

## **Dying Person's Bill of Rights**

- The right to be treated as a living human being until death.
- The right to maintain a sense of hopefulness however changing the focus may be.
- The right to express feelings about one's approaching death in one's own way.
- The right to participate in decisions concerning one's care.
- The right to expect continued medical and nursing attention even though "cure" goals have been changed to "comfort" goals.
- The right to maintain one's individuality and not be judged by personal decisions which may be contrary to the belief of others.
- The right to be free from pain.
- The right to have one's questions answered honestly.
- The right to have help from one's family and for one's family in accepting death.
- The right to die with peace and dignity and not die alone if they wish.
- The right to discuss and enlarge one's religious and/or spiritual experiences whatever they may mean to others.
- The right to expect that the sanctity of one's body will be respected after death.
- The right to be cared for by caring, sensitive, knowledgeable people who will attempt to understand the needs of the dying and be able to gain some satisfaction in helping one to face death.

*Source: Donovan and Pierce (1976). Cancer Care Nursing, p.33. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.*