

SESSION FOUR

Choose a Proxy and
Provide Specific Instructions



Big Word for This Session: COMMUNITY

*Share each other's burdens,
and in this way obey the law of Christ.*

— GALATIANS 6:2, NLT

1. What is the Patient Self-Determination Act?

How does this change the way we communicate with physicians?

A law created by Congress on November 5, 1990.

This law made it illegal for a doctor to do anything to you without your consent.

Doctors are required to explain what they want to do, make sure you understand the procedure then give your consent or they will not be able to proceed.

This is called informed consent.

This is the reason we all need a proxy. If you can't speak and there's no one to speak for you, physicians default to doing everything they know to do to keep you alive as defined by modern medicine.

2. What are the problems that can arise if you choose a spouse or a child for a proxy?

Dr. Michael Mitchell works with as many as 100 dying patients at any one time. He

says, “When someone is dying
there is no such
thing as a
functional family.”

(Lecture at the USC Graduate School of Gerontology September 25, 2014)

3. Is choosing a proxy enough? **NO. Must provide specific instructions.**

4. Why does everybody need someone to advocate on their behalf?

Doctors do not make end-of-life decisions. You do.

Since most of us will be too weak toward the end of this life to sort out complex medical choices, we need a proxy. You must define what is important to you and you must communicate now while you are healthy.

Completing pages 157-164 and sharing what you write is your communication tool.

Create a Circle of Care starting with selecting a proxy and a backup.

Having 8 or 10 or more who have your instructions means the proxy is not alone. The proxy is supported by the others who have been given your instructions. This doesn't mean they get to talk with doctors—only your proxy has that legal authority—it means they can comfort and encourage the proxy. This is good for you especially as a child or spouse could waffle and friends, family, pastors and doctors who have your instructions can keep them accountable.

Think about people you know who . . .

- You trust with your life.
- Would be willing to speak for you.
- Can negotiate with physicians to achieve your stated goals and be willing to fire a physician who doesn't listen.
- Can stand up to family members who may not agree with you.
- Can listen to facts presented and make a rational decision.
- Can calmly manage any conflicts.
- Can separate their personal desires for you from your desires for you.
- Would take some time soon to review with you what you are writing in this document.
- Are young enough and healthy enough to be around in the future.
- Live close to you; can travel to you quickly; or work via phone, email, and text with a physician.

FACT: If you are over 60 there's a 70% chance you will not have capacity to make decisions for yourself at end of life.

FACT: Proxies make care decisions at end of life in up to 75% of cases.

like my dad,
**most named
healthcare proxies
are not able
to do their job**

“Everybody knows, including your healthcare proxy, you don’t want to be kept alive with machines.”

**In 2018 Medicare spent \$365 BILLION
in the last six months
of patient’s lives and in six months
they were all dead.**

We put in \$120,000 and take out \$450,000.

This reveals an epidemic of over treatment.

The legacy players
are happy
with the \$4 trillion
medical industrial complex when
we call 911



Healthcare Systems

Physician Groups

Pharmaceuticals

Insurance Companies

5. What problems can arise if you choose someone who is afraid of death for you or for themselves?

They freeze. The right proxy will be able to ask the right questions to assure your instructions are respected.

(Your instructions generate the questions.

Will Hattie be able to have meaningful conversations? Taste, chew and swallow crunchy food like potato chips? Crisp chocolate chip cookies? This keeps anyone from keeping me alive on spoon-fed liquids. Toilet herself?)

6. Read Mark 3:31–35 and John 19:26–27.

How did Jesus redefine family?

Whoever does the will of God is my brother, my mother, my sister.

Even so, what did Jesus do for his mother?

Makes caring connection for her to have a new son!

7. Read Mark 8:31–38 and John 12:6–7.

How did Jesus prepare his own Circle of Care for his death?

Told the disciples....going to be betrayed...tried and found guilty...
killed...rise from the dead...I'm going to die soon...this is my body
broken...this is my blood poured out for you...blessed the women who
poured oil on him and said...you will not always have me

still Peter used all of his might to keep Jesus here

You eliminate the Peters in your life by choosing someone you can trust.

A psychologist chose her nephew's wife.

A banker chose her hairdresser.

My close friend chose the wife of a former boss.

All of these women have husbands and children and who are educated and productive.

But all of these women have learned here that the complex emotions around end of life will make it extremely difficult or impossible for their close loved ones to make thoughtful choices.





Ellie Montano came to work for the Fox family in 1989 when she was 32 years old. Carolyn chose Ellie because her husband and two sons—three brilliant men—wouldn't even listen to her talk about the possibility she just might die someday. Ellie watched in grief for years as cousins kept a grandmother alive.



