Ethics after Hours

End Game - Documentary

Summary[1]

In this documentary we follow members of the Palliative Care Team at UCSF Medical Center and at the Zen Hospice Project, who are dedicated to changing our thinking about life and death. The movie features conversations between medical practitioners, their terminally ill patients, and the patients' relatives around end-of-life care. The film follows these patients as their health declines and they try to come to terms with death.

Duration: 40 mins.
Directors: Rob Epstein, Jeffrey Friedman
Produced by Steven Ungerleider and Shoshana Ungerleider
Released: Jan 21, 2018
Available on Netflix (Original Netflix Production)

Questions for discussion:
- What was your initial reaction to this movie?
- Dr. Miller describes suffering as the gap between the world you want and the world you've got. Do you agree? Why / why not?
- How do our compassionate reactions to others' suffering affect how we balance values when we make decisions?
- Early in the movie, Mitra's husband is struggling with the idea of shifting from aggressive treatment to palliative care because he is not ready to let her go. Her mother's primary concern is that Mitra is suffering. It is clear that they are both having a hard time having to make a decision about care and they disagree on what approach to take.
  - What was your reaction to their conversation?
  - What do you think of the way the Dr. Pantilat handled the situation?
- Later in the movie Mitra's husband and mother have another conversation about shifting Mitra to palliative care and letting her die a natural death.
  - Identify and discuss some of the differences in their way of thinking about the fact that Mitra is dying compared to the conversation they have with the health care team earlier in the movie.
- What is a "natural" death in a modern medical setting?
- In your opinion, what is a good death?

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[1] This summary is adapted from the Wikipedia website
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End_Game_(2018_film)