

We Know How This Ends, Living While Dying
by Bruce Kramer and Cathy Wurzer



End in Mind

1. "Dis ease has always been with me, lying in the depths of collective human need, illuminating life's inevitable sharp edges, it's dangerous borders, its precarious balance between good living and catastrophic existence." How does the distinction between disease and dis ease help you understand experiences you have? When have you recognized dis ease in yourself or others? What did it reveal to you?
2. After Bruce's diagnosis, he gained an acute awareness of his own mortality, became much more open in discussion, conversation, and in his needs from friends, caregivers, and family. How did his story make you change your view of your own mortality? Has that awareness brought any transitions to your approach to relationships?
3. After his diagnosis, and especially as the disease progressed, Bruce was very keen to the toll of his dis ease on his caregivers. "No person can give without receiving and receiving will never be authentic without learning to give." What caregiving have you given or received? How have you balanced that caregiving? How have you provided support and relief to a caregiver?
4. Chapter 13 discusses time traveling. Bruce took many naps, read voraciously, and was incredibly reflective. During this time, he states that what is important becomes very clear. If it's costing you nickels of energy instead of feeding your soul, it's a waste of a precious gift of time. What feeds your soul? What choices have you made this week that fulfilled you? Drained you?
5. Vulnerability in dis ease, in able-bodiedness, in relationships are all themes throughout the book. Bruce grew close to people through showing his vulnerability. At first, it was incredibly difficult for Bruce to ask for help, but once he let ALS become his teacher, he realized that we can only grow through showing our vulnerabilities. When was the last time you showed your vulnerabilities? How do you think it affected outcomes?
6. Adaptive Yoga was a surprising shift for Bruce. It taught him that you can indeed practice yoga without being able to move your arms and legs, that it deepens connections with those who practice with you, and that receiving is a gift. Even when breathing became difficult, weekly yoga was a routine not to be missed. Even through a physical decline, Bruce grew through his yoga practice. It truly helped him through grief and loss with each paper cut of his dis ease. What is your adaptive yoga? What has helped you focus your mind, body, and soul to feel more connected to your true self?