



**10010 Kennerly Road
St. Louis, Missouri
(314) 525-7360**



How to Help Resolve the Patient's Unfinished Business

People near the end of their life commonly to want to take certain actions or have certain experiences before they die. Sometimes, it is to do or see something important or pleasant again, such as being with friends or visiting an especially meaningful place. Sometimes, it is to say things to someone that have been unsaid in the past or to resolve some old misunderstanding or conflict. Arranging for these experiences can be substantial undertakings, involving contacting other people and organizing long-distance travel.

Do not expect that the experiences you arrange will always be successful. Even with the best of intentions, things may not happen as you or the person you are caring for would like. The weather may be less than ideal for the trip. The people you work hard to bring together may not say helpful things once they arrive. When it is over, both of you may be disappointed. The fact that you tried, however, can be very important - and this may make all of the effort worthwhile.

Before committing to such a major undertaking, ask yourself how you and the person being cared for would feel if the experience is less than you hope. Would it still be worth the time and resources? If your answer is no, ask what you could do that would be less costly or stressful. If your answer is yes, then move ahead (with realistic expectations).

Source: American College of Physicians