

The Butterfly Effect

Allyson's story is creating change around the world.

A Butterfly Has Been Released and Caregiver to Patient: Hospice Nurse Allyson's Final 39 Days invite conversations and actions that are waiting to happen:

Personal: talk openly with family and friends, share end-of-life wishes, create advance directives

Professional: organize workplace screenings to improve patient and family care and validate the meaningful work of end-of-life care professionals

Community: host public screening events that enhance death literacy and community connections

A Partnership for Change

Hospice Foundation of America & TGBeyond

Death education in America is underfunded and often avoided, yet every family and healthcare professional will face end-of-life decisions.

Together, Hospice Foundation of America and TGBeyond are proud to share Allyson's story to support:

- Normalized conversations about death and dying
- Increased death literacy
- Better end-of-life outcomes
- Reduced fear and anxiety around dying
- Empowered healthcare professionals

About Hospice Foundation of America

Founded in 1982, HFA is a national nonprofit dedicated to advance care planning, the hospice philosophy, grief education, and research—working to enhance end-of-life care for all Americans.

hospicefoundation.org



About TGBeyond

Founded in 2018, TGBeyond helps families navigate the emotional, physical, and administrative realities of death. Their "5 Step Journey" empowers people with choice, meaning, and connection—before, during, and after loss.

tgbeyond.com



Questions?

Email us at butterfly@hospicefoundation.org



A Butterfly Has Been Released

"This film should be mandatory viewing for everyone—not just healthcare workers.

It shows us that talking about dying doesn't make death happen faster; it makes life happen fuller."

– Hospice chaplain

A PARTNERSHIP OF



Allyson's Story

Nine days after a terminal brain tumor diagnosis, Allyson Z. invited filmmakers Jason Zamer and Barry Koch to record her final days—not just to witness and document her death, but to show us how to truly live.

For more than two decades, Allyson was a hospice nurse who educated patients, families, and healthcare professionals about end-of-life care. She guided thousands of people at life's end. Then came May 2024, when forgetting where she parked her car morphed into a life limiting brain cancer diagnosis. And she became the patient.

Today Allyson's story is the award-winning documentary, *A Butterfly Has Been Released*.

Critics and viewers alike agree that *A Butterfly Has Been Released* is a moving film that transforms how we think about life's hardest moments. Through her remarkable unfiltered honesty, authenticity, and humor, Allyson gives us permission to talk openly about death and find beauty in unexpected places.

*"I'm not dead
if I'm still talking."*

Allyson lived life passionately by helping others. Making her end-of-life journey public through film was her way of continuing that mission.

"I'm not dead if I'm still talking," she said.

Allyson is still talking to us all.

From Caregiver to Patient: Hospice Nurse Allyson's Final 39 Days

68-minute online continuing
education program



Allyson's final wish was to transform her dying experience into a teaching tool—one that sparks meaningful, compassionate conversations about death and dying.

This program includes a screening *A Butterfly Has Been Released* followed by a conversation with:



Kenneth J. Doka,
PhD,
MDiv



Natasha Fowlks,
RN



Megan Heller,
LCSW

Emmy-award winning journalist **Frank Sesno** moderates the discussion topics:

- Goals of end-of-life care in hospice and palliative care settings
- How hospice interdisciplinary teams can support meaning making, ritual, and grief
- Advance care planning

1.0 continuing education hour for a
variety of professional boards



Viewing options:

- Hospice and palliative care teams
- Healthcare and social service clinicians
- Funeral service professionals
- Faith and community leaders
- Perfect for public outreach and education of the broader community.



A Butterfly Has Been Released



36-minute award winning documentary

Follow Allyson's final 39 days as she:

- Connects with family, friends, and hospice colleagues
- Hosts a living funeral
- Chooses a natural green burial
- Creates meaning and legacy—before and after her death

Available as a 72-hour rental
for individual viewing or an
educational license for use
in academic settings.

