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When the thing they want most is a peaceful death

Inspired by her mother and by Terry Schiavo, author explores a patient's right to die

WHO: Janice Van Dyck, author of *Finding Frances* (April 2010, Winston-Higgins Press).

WHAT: It's the most difficult decision many of us will ever make.

When a family member is dying, should we fight to keep them alive, or let nature take its course? What if that person asked *you* to pull the plug, and let them have a peaceful death?

Finding Frances (April 2010, Winston-Higgins Press) by Janice Van Dyck, tells the story of a family grappling with this issue. A life-long smoker, Frances Baldwin has emphysema, heart failure, and a palpable desire to die on her own terms. But her husband and three grown children – not to mention the medical industry – aren't ready to grant this simple wish so easily.

A must-read for caretakers, those with aging parents, or anyone who has ever asked themselves the same question Van Dyck did, *Finding Frances* will no doubt spark a dialogue about ethical choices when a family member expresses a willingness to die.

Praise from Washington Times Book Review:

"How does each person want to live? How would they want to die? Death will happen to all of us without a doubt. Can we as individuals and as a community face our own mortality and incorporate options into our health care? ...Our current medical system is required to do whatever it can to prolong life. Is there a way for us to improve on that model?"

Van Dyck brings these questions smoothly to the surface without ever pushing an agenda or setting up arguments. She leaves the reader wishing death could be made easier and glad that the family and hospital finally helped Frances go." --*Cecie O'Bryon England*

WHEN: Van Dyck is available for an interview at your convenience.

SHOW SEGMENT IDEAS:

- Five years after Terri Schiavo's death, what have we learned?
- What are a patient's options, when he or she desires a dignified and natural death?
- The voices of the "sandwich generation:" Facing its own mortality, while caring for aging parents
- How did the Terri Schiavo case – and her own mother's passing – inspire Van Dyck to write *Finding Frances*?
- How does fiction help us discuss this controversial issue?

JANICE VAN DYCK is a freelance writer and author of *The O'Malley Trilogy*. A Philadelphia native, she now lives in the Tampa Bay, Florida area. A 20-year business veteran, she has enjoyed a long career as a senior executive in a public company, as a corporate communications specialist, and as an organizational development consultant. She is currently involved with Project Grace (www.projectgrace.org), a non-profit devoted to advance care planning. For more information, please visit www.janicevandyck.com.

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