

Ethics after Hours



Hold Me

The Movie

Summary¹

Hannah is an end of life caregiver whose job is to hold and console people while they are going through medically assisted dying performed by a doctor in the patient's home. The job is taking its toll on her and she struggles with empathy burnout. Hannah finds herself uncertain and conflicted, but instead of facing her own pain, she holds herself together for the sake of those around her. When her mother is hospitalized, Hannah sees no choice but to continue her job so she can pay for her mother's hospital bills. Reluctantly, she agrees to a patient's request to meet her and get to know her before she is to watch him die. Realizing that she can't escape the path she is on or the memories of the people she has consoled in death, she finally allows herself to grieve.

Duration: 1 hours 29 mins.

Writer/Director: Tease Snyder

Released: 2016

Available online: [Hold Me The Movie](#)

Additional Resources: The movie website has additional material, including a panel discussion with a psychologist, a family physician and a clinical ethicist, which is highly recommended to watch after the movie.

Themes: End of life care, compassion fatigue, burnout, death with dignity, medically assisted death

Questions for discussion:

- What was your initial reaction to this movie?
- Do you have any ethical concerns around the job Hannah is doing?
- Why do you think the nurse said no to the job Hannah does?
- Why do you think Hannah attempted to obstruct the assisted death of one her patients?

¹ Summary adapted from the official movie website: <http://www.holdmethemovie.com/>

- Do you think Hannah made the right decision in attempting to obstruct her patient's assisted death?
- In Hannah's conversation with the nurse she explains how she keeps thinking about all the practical things she needs to do for her mother. What was your reaction to her thoughts?
- Discuss the different ways Hannah expresses grief in the movie. Do you think that there's a relationship between her grief and her burnout?
- Hannah says "Sometimes it is just too much, but then I tell myself that that's ok". Discuss the role of self-care in preventing compassion fatigue.
- Hannah and the doctor never seem to do an official debriefing after the assisted deaths. Discuss the role of debriefing among care team members to prevent compassion fatigue.
- What do you think of the way the movie portrays the patients who have opted for medical assistance in dying?
- Do you think the movie portrays the medically assisted death as a death with dignity?
- What does a death with dignity mean to you?
- If you watched the panel discussion (separate video on the movie website), how do you think the stories of the panellists and their experiences with assisted death compare to the way it is portrayed in the movie?