

Living the last days of life with a strong will

Through interview with those who supported the last days of a cancer patient living alone

MIYASHITA Kaoru

Graduate School of Science for Human Services, Ritsumeikan University

Key Words: local community, last days, NPO

This study was performed to seek the insight by concerning the case of the late Mr.A, who was a cancer patient living by himself. For the purpose of knowing what supported his last days, by quoting the records from his profession, this study interviewed the chairman of the NPO who provided him counseling and assistance, and local residents who worked together on musical activities which motivated Mr.A for living. Given the fact, this study focuses on what is expected for local communities to encourage the elderly to hold their will and spend their fruitful last days with honor, as well as what we have to consider and initiate action for. According to the interviews with these three persons, what made his last days at home achievable was: the continuous support by professionals without being bound by the regulations, the opportunities to elevate self-esteem, and those whom he can share them with. Moreover, local communities have problems of people with difficulty in living, and need supporting hands besides the systems to be their safety net. Hence this study reveals the importance of what plays a role to make full use of the volunteer spirit of the local people.