

LB b.1948

Louise is a 75 year old woman living in a town in New Brunswick. She has recently seen her cardiologist regarding longstanding heart issues. The physician informed her that her prognosis is very poor and she is eligible for enrollment in palliative care; Louise states that she “does not believe” the physician’s prognostications because, “this cannot be true, I cannot be sick.”

Louise went on to describe her home situation and why she cannot permit herself to be sick. Her husband, Charlie, has dementia. She is devoted to Charlie who she met in high school and has been married to for 60 years. Louise is the primary care giver for Charlie who is prone to wander – she describes sitting by the door at times to ensure that he does not leave and get lost. Louise is very fearful of hospitalisation as this would mean Charlie would have to go into care as he cannot be left alone. A helpful neighbour was sitting with Charlie while Louise and I met, but she stated that this could only be a very rare solution as the neighbour though kindly was busy.

Louise and Charlie have one daughter and three grandchildren living in PEI. Their daughter is not in good health and Louise does not want to burden her with her own concerns about her deteriorating condition but felt that their daughter would come to be with Charlie in an emergent situation.

Louise describes herself as a artistic person who finds solace in creative pursuits. She and Charlie also love to dance and she spoke fondly of Saturday nights as having been their favourite time of the week when they would go out dancing.

Louise was most anxious for me to understand that the most important thing to her in the world is Charlie; being there for him, his well being and care. Louise is the “strong one” for the whole family and is afraid this role is becoming impossible to fulfill.