

## HEALING PRACTICES AT THE END OF LIFE

Primary Mentors: Dr. Kevin Dieter, Stan Tomandl, Ann Jacob

Honorary Mentors: Ira Byock, Joan Halifax, and Dame Cicely Saunders\*

*"I once asked a man who knew he was dying what he needed above all in those who were caring for him. He said, 'For someone to look as if they are trying to understand me.'" "Indeed, it is impossible to understand fully another person, but I never forgot that he did not ask for success but only that someone should care enough to try."* Dame Cecily Saunders 1918-2005. Founder of the Modern Hospice movement.

This track will help apprentices translate Anamcara principles into practice. The human life journey has numerous challenges and thresholds. We offer practical spiritual skills and awareness tools for use during end of life and other transitions. Apprentices will have an opportunity to explore more deeply: coma communication, story and metaphor, spiritual health assessment, and other specific practices. We will teach through narrative and lecture, resource materials, journal writing, experiential exercises, and time for questions, supervision and learning discussions. Enriching our ability to be direct, compassionate, clear, attentive, and connecting to another's nature and needs; you will learn about real life situations, heartfelt experiences, and the potential for furthering deep, meaningful, relieving care, as an Anamcara Apprentice. The year will have value for professional and lay caregivers.

### Primary Lessons:

- a. Weaving together the medical, psycho-social and spiritual dimensions of care.
- b. In-depth mentorship for communicating with people in altered states of consciousness.
- c. Developing our Anamcara presence with persons during major life transitions.

### Practical Skills:

- a. Facilitating conversations about death and other essential real life situations.
- b. On medications: Learning when enough is 'enough' and when is 'more' better.
- c. Skills for working with family entanglements.
- d. Enhancing communication using non-verbal signals. How to read feedback, find insight in delirium, follow and respond to end of life breath patterns.
- e. Interact usefully during communication dilemmas by learning to use personal reactions, intuition, serendipity, and synchronicities in service of spirit in the moment.
- f. Specific practices using nature to connect with human nature.
- g. Utilize narrative medicine skills to facilitate end of life healing as well as self care for caregivers.
- h. Recognizing sacred space when attending to the dying.
- i. Attending to mystery, wonder, and awe as guideposts in understanding the dying process.