The Soul of Care (Viking/Penguin 2019) is an autoethnography of the failure of caregiving in medicine and the loss of care in families that taken together constitute health care’s existential crisis in our times. The book presents an anthropological critique of the human scale of the problem and ethnographically-based ideas for how this tragedy can be ameliorated and remedied. But The Soul of Care also sets out a theory of care as a gendered human developmental process. And it defines the quality of relationships, rituals, presence, narratives and memory that explain how ordinary people endure the everyday suffering, catastrophes, and dangers that together with aspiration and well-being constitute what living a life means. By doing this, I also seek to make the case for why medical anthropology is important for health care, medicine, and anthropology itself. (Photo © Torben Eskerod)