



Signature Sunsets

Initiatives To Advance Learning About End of Life

Thursday, May 21, 7:00-8:15 pm EDT

SUNSET CAFETERIA

A sunset cafeteria is like a death cafe conversation, but begins with the introduction of a topic as food for thought. The menu for nourishing group interaction about end-of-life issues is diversified. Though one pre-selected subject serves as a catalyst for discussion, at any time the focus can shift to spontaneous comments reflecting whatever is on the minds of participants.

Springboard topic of the day:

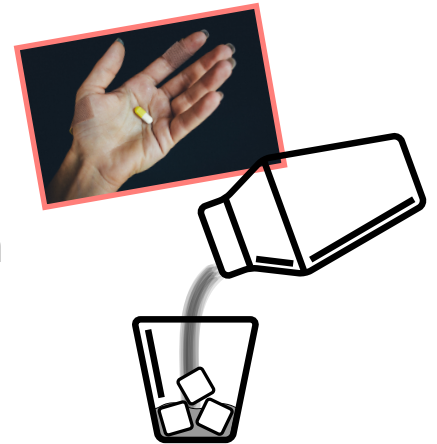
Attainability of Medical Aid in Dying

This avenue for departure is increasingly becoming a realistic option for terminally ill individuals in the United States. It is garnering considerable attention these days, in large part due to legislative efforts underway and approvals of the practice in fourteen jurisdictions. New York is the most recent state to legislate approval, with enactment to be launched in August.



Though states determine regulations for their residents, slight variations dictate protocols within an arena of standard operations in states where MAiD is available. And certain foundational tenets, practices, and even terminology in the USA differ from those in other countries.

People on the threshold of their life endings pursue MAiD primarily to minimize suffering, gain control over progressive deterioration, and maintain dignity when confronted by the daunting unknowns that are part of dying journeys. An opportunity to conclude one's life in this manner serves as an exit door in contrast to the prospect of being locked into what may be perceived as a potential for unbearable circumstances.



For those of you who are unfamiliar with basic parameters of this option, we'll begin the discussion with an overview consisting of general information, including complexities that interfere with accessibility for some folks. Most likely, you'll have questions, and maybe you'll have feelings about the subject, which can be freely expressed in this environment that supports differences of opinion.

Please plan to have your cameras turned on, as this will primarily be a discussion with face-to-face interaction rather than a presentation.

Join Zoom: Signature Sunsets Program

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82801213093>

Meeting ID: 828 0121 3093

signaturesunsets.com

If you would like to attend,
please email
ponderingleaves@gmail.com
simply stating:
"I plan to attend"

A note of upcoming interest:

On **Saturday, June 6th**, an in-person program about MAiD in New York will be hosted by the Funeral Consumers Alliance of Greater Rochester. Everyone is welcome to attend. Details to follow in next month's newsletter.

Tuesday, May 5, 12:30-2:00 pm EDT

After Death Care and Grief Support

This combined AARP session brings together two essential topics: **making your final arrangements** and **preparing grief support for loved ones**.

Planning for the end of life can feel overwhelming, but taking a few thoughtful steps now can ease stress for those who matter most to you.

You'll learn practical ways to communicate your wishes, understand your rights as a consumer, and explore meaningful choices for body disposition, ceremonies, and legacy planning.

The session also covers how to support friends and family through grief, before, during, and long after a loss. By documenting and sharing your choices in advance, you give others clarity, guidance, and peace of mind.

This webinar empowers you to plan with confidence and ensures the people close to you know exactly how to honor your life and support each other.

Registration (free, AARP membership not required):

[https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-505-After/regProcessStep1?](https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-505-After/regProcessStep1?i=60BAII05JEyQ8cU-Z3ihiA&rp=8cd5838c-219b-4c97-acd0-7ff43787ef8)

[i=60BAII05JEyQ8cU-Z3ihiA&rp=8cd5838c-219b-4c97-acd0-7ff43787ef8](https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-505-After/regProcessStep1?i=60BAII05JEyQ8cU-Z3ihiA&rp=8cd5838c-219b-4c97-acd0-7ff43787ef8)

Tuesday, May 5, 7:00-8:30 pm EDT

Transformations for Grief



A healing music & reflective space for grief support in community, with vibraphonist Chris Dingman, creative writing specialist Dr. Debbie Bronkema, and holistic psychotherapist Dina Percia.