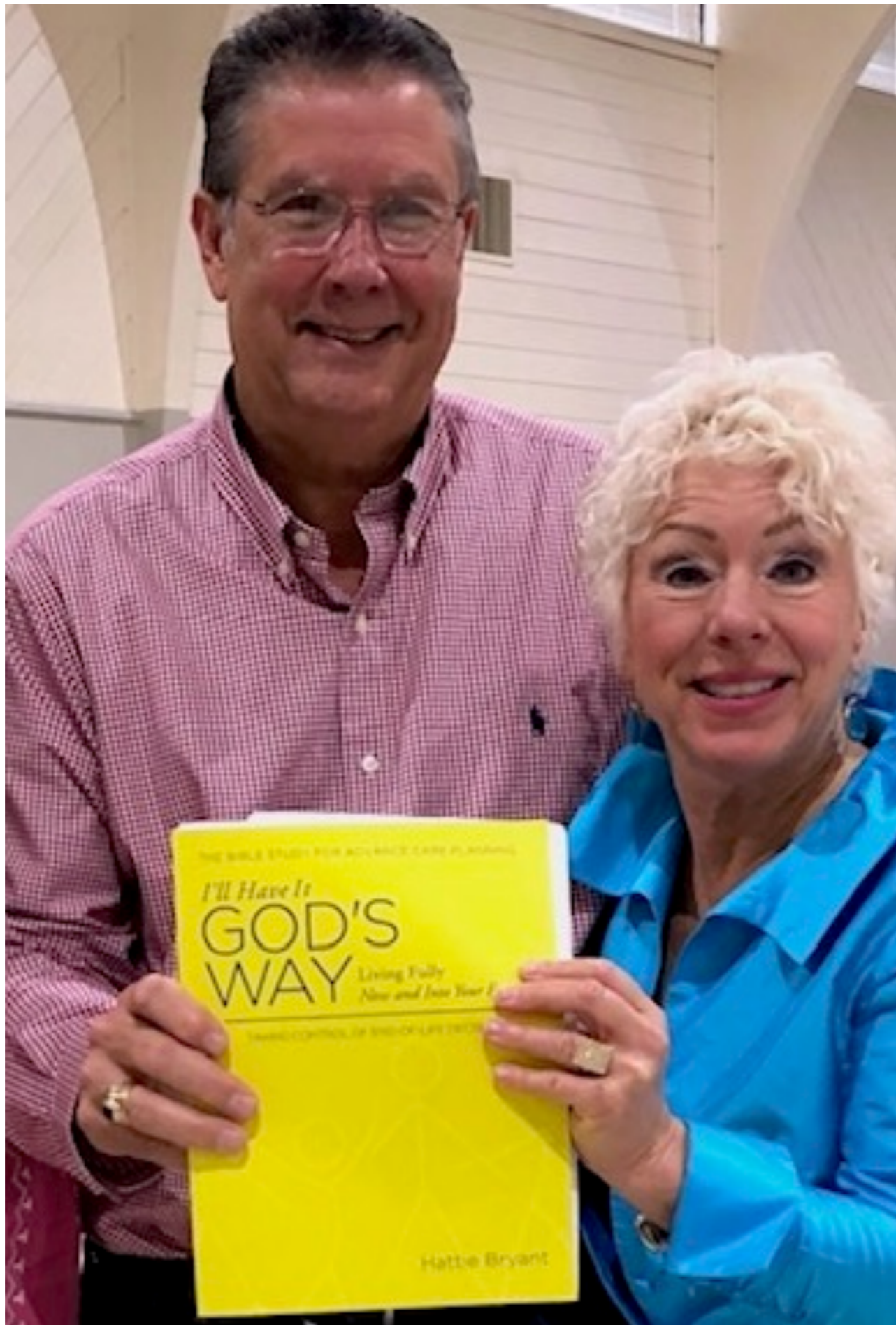
Dr. Neff is a retired physician who has three sons and a daughter. Two sons are physicians. She chose as her proxy the wife of the son who is not a physician. She said her physician sons would compete over who could keep her here the longest.

David Tarter did not choose either his pharmacist son or his physician nephew. He chose a young man he drinks coffee and prays with weekly.





One woman said she has no family that fit the criteria needed for a healthcare proxy so I brought in an ER doc she knows from church. He is honored to do this for her.

