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Handbook for Mortals: Guidance for People Facing Serious Illness

Joanne Lynn, Joan Harrold

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Modern medical technology has changed not only the way we live but also the way we die. Until two generations ago, people usually died suddenly, after an accident or serious illness. Now, most of us may expect our dying to take longer, to require more care, and to demand more forethought than ever before. *Handbook for Mortals* is warmly addressed to all those who wish to approach the final years of life with greater awareness of what to expect and greater confidence about how to make the end of our lives a time of growth, comfort, and meaningful reflection. Written by Dr. Joanne Lynn and a team of expert physicians, this book provides equal measures of practical information and wise counsel. Readers will learn what decisions they will need to face, what choices are available to them, where to look for help, how to ease pain and other symptoms, what to expect with specific diseases, how the health-care system operates, and how the entire experience affects dying persons, their families, and their friends. Such practical information is indispensable. But equally important are the personal stories included here of how people have come to terms with dying, how they have faced their fears and made their choices. These give us moving firsthand insights into a profoundly important process, one that is increasingly kept hidden in our culture.
From down-to-earth advice on how to talk to your doctor to inspiring quotes from such writers as Emily Dickinson, W. H. Auden, Jane Kenyon, and others, *Handbook for Mortals* encompasses the needs of both the body and the spirit in our final years.

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