Acclaimed vibraphonist Chris Dingman plays evocative improvised music that guides an internal journey many have found comforting and healing. Creative writing specialist Dr. Debbie Bronkema and somatic therapist Dina Percia hold space with candle-lighting to honor and remember those we have lost, writing prompts designed to meet you where you are, and a short somatic awareness meditation.

- Held the first three Tuesdays each month
- Each session is centered around a grief-related theme
- Every session is unique and responsive to the people who join.
- Everyone participating fills out our [online form](#) in advance



Registration (free): <https://letsreimagine.org/76768/transformations-for-grief-50>

Additional dates:

Tuesday, May 12

<https://letsreimagine.org/76768/transformations-for-grief-52>

Tuesday, May 19

<https://letsreimagine.org/76768/transformations-for-grief-51>

Tuesday, May 5, 7:00-8:00 pm EDT

After Death Care: What Comes Next Matters

What happens after someone dies is often rushed, hidden, or handed over without much conversation. But after death care can be an intentional, meaningful part of the end-of-life experience; one that reflects our values, supports grieving loved ones, and honors the person who has died.

Join Michelle Acciavatti of Vermont Forest Cemetery, Kasey March of Doula Care for Dying, and Lindsey Warren of Journey with Compassion for an educational and grounding conversation about after death care in Vermont.

We'll explore what after death care is, why it matters, and what options are available—including whether home-based after death care is possible following medical aid in dying (MAID).

Presented by:

Michelle Acciavatti: founder of Vermont Forest Cemetery, funeral director, death doula, pregnancy loss guide, end-of-life specialist, and a natural burial educator

Kasey March: end-of-life doula, hospice volunteer, educator, and advocate.

Lindsey Warren: end-of-life doula, Reiki Master, community educator for natural and home burial, provider of bedside music therapy for the dying, supporter of individuals who choose MAiD

An EXIT MATTERS program sponsored by Patient Choices Vermont

Registration (free): <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/cngajpw>

Wednesday, May 6, 4:00-5:30 pm EDT

Heart Broken, Heart Open: Taking a Pulse Before Mother's Day

Featuring a diverse roster of luminaries in mental health, spirituality, arts, and entertainment, this gathering provides a space to reflect on our relationship to matriarchs, mothers, and motherhood as we prepare for the holiday. We welcome bereaved adults, motherless mothers and fathers, folks mourning miscarriage or children, and those grieving complicated relationships with living parents. We will honor family caregivers and those grieving their own health and inability to fulfill parental expectations. And we will acknowledge the collective grief of mothers in the U.S. and around the world due to injustice, murder, war, migration, and the climate crisis. Together we will share pain, love, courage, joy, and laughter.



Sponsored by Reimagine

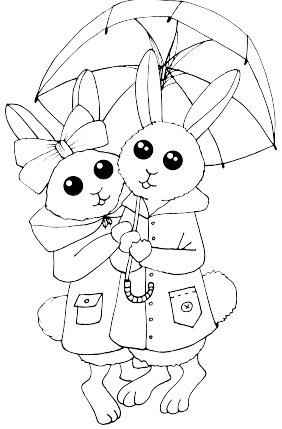
Registration (free or \$15.):

[https://letsreimagine.org/76768/heart-broken-heart-open-taking-a-pulse-before-mothers-day?](https://letsreimagine.org/76768/heart-broken-heart-open-taking-a-pulse-before-mothers-day?utm_medium=paid&utm_source=fb&utm_id=120242436558340714&utm_content=120242436558360714&utm_term=120242436558370714&utm_campaign=120242436558340714&fbclid=IwY2xjawRbOCVleHRuA2FlbQEwAGFkaWQBqzAM5SSUmnNydGMGYXBwX2lkEDlyMjAzOTE3ODgyMDA4OTIAAR50Bhgj--B0Ms25kmX8f0C73tPeDiDNgL2wK55ifDy_xbq5ZhEvALivjNtSfg_aem_RXV4XPuZXuKIKdWOlmZEgg)

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Thursday, May 7, 8:00 pm EDT

Supporting Grieving Children: What They Need Most



In a world overflowing with platitudes, clichés, and self-appointed grief gurus on TikTok, it has never been harder for families—and for the professionals who serve them—to discern what truly helps a grieving child. Children are often caught between overwhelming emotions and well-meaning adults who fear saying or doing the wrong thing. The result is confusion, silence, or coping behaviors that mask deeper needs.



Join us for guidance designed specifically for celebrants and deathcare professionals. You'll explore what helps a child feel safe enough to grieve deeply, how to recognize the difference between healthy and harmful coping patterns, and why your presence and language matter more than any script or slogan.

