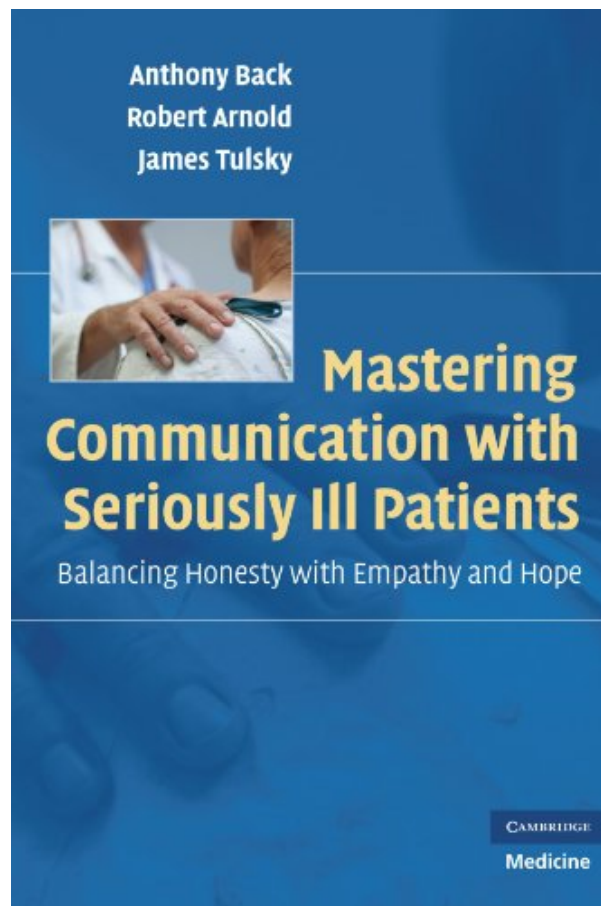


**MASTERING COMMUNICATION WITH
SERIOUSLY ILL PATIENTS: BALANCING
HONESTY WITH EMPATHY AND HOPE BY
ANTHONY BACK, ROBERT ARNOLD,
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Review

Advance Praise for **Mastering Communication**: "Clear, concise, and brimming with useful advice, **Mastering Communication With Seriously Ill Patients** is one of those rare books that manages to be both eminently practical and thoroughly enjoyable. Written by three of the most important figures in the field of doctor-patient communication, this book is a must-read for clinicians who care not only for the seriously ill but for any patient." - Pauline Chen, author of *Final Exam* (Knopf) and "Doctor and Patient" columnist for the *New York Times*

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Physicians who care for patients with life-threatening illnesses face daunting communication challenges. Patients and family members can react to difficult news with sadness, distress, anger, or denial. This book defines the specific communication tasks involved in talking with patients with life-threatening illnesses and their families. Topics include delivering bad news, transition to palliative care, discussing goals of advance-care planning and do-not-resuscitate orders, existential and spiritual issues, family conferences, medical futility, and other conflicts at the end of life. Drs. Anthony Back, Robert Arnold, and James Tulsky bring together empirical research as well as their own experience to provide a roadmap through difficult conversations about life-threatening issues. The book offers both a theoretical framework and practical conversational tools that the practicing physician and clinician can use to improve communication skills, increase satisfaction, and protect themselves from burnout.

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Fantastic resource for EVERY clinician

By NYC Doc

I have been a palliative care physician for 5 years now, and I was amazed at how much this book taught me. I appreciate its straightforward language and found that I was learning new communication techniques from

the very first page (yes, really!). I think this book is a great resource for any clinician regardless of their level of expertise, experience, or training. From the novice to the expert - from medical student to attending physician - and for every discipline - this book should be required reading for anyone who deals with patients with serious illness and their families.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Highly recommended

By PallDoc

I was fortunate enough to attend a communication skills training retreat with the authors and it changed the way I practice medicine. I was moved to write this review because the book so effectively distills their years of experience as clinicians and educators into a readable and practical format. It serves as an ideal refresher and reference for those who have taken part in their workshops. More importantly, though, the text is accessible enough that it could be used by anyone of any discipline who deals with seriously ill patients, even if you never thought of communication skills as something that could be taught! Written in the style of "Difficult Conversations" and "Getting to Yes" the authors have structured the book to make it a quick, high yield read. They use tables to highlight "what happened" in a conversation and "what we can learn" then end each section with "the bottom line" and a few tips to help you in "maximizing your learning." This material made me a much better communicator which has not only helped my patients but has also made my practice infinitely more fulfilling. This book offers the same opportunity to anyone who reads it which I find very exciting for the future of medicine. I cannot recommend this book highly enough.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

What all Physicians should read during training . . . and after.

By Ann Kellogg

Communicating serious news and dealing with end-of-life issues are poorly taught in medical school, but something that is constantly present in practice. This book is a quick read, but a great resource in how to have those discussions go well. As we are constantly dealing with death, we easily forget how new, personal and foreign a serious situation is to the individual patient we see. This book walks through discussions about breaking serious news, giving a prognosis, to discussing code status while being mindful of where the patient is at. I can't advocate this enough as needing to be a book in every doctor's library.

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