

Aging, Alzheimer's and the Arts: Exercising Our Therapeutic Imaginations

The arts have a way of reaching our hearts and souls, affirming our common humanity. Join us in this visual feast which will illuminate traditional and contemporary images—serious and humorous— of the joys and strains of aging, and more specifically, the fears and hopes regarding Alzheimer's disease and the end-of-life.

This program will explore a variety of resources and techniques readily accessible and easily adaptable to engage areas of the brain that are not damaged by Alzheimer's disease and thus help reawaken identity, dignity, connection and hope for people with Alzheimer's and for those who care for them.

Goals/Objectives

- 1. Explore the concept of personhood that challenges us to deeper and more spiritual analysis of human worth.**
- 2. Experience [two] practical strategies for engaging discussions about clients' and family members' fears and hopes regarding Alzheimer's disease and care at the end-of- life.**
- 3. Identify new resources for reflective practice and renewal.**

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Formerly she was Professor of Humanities in Medicine and founding Director of the Program of Medical Humanities UMass Medical and Graduate Nursing Schools. In her 25 years at UMass, she pioneered programmatic and curricula offerings in death, dying, hospice and palliative medicine, and reflective practice. She continues to develop and conduct Care for the Caregiver Projects which she has presented in Africa and Japan. Her publications include the classic handbooks *Facing Death: Images, Insights and Interventions* (1991), *Grief and the Healing Arts: Creativity as Therapy* (1999), *One Breath Apart: Facing Dissection* (2009) and the DVD *Art, Spirit and Soul* (forthcoming). Bertman was named "Outstanding Death Educator" by both the Association of Death Education and Counseling and the National Center for Death Education, honored by the University of Massachusetts for Distinguished Professional and Public Service, co-recipient of the first humanities award by the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and inducted into honorary membership to Sigma Theta Tau, the International Graduate Nursing Honor Society.