executive director of the Oregon Hospice. Both live in Portland, OR.

Great help for those dealing with oncoming death and after.

An excellent book for those supporting someone who has decided on no more treatment and is preparing for the end. I keep an extra copy on hand for friends who may be in this situation.

I was first given this book when my younger sister was very sick. It helped answer so many questions, both before and after she passed away. I was so impressed with the book that I now order multiple copies to have on hand to share with other family members, friends, co-workers, etc., to move thru this most difficult time.

This book has sensitivity, compassion and authenticity. It rings true. The parts about coming to terms with the surprising shock of loss, even though death was expected are especially good.

A new approach to thinking and planning

I really enjoy this book and find it very helpful. I have read it many times before purchasing it. Although, did ship my shipment and it was damaged. I was disappointed with this.

In this moving, candid, and personal story, former Oregon governor Barbara Roberts talks about the year long process of losing her husband, and the much longer process of grieving after his death. The book begins in December, 1993 in the Governor's Mansion in Salem, OR, as a grieving Governor Roberts comes home at night to hug the urn with her husband's ashes, kiss his photograph, and tell him how her day went. Although Roberts acknowledges that some might find this kind of grieving 'not appropriate' 'weird' or 'crazy' , she emphasizes that whatever form of

grieving brings the most comfort to the suffering is the best kind. She also says of the grieving process 'it will take as long as it takes.' Four years after surviving prostate cancer, State Senator Frank Roberts was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer in October, 1992. He and Barbara were both astonished when his doctor then suggested chemotherapy. The couple quickly rejected the suggestion, and instead turned to Hospice. Throughout the book, Roberts praises Hospice and their outstanding care for her husband and support for his family. She describes how Hospice was there for them right up until Frank's death on Halloween 1993, three weeks after a stroke had taken away his ability to speak. For Roberts, as for others, the grieving process was a long and sometimes painful journey. The memories of her husband, triggered by anything from a sunset to his personal belongings, would bring back a flood of memories that caused sadness and loneliness. Gradually, though, the memories turned to feelings of warmth, as she could celebrate Frank's life and except his loss. Senator Frank Roberts was an early sponsor of the 'Death with Dignity Act' that Oregon voters voted into law a year after his death. Governor Roberts ends her book strongly defending the controversial law (that exists only in Oregon) and praising Oregon for being a leader in the use of Hospice care and pain management for the dying. Facing death is difficult for most of us. In this book, Barbara Roberts makes it much more acceptable.

I found this book right when it was starting to look unavoidable that I would lose my 29-year-old husband to cancer. He is still here for the moment, and we've started hospice. Barbara Roberts gives you a good idea of what to expect from hospice, and the experience of having your loved one die at home through hospice. It is not easy to read in the emotional sense, but it's a quick read - I read most of it in a night. It is difficult to read, but gives you hope that you can find comfort and support from hospice whether you are the terminally ill person or their caregiver. I would recommend it to anyone who has a loved one or friend who is either trying to make the choice whether or not to do hospice, or is already on hospice and you want/need an idea of what to expect. The book also makes a strong argument for thinking hard about whether or not chemo (or other similarly strong treatment for other conditions) is really a good idea, based on what will be gained - or lost - by seeking or foregoing treatment. She also makes a good argument for making all possible arrangements for the death ahead of time - memorial service, funeral, whom to notify, personal messages, etc. If you are in this horrible situation, this is a good book to give you a basic idea of what to expect and some hope that you can find support and guidance during this terrible time.

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