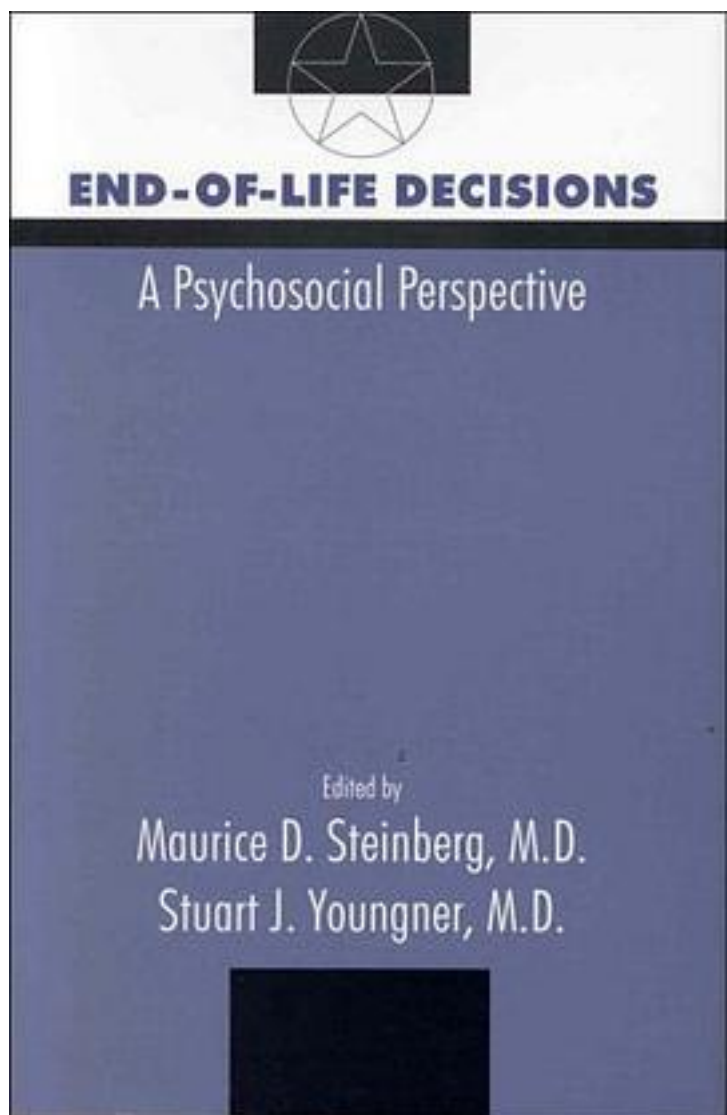


End-of-life Decisions



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In recent years, the lens of the media has narrowed issues of euthanasia and assisted suicide to a drama involving two players: Dr. Kevorkian and the law. This has left suffering patients and their families unrecognized and isolated when facing the most painful life decision. Here at last is a book that addresses the role of psychiatry in dealing with a major, controversial topic in American medicine today. *End-of-Life Decisions: A Psychosocial Perspective* acknowledges and explores the role psychiatrists can play as advisers to the terminally ill and their loved ones. It describes the wide range of emotional and psychiatric issues faced by the patient, family, and physician that affect choices patients make to limit treatment or seek physician assistance in dying. A distinguished group of contributors, all of whom have extensive experience dealing with end-of-life issues in clinical practice, address topics that may not have been considered previously. From dealing with issues of terminal illnesses in children, to making difficult treatment decisions for patients with AIDS; from judging the competency of clinically depressed patients for making sound decisions, to understanding the influence of family dynamics, economic forces, and language differences on doctor-patient communication. The book uses specific case studies and data to explore the role of professionals in end-of-life decisions. *End-of-Life Decisions* strikes a careful balance between the need for patient autonomy and the challenge to make well-formulated treatment decisions. This book will heighten modern medicine's and society's consciousness concerning the difficult challenges faced by patients and their families when making end-of-life decisions.

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