

- Be honest and unafraid. What kind of presence might *you* want from a companion if you were dying?
- Your presence is the most important thing. You're valuable just being there. Don't feel you have to do something.
- Stay present, open, available. Go slow. Be aware of yourself.
- Keep yourself equal with your dying companion – no separation, no sympathy, no hovering above. Keep your heart lower than theirs.
- Ask before touching. Don't spend the night.
- Listen with your whole heart, without judging, fixing, evaluating or reassuring.
- Be willing to talk about dying. Be receptive to the patient's process. Don't avoid.
- Allow the dying person's end of life journey to unfold as it does, not as *you* want or hope it to.
- Be aware of your own needs and agendas – to be helpful, to talk, to do tasks, to bring things, to be planning your own death. Let those things be there, but try not to act on them. Hold them aside.
- Address an unconscious dying person directly and with caring attention. Be ultra sensitive to their presence even if they seem unaware, asleep, in a coma, or in the background.
- Sometimes unexpected and uncomfortable things occur. A calm presence and a faith in your ability to face the unknown with equanimity and strength helps during times like these.