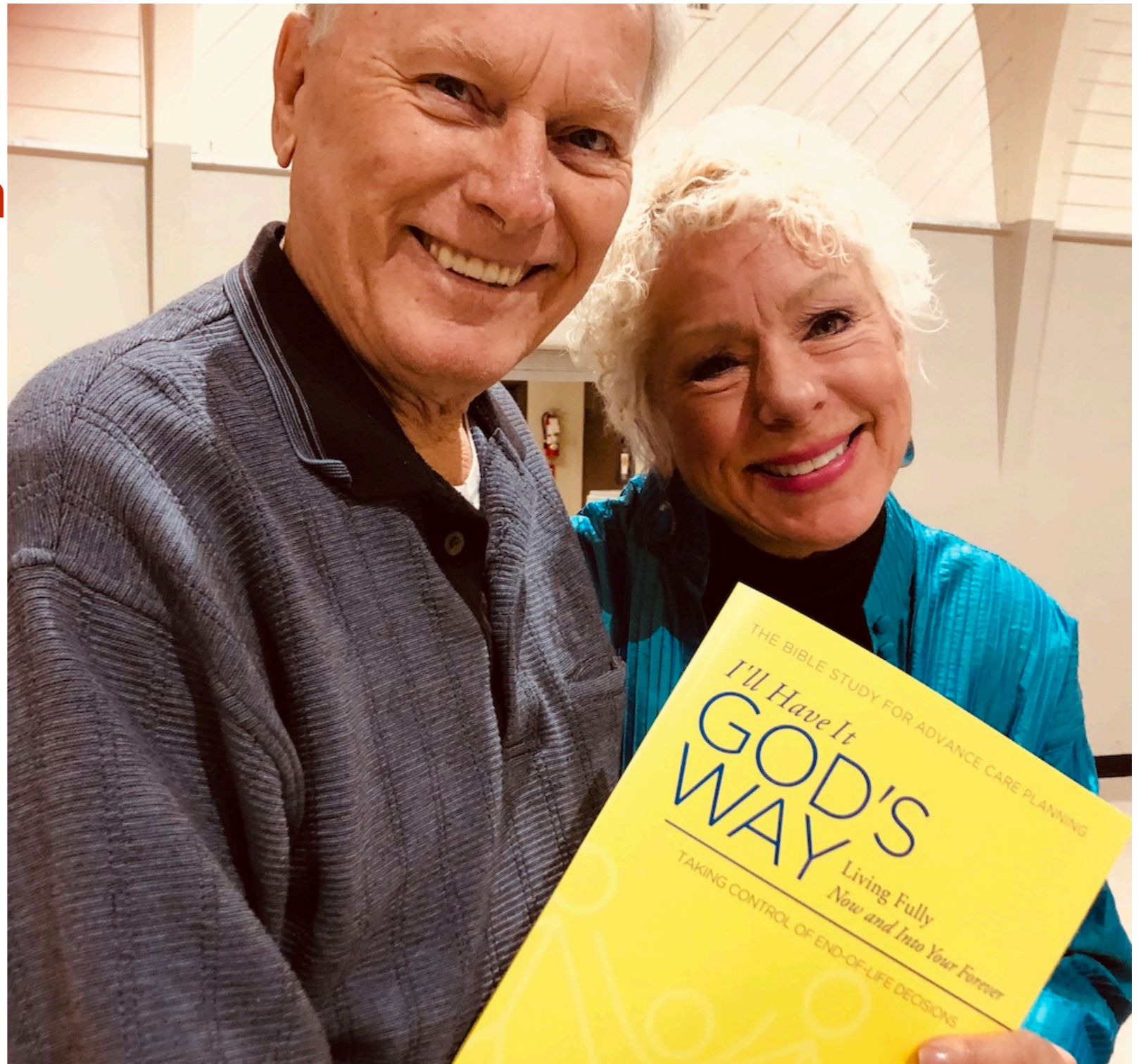


Retired Pastor Paul has one daughter who he said is too tender-hearted so he chose his son-in-law who is a business man.



Sylvia chose co-workers, not her daughter or son-in-law.

Very wealthy man with one daughter chose his real estate broker who is 20 years younger.



too often the
frail and seriously ill
are not allowed
to die with
grace and ease

the Peters in their lives think they are the brave,
smart ones leading the charge for your life while
Jesus could be calling you to your perfect life

Close loved ones are often the reason...

“Efforts to prolong
life when there is
limited hope of
recovery threaten to
prolong dying rather
than save life.”

Kathryn Butler, MD

A proxy should ask: is this life saving or death prolonging?