The workshop will introduce new paradigms for understanding childhood grief, offer practical tools you can use immediately, and show how meaningful rituals—simple, symbolic, and developmentally appropriate—can empower children as they rebuild their world after loss.

Presented by Joe Primo, child bereavement specialist and author of *What Do We Tell the Children? Talking to Kids About Death and Dying*.

Sponsored by Natural Transitions Institute

Registration (\$33.): <https://www.naturaltransitions.org/offers/2ihPipr9/checkout>

Tuesday, May 26, 2026 3:00-4:00 pm EDT

Beyond The Basics of Planned Giving: Bequests, Beneficiary Designations, and More

We know that end-of-life and estate planning can be intimidating, but we are here to get you off to the right start. Do you ever find yourself asking, “How do I utilize my assets to best benefit myself, my heirs, and my philanthropic interests?”

Join Josh Roth, Director of Planned Giving for Compassion & Choices, and Bill Albrecht, Senior Consultant at Pathways Non-Profit Solutions, for another session that goes beyond simple bequests (though they'll cover those, too!). They will discuss beneficiary designations, charitable remainder trusts/lead trusts, retained life estates, and more! Learn about benefits that you may never have known existed and gain the tools necessary to structure an estate plan that matches your personal priorities and values.

Sponsored by Compassion and Choices

Registration (free): <https://join.compassionandchoices.org/a/beyond-basics-bequests-beneficiary-designations-and-more>

Wednesday, May 27, 2:00-3:30 pm EDT

The Pitfalls with Legal Eldercare Planning



You have a will, power of attorney and health care proxy. Perhaps you have transferred your residence or other assets to protect against future long-term care costs. Hidden dangers could still cause problems. Learn about the most common pitfalls with eldercare planning and how to fix them.

This presentation is for those with planning already in place who may benefit from a thorough review given changes in law and personal circumstances since creation.

Presented by: Lisa Powers, attorney at Harris, Beach, Murtha

Sponsored by Lifespan

Registration (free): <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/uj89vr3>

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Wednesday, May 27, 7:00-8:00 pm EDT

From Goodbye to Green Burial: Talking to Children about Death

How do we talk with children about death in ways that are honest, compassionate, and age-appropriate and how can those conversations include green burial? In this webinar, you'll learn practical strategies for explaining death with clarity, responding to tough questions, and supporting children's development. We'll cover age-specific approaches to introduce green burial in ways that emphasize simplicity, connection, and care for the earth. Ideal for parents, caregivers, educators, clergy, and deathcare professionals, this session offers clear guidance and meaningful insight on one of life's most important conversations.

Featured Speaker: Ilana Haimen, landscape architect

Sponsored by Green Burial Council



Registration (free): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/from-goodbye-to-green-burial-talking-to-children-about-death-tickets-1983916506677?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

Thursday, May 28, 11:30-1:00 pm EDT

Expected Loss: Coping with Anticipatory Grief

We don't only experience grief after a loss—we often experience it before.

If someone we love is seriously ill, or if we're concerned about upcoming hardships of any kind, we naturally begin to grieve right now. This process of anticipatory grief is normal, but it can also be confusing and painful.

You will learn:

What anticipatory grief is, what causes it, how it is different from regular grief, why grief and mourning are not the same, how to actively and authentically mourn grief before loss, how to understand and befriend your grief, utilizing effective ways to express it as you live⁸ your daily life, how to care for, love, and mourn with someone who is dying.

This webinar is based on the book,
Expected Loss: Coping with Anticipatory Grief by Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D.
Sponsored by Kitchen Table Conversations

Registration (free):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/fcVMByaJQyCqNqECfo24Yg#/registration>

Thursday, May 28, 7:30-8:45 pm EDT

Death over Drafts

Cheers! Conversation with Ken Ross discussing the legacy of his mother, Elizabeth Kübler-Ross.

Join Stefanie Elkins, Founder of Death over Drafts and Be Present Care, and Lisa Pahl, LCSW, Owner of The Death Deck, in conversation with Ken Ross, Founder of the Elisabeth Kübler-Ross Foundation (EKRF). EKRF is dedicated to advancing the legacy of Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross—psychiatrist, humanitarian, educator, and pioneer in hospice and end-of-life care. Founded in 2005 by her son, Ken Ross, one year after her death, the Foundation continues her work in hospice and palliative care, grief education, and public understanding of death and dying.

