There are three moments that come to mind when I think of Neville Symington.

The first is walking along the northern bank of the Douro River in the Portuguese city of Porto and constantly coming across the Symington name. Neville’s family are port producers and sell their product in the city. Similarly, you do not have to walk far into the psychoanalytic literature to come across the Symington name. Neville was an independent and influential thinker and a prolific writer.

In the year before he died, Neville was due to go on a trip that would take him to the United States, London and Israel. He had not been well and was in hospital before he was to leave. I asked him if he should be going overseas. Neville replied emphatically, “I am going overseas!” It was a moment that brought home just how determined he was to live every moment of life to the full. Illness was an inconvenience and would not stand in his way.

Just before Neville died, my partner and I visited him in hospital. The time was spent reminiscing about his travels with his family to Australia. He spoke of his pride in his sons and his gratitude to his wife Joan who had undertaken the lion share in raising them. He felt thankful to Andrew for being such an exceptional son, for looking after him in the previous years. He was looking forward to spending his final week with his other son, David. Neville was concerned that David was not prepared for his death. I had a sense that ultimately his family was his greatest achievement. He had lived and was now preparing to die.

Rise Becker.