



When a Child Dies: How Pediatric Physicians and Nurses Cope

Robert S. McKelvey

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How is it possible for practitioners of the healing arts to cope with the deaths of children and the devastating grief of their families? Physician Robert McKelvey looks squarely at this painful question and gets to the heart of it in *When a Child Dies*. Although the stories he tells are replete with heartbreak, he achieves a higher purpose by illuminating the successes and failures of medical training in helping doctors and nurses confront these deaths.

McKelvey interviews members of a pediatric hospital staff, specifically those working in intensive care and hematology-oncology units where children often die and where caretakers have a great deal of experience with terminal illness. His interview subjects discuss their family backgrounds and what led them into medicine; their education, training, and on-the-job experience that helps them deal with death; their emotional reactions to the death of a young person; and their styles of coping, both personally and professionally.

This is the first book to focus on the grieving process of physicians and nurses for their child patients. There is a wealth of information here that will be recognizable and comforting to those already in the medical profession and that will help in the training of those about to enter the profession. Physicians, nurses, and medical students, as well as sociologists, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, the clergy, and families, will find this book invaluable.

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