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“Don’t I have a say?” A critical auto-ethnography on choice and essentiality-of-being

Christopher B. Williams

University of Kansas, USA

In this auto ethnography, I reflect on the last 72-hours of telephonic experiences with my godmother's decision to live or die before entering a nursing facility. “Don’t I have a say” is a broader critical reflection about older adults' lack of personal choices with regard to their health care without advance directives and the caregiver's best interest decision-making approach. The central ideas in this auto ethnography illuminate choice theory and the essentiality-of- being. From my godmother's point of view, choice theory and essentiality-of-being highlight the need for her “owning” her health care decision. From my perspective, choice theory offers new perspectives and solutions to best interest decision-making as a potential caregiver. While in the final hours of my godmother's life, she “owned” the decision; however, years later, I am still processing what happens when a person wills death to have the final say.

Biography

Christopher B. Williams has a PhD in Health Psychology from North central University. While in academia, his research interests included the lived experiences of African-Americans and how spirituality influences decision-making. He is grateful for the chance to share his lived experiences.