

em dash podcast

Episode 6 Show Notes: "Niagara Falls," featuring Amy Berman

Podcast available at: <https://www.em-dash-podcast.com>

Show Notes

(00:00) Show Intro

(00:15) Amy introduces herself and lists the words she uses to describe her identities:

- "Registered Nurse"
 - "expert in geriatric care – care of older adults"
 - "single mother to a lovely young lady named Stephanie"
 - "I'm also a person who has a serious illness"
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(00:36) Amy talks about the moment six and a half years ago that she went from being a nurse to being someone with a terminal illness.

(07:23) Amy talks about the differences between her experience with her local doctor and her experience with a renowned expert from whom she sought a second opinion.

- "There were two doctors who were both world class. One of them could care nothing about who I was, and I would have had a very different experience. I would have been thrown off the cliff and gone out to the same end point. It would not have been a good experience."
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(10:54) Amy talks about living – *really* living – for the six and a half years since her diagnosis, thanks to the care she's received from palliative care professionals.

- "If you looked at me, I'm going to die at some point – but not today. Today I'm living with serious illness."
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(13:51) Amy talks about access to and trust of palliative care in communities of color, and urges people with serious illness to seek palliative care so that they can live their lives as fully as possible.

(15:15) Amy gives an example of a time when palliative care was able to provide her with efficient, effective symptom relief that made it possible for her to keep living her life with minimal interruption or discomfort.

(15:15) Amy talks about the Choosing Wisely campaign

(18:55) Amy talks about the way her palliative care team handled treating a recent pain issue:

- "They were brilliant. They continue to be exactly what you would want in your corner."

(19:01) Amy talks about nurses:

- "I hold nurses in the highest esteem. I couldn't speak more highly [of them]. I've had the opportunity to intersect with strong, phenomenally supportive people, both on my palliative care team and on my cancer care team, that are just amazing. The compassion that they've shown, the way that they explain things – they're just phenomenal."

(19:26) Amy talks about the future:

- "I don't know how much time I have left...I would kind of guess that this might be my last year because the cancer's progressing....My guess is that I don't have a tremendous amount of time."
- "I'd like the public to see that palliative care is there for them. I'd like to see an expansion of palliative care so that people who need it can get it."
- "I'd like for healthcare professionals to better understand palliative care. We have a big problem in that there are many healthcare professionals who don't refer to the palliative care team because *they* don't understand what it is."

(21:18) Amy tells listeners how to get more information about palliative care.

(21:39) Show Outro

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Guest Bio: Amy Berman, BSN, LHD



Amy Berman is a Senior Program Officer with the John A. Hartford Foundation. She heads the Foundation's development and dissemination of innovative, cost-effective Models of Care that improve health outcomes for older adults. Among these efforts, Ms. Berman is responsible for the Foundation's work to advance palliative care led by Diane Meier and the Center to Advance Palliative Care. She also directs a number of collaborations with federal partners including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, and the Administration for Community Living. Ms. Berman openly shares her

experiences living with Stage IV breast cancer. She has presented to the Institute on Medicine and has authored numerous pieces about her health care choices, palliative care and implications for patients, practice and policy. Her piece in *Health Affairs*, *Living Life In My Own Way—And Dying That Way As Well*, was among the journal's most read in 2012. She has been featured in *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and on NPR's *Diane Rehm Show*. She blogs on the Hartford Foundation's HealthAGenda site (www.jhartfound.org/blog) and can be followed on Twitter as @jhartfound and @notesonnursing.

Links

- The Center to Advance Palliative Care's website about how to access palliative care: <http://www.getpalliativecare.org>
- "*Choosing Wisely* is an initiative of the ABIM Foundation in partnership with Consumer Reports that seeks to advance a national dialogue on avoiding wasteful or unnecessary medical tests, treatments and procedures." <http://www.choosingwisely.org/>

Tags: Amy Berman, nurse, palliative care, life-limiting, terminal, breast cancer, illness, diversity, difference, healthcare