

Episode: *Author Interview: "Solidarity in Mortal Time"*

Guest: Helen Stanton Chapple, PhD, RN, MSN, MA

Host: Tim Hoff

Transcript by: Cheryl Green

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[bright theme music]

TIM HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the *Author Interview series* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I'm your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative format for accessing the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is Dr Helen Chapple, a Professor at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, where she teaches health care ethics online to nursing students. She's here to discuss her article, *Solidarity in Mortal Time*, in the December 2022 issue of the Journal, [With Stillness and Solidarity](#). Dr Chapple, thank you so much for being on the podcast. [music fades out]

DR HELEN STANTON CHAPPLE: Thanks so much for having me.

HOFF: To begin with, what's the main ethics point in your article?

CHAPPLE: I would say that it's to pause, to notice. We need to seek to make meaning, and we're seeking stillness in order to do that, in order to take a break from the chaos around us and the urgency around us, to notice that this is something different, what we're seeing now. And what might be, in that stillness, what might be a way to make meaning out of this particular situation?

HOFF: And so, what do you see as the most important thing for health professions students and trainees to take from this article?

CHAPPLE: I would say that it would be to embrace and reflect on the ambiguity of the situation and the uncertainty and your feelings about that. Because feelings of helplessness are not things that people want to feel, but they are appropriate for a dying situation or a situation where it seems as though you can't change the trajectory of what's going on. So that rather than running away from that unpleasant feeling to kind of lean into it and interrogate it a little bit.

HOFF: Hmm. And finally, if you could add a point to this article that you didn't have the time or space to fully explore, what would that be?

CHAPPLE: I would say that we need to recognize the diversity of what it means to live while dying. That people who are maybe dying or very seriously ill can inhabit all different kinds of clinical conditions, so Jack in the article is quite healthy when I meet him. And I think there are a lot of folks out there who deal with dying patients in the clinical setting, in the acute care setting, who believe that they can only be unconscious and very close to death and all those kinds of things. So, it's important, I think, for us to recognize that there is an enormous diversity in this group of people who could be dying. [theme music returns]

HOFF: Hmm. Dr Chapple, thank you so much for being on the podcast today and for your contribution to the Journal this month.

CHAPPLE: You're very welcome.

HOFF: To read the full article as well as the rest of the December 2022 issue for free, visit our site, [JournalofEthics.org](https://www.journalofethics.org). We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*.