Overview

- Collective Cheers, Welcome & Participant Check-In
- 2-4 Prompts with Ken Ross as we reflect on his mom's legacy, as she would have been 100 this year.
- Play The Death Deck
- Reflection and Closing



Please bring your beverage of Choice to the Zoom!!!

- All are welcome! You can still come if you don't love beer
- This is a super supportive community, yet we are not a support group

Reimagine is a Co-Crafter of this Death over Drafts Zoom.

Hosted by Be Present Care

Registration (free):

<https://letsreimagine.org/76768/death-over-drafts-on-zoom-with-ken-ross>

IN-PERSON Program Opportunities



Tuesday, May 12, 10:00 am -12:00 pm

Joe Flaherty Legacy Writing Workshop



Apart from money and physical heirlooms, what do you want to give your loved ones so they will remember, appreciate, and learn from you for generations to come?

In Writers & Books' *Joe Flaherty Legacy Writing Workshop*, you'll write letters, stories, short nonfiction pieces, and poems that share the depth and breadth of the life you've lived, as well as the dreams and ambitions you still wish to achieve. Your writing will bring you closer to others, connect you to past and future generations, and also generate meaningful, even surprising, self-revelation. So bring a friend, a pen, and a notebook, and get ready to express what you hold most dear! *No prior creative writing experience necessary.*

Presenter: Tyler Barton (he/him), Artistic Director, Writers & Books

Sponsored by Lifespan

Event location: 1900 South Clinton Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618

Registration (free):

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/d2247f9>

Tuesday, May 19, 6:00-8:00 pm

Understanding Your Grief: Touchstones for Hope and Healing

As part of his countrywide tour for speaking engagements, this program and a workshop the next morning will be presented by Dr. Alan Wolfelt, bereavement specialist, prolific author, and director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado.

For mourners:

This seminar will help you discover how loss influences our lives. You will be able to embrace the uniqueness of your grief, quietly reflect on your feelings of loss, learn about the six essential needs we all have when someone dies, and come to understand the difference between “reconciling” your grief and “resolving” your grief.

Event location: Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home
1411 Vintage Lane, Greece, NY 14626

Registration by 5/12 (free): <https://bartolomeo.com/dr-alan-wolfelt-events/>



Wednesday, May 20, 9:00 am-12:00 pm

The Art of Companioning the Mourner: Care Versus Curing

For caregivers:

This workshop will help enhance your knowledge and skilling in supporting people who are experiencing grief and loss. Anchored in Dr. Alan Wolfelt’s “companioning” model of grief care, there will be recognition of how grief and mourning are normal and necessary experiences that are fundamentally a journey of the heart and soul. A critical distinction between caring versus curing will be outlined. You will leave with a wealth of

It will be particularly helpful for counselors, social workers, clergy, chaplains, nurses, and lay ministers.

Event location: Bartolomeo & Perotto Funeral Home
1411 Vintage Lane, Greece, NY 14626

Registration by 5/12 (free): <https://bartolomeo.com/dr-alan-wolfelt-events/>

RESEARCH Participation Opportunities



May 21, 12:00-2:00 pm EDT

Online: Join Evermore's
Lived Experience Bereavement Research Network!

For too long, bereavement research has failed to give bereaved people a voice and to incorporate the real-world factors that matter to grieving people, especially to their health and well-being. The narrow focus on what's "wrong" with us and why we haven't adapted to our loss on a specific timeline simply does not resonate with a large portion of people's lived experience. Without input from those living with grief, researchers cannot know the most important research questions to ask and what kinds of care models and interventions should be developed.

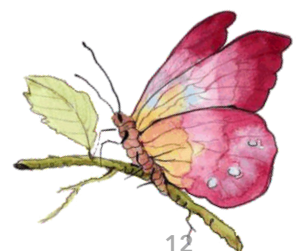
Evermore, with financial support from PCORI, has established the Lived Experience Bereavement Research Network (LEBRN) to do just that.

LEBRN will bring together people with varied backgrounds and expertise, including people who have experienced bereavement themselves — bereaved parents, children, siblings, spouses, and community leaders — alongside bereavement care providers and researchers. Over the next two years, we will identify how to best engage *with* bereaved people during research endeavors and we will recommend research questions, from the perspective of lived experience, to guide the future of bereavement research.

As part of LEBRN, Evermore is engaging all bereaved people who would like to share their experiences, opinions, and insights to inform future bereavement research.

Registration (free):

<https://secure.everyaction.com/rIVUAