

The end-of-life journey explored at 2014 Spirit & Place Festival

19th annual Public Conversation will feature bestselling author and journalist Gail Sheehy, bestselling poet and philosopher Mark Nepo, and author and palliative care expert Dr. Timothy E. Quill

Sunday, Nov. 16, 2014

Christian Theological Seminary, Shelton Auditorium, 4 p.m., Free Admission

INDIANAPOLIS – The public is invited to eavesdrop on a spontaneous conversation surrounding end-of-life issues from the perspective of a caregiver, patient, and physician as they chat together about this inevitable human “journey.” Speakers include Gail Sheehy, author of *Passages* and *Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos Into Confidence*; two-time cancer survivor and New York Times No. 1 bestselling author and poet Mark Nepo; and Dr. Timothy E. Quill, Director of the Center for Ethics, Humanities and Palliative Care, University of Rochester School of Medicine. The speakers will discuss multiple dimensions of death and dying, such as caregiving, aging, physician-assisted suicide, policy implications, and more, as well as the impacts on individual, family, and community life. A public reception will follow.

The 19th annual Public Conversation: Journey’s End will close the 10-day Spirit & Place Festival on Sunday, Nov. 16 at 4 p.m. in the Christian Theological Seminary’s Shelton Auditorium. The program is made possible with the support of the Walther Cancer Foundation; Indiana University Health Cancer Centers; IU Health Division for Values, Ethics, and Pastoral Services; Walther Palliative Care Research and Education Program; IU School of Medicine; CICOA Aging and In-Home Solutions; Goldstein Group Financial Advisory, LLC; and the Columbia Club; and through a partnership with the Spirit & Place Festival.

Now celebrating its 19th year, the city’s largest collaborative festival is an extensive civic celebration engaging upwards of 18,000 people throughout Central Indiana in dozens of programs presented in partnership with more than 100 organizations. A project of The Polis Center, part of the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI, the festival’s mission is to stimulate conversation, community building, and civic action through creative collaborations among the arts, religion, and humanities.

The 2014 festival explores JOURNEY through the lens of elders, prisoners, veterans, immigrants, people who are visually impaired, African Americans, Native Americans, and more. Programs include 37 experiences – performances, exhibits, documentaries, and conversations – on topics such as the journey of popcorn, gun violence, mass transit, arts therapy, marriage, immigrant composers, race relations, addiction, play, public health, religion, poetry, accessibility, and much more. The central Indiana festival begins Friday, Nov. 7.

As the bestselling author of 16 books including *Passages*, **Gail Sheehy** has rocked the culture and changed the way millions of women and men around the world look at the

stages of their lives. In 2010 she took on the most challenging and personal issue in her latest book, *Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos into Confidence*. She tells the inspiring story of her own 17-year journey caring for her husband and fills the book with stories of relatable families, along with their most creative strategies. Her new memoir *Daring: My Passages* will be released in September.

Mark Nepo is a poet and philosopher who has taught in the fields of poetry and spirituality for 40 years. A New York Times No. 1 bestselling author, he has published 14 books, recorded eight audio projects, and appeared several times with Oprah Winfrey on her Super Soul Sunday program on OWN TV. As a cancer survivor, Nepo devotes his writing and teaching to the journey of inner transformation and the life of relationship. His work has been translated into more than 20 languages and he often works with healing and medical communities.

Dr. Timothy E. Quill is a professor of medicine, psychiatry, and medical humanities at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. He is also the director of the Center for Ethics, Humanities and Palliative Care and a board-certified palliative care consultant. He has published and lectured widely about various aspects of the doctor-patient relationship, with special focus on end-of-life decision making, and is the author of several books on end-of life, including *Physician-Assisted Dying: The Case for Palliative Care and Patient Choice*, *Caring for Patients at the End of Life: Facing an Uncertain Future Together*, among others. Quill was the lead physician plaintiff in the New York State legal case challenging the law prohibiting physician-assisted death that was heard in 1997 by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Quill v. Vacco*).

For details on the Public Conversation and all Spirit & Place programs and events, visit spiritandplace.org.

About the Spirit & Place Festival

The Spirit & Place Festival catalyzes civic engagement, respect for diversity, public imagination, and enduring change. Spirit & Place is a collaborative community project managed by The Polis Center, part of the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI. Major partners include Lilly Endowment Inc.; Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc.; The Scott A. Jones Foundation; Bohlsen Group; The Indianapolis Foundation, a CICF Fund; IUPUI; IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI; University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Christian Theological Seminary, Christel DeHaan Family Foundation, Indianapolis Public Library and more than 200 other community partners and donors. For more information, call The Polis Center at (317) 274-2455 or visit www.spiritandplace.org. The 2014 festival takes place November 7-16.

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