

03. November 2025

Education and culture

What is important in the end - moving panel discussion at LernWerk

Full house at LernWerk // Experts from the fields of medicine, theology and social work in dialogue // Audience contribute their own questions and experiences

Over 120 guests accepted the invitation of the Bocholt-Rhede-Isselburg Adult Education Centre to the panel discussion "What is important at the end" at LernWerk on Wednesday evening, 29 October. The event was part of the VHS series "Zwischen Aufbruch und Abschied" and took place in front of a sold-out audience. The audience was deeply moved and took an active part in the discussion.

Experts from various fields discussed under the moderation of Michael Ridder: Dr Benedikt Matenaer (palliative care physician), Iris Lehmbruck (specialist in internal medicine and chairwoman of the hospice association Omega Bocholt e.V.), Lukas Tekampe (social worker and director of the Edith-Stein-Hospice), Melanie Neumann (sociologist and medical psychologist) and pastor Rafael van Straelen. Together, they shed light on medical, social, psychological and spiritual perspectives on dying, mourning and saying goodbye.

Ridder began with a personal anecdote to create an atmosphere that was both humorous and thought-provoking. The guests picked up the thread and gave very personal insights into their work. The words of Lukas Tekampe, who emphasised that honesty towards the dying is key, were particularly poignant: "Dying is always difficult in the end - and the dying deserve honesty."

Iris Lehmbruck also emphasised how important the work of carers and volunteers is in hospice care: without their commitment, good end-of-life care cannot succeed. Dr Matenaer sensitively explained the physical processes involved in the dying process and emphasised the self-determination of patients. Pastor van Straelen and Melanie Neumann focussed on the importance of love and care: every person has a right to unconditional love, even in the last phase of life.

After a short break, the audience contributed numerous questions and their own thoughts - from coping with grief to the role of social networks. At the end, all the panellists agreed that artificial intelligence cannot replace genuine human closeness in hospice work.

Moderator Ridder brought the event to an emotional close with the lyrics "Nur zu Besuch" by the Toten Hosen - a moment that resonated with many visitors and summarised the topic of the evening in an impressive way.



© Stadt Bocholt

About dying and life: VHS discussion evening touches the audience