Efforts to prolong life when there is limited hope of recovery threaten to prolong dying rather than save life and ignore God's authority over death. Our medical technology can transmute death from a finite event into a prolonged and painful process.

-Kathryn Butler, MD

When you are ready to leave us,
and the burden of care is greater than the benefit
make sure your DNH (Do Not Hospitalize)
is front and center.

TIP: Your family might fight with you just as Peter
fought with Jesus.

Jesus explains he will suffer and be killed, Peter says, “never.”
Jesus says, in Matthew 16:23, “Get behind me satan.”

One Christian physician talking with the mom of a dying son said, “If he gets so sick that we can’t fix him with our worldly treatments we might know that God is calling him. Stopping the heart is God’s call.”

Sunita Puri, MD
That Good Night

One study revealed that family members serving as a proxy made decisions contrary to the patient's instructions in 1/3 of cases.

"The Accuracy of Surrogate Decision Makers: A Systematic Review"

“The death of a beloved is an amputation.”

C. S. Lewis



Does naming your spouse or a sensitive child to be your proxy add a burden or lift a burden?

Since my dad was the named proxy and was not able to do his job, I took over. But what if my brother and sister had fought with me?

Just like Ariel Sharon, my mom would have been sent to a nursing home with a feeding tube.

No worries because Jesus redefined family.
Remember: His biological family thought he was crazy.
They said, “He is out of his mind.” Mark 3:21

What might be impossible for our biological family to do
can be possible for those who love us but are not too, too
close. Let's consider our Christian brothers and sisters.
2.5 billion to choose from!

Let's volunteer to be a proxy for a friend.



Falyn is my 'Hattie' She is strong, smart, logical, calm, 34 years my junior, family by marriage, has read my goals, can stand up to other family members and physicians, and **can be trusted** to do for me what I want for me not what others might want for me

Think hard before choosing your spouse or your children.

My Directive in Essay Form

HATTIE'S HEALTHCARE DIRECTIVE

Let Nature Take Its Course

The more you
give your
Circle of Care,
the easier their
job will be.

When I am no longer able to do the things that are important to me such as breathe on my own, chew and swallow food, toilet myself, carry on a conversation, recognize people I know, read, etc., (unless I am healing from what is considered to be a short-term issue where full recovery is anticipated), I direct that medical care be withheld or withdrawn and that I be permitted to die naturally with only the administration of pain medications and other symptom-control medications to keep me comfortable.

Let nature take its course is my theme. When I can no longer speak for myself, my trusted proxies will execute the following:

Hospice care should be ordered by either a doctor who is on the case or accessed (a simple phone call) by a family member or either of my healthcare advocates who both have my durable power of attorney for healthcare, Falyn Curtis or Dr. Pat Gary. If I have some sort of calamity in public, I realize that 911 will be called, CPR will get done to me if needed to keep me alive and I will get taken to an ER. Hopefully, very quickly after that, my healthcare advocates will be contacted and they will implement this plan. If I have a calamity at home, do not call 911. No healthcare provider, including EMTs, is allowed to touch me without consultation with Ms. Curtis or Dr. Gary. Dr. Gary said she would not let me die on the floor, so I guess someone is allowed to pick me up off the floor and put me on a bed or sofa. Don't put me on the white sofas, as you know things can get messy.

Forbidden Treatments/Override

I forbid and choose to forego CPR, surgery, chemotherapy, dialysis, tests, ventilation, feeding tubes (no tube down my nose and no percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy tube), blood transfusions, antibiotics or IV hydration. I do not choose to die in a hospital or any other institution. The exception would be a Hospice in-patient facility due to the need for its pain and symptom management capabilities.

Your job is to choose a proxy and make it easy for that person and everyone in your circle of care which includes friends, family, clinicians, neighbors and clergy.

You make it doable by being specific about what is important to you and by sharing your instructions with family, friends, neighbors, clergy and physicians.

8. What did Lyle's mom do for her children?

Talked, talked and talked about death.

9. How might the minister or staff of your local church help you prepare to face death and other end-of-life issues?

10. How might asking your neighbors to be in your Circle of Care impact them?

11. Do you feel comfortable asking people to be in your Circle of Care? Why or why not? How might you overcome your discomfort?

Before our next session.

Let's look at page 112 for your assignment.

Please try to select your proxy from
the list you have made on
Page 113.

Father, help us see what you want us to see.

Dispel any fears or anxieties we have
about our own death and the
deaths of those we love. Make it easy for us
to speak with our chosen proxies, make
it easy for them to say yes.

Clear the way for us to come
to you when you call!

In Christ's name we ask.

Amen