

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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This issue of *Reflections* is dedicated to those professional social workers who have offered caregiving to family members facing the end stages of their lives. The task of facing one of the greatest of life's challenges is not made easier by professional education and experience, as these narratives testify. Instead there is a bittersweet quality to the inversions experienced by those who have witnessed such passages from a safe professional distance. In the process of meeting the great challenge and opportunity offered by those who are dying, the authors in these narratives drew on their resources and their circles of support to sustain them, and found themselves in the roles of clients, perhaps for the first time.



Virtually all of us will have this experience at some point in our lives. While we are living it, the pain is searing; we feel as if we will die along with the one we love. Saying goodbye is the hardest thing we will ever do. Yet the real meaning of these experiences is felt only years later, when we can think about this time with calm reflection and realize that it has deepened our hold on life and diminished our fear of death.

*Reflections* would like to thank Steve Wilson for conceiving this issue, soliciting the narratives and performing the role of guest editor with great panache and intelligence. His contribution as a gerontologist is to have professionals reflect on their own first-hand experience with mortality. The universality of their experiences is refracted through their intellectual understanding of the themes embedded in end of life issues and their professional experience of witnessing these themes play out at a remove, for others. Steve Wilson has given us a great gift with this issue, one that *Reflections'* readers can share as their lives unfold.

## Corrections:

We'd like to apologize for an error that was printed in our Winter Issue, Volume 14, #1. The narrative entitled "The Teacher's Task: Empowering the Student," by Paul Johnson and Brandi Fairchild has a mistake in the byline: Ms. Fairchild is listed as D.S.W., when it should have read B.S.W. We apologize to Ms. Fairchild for this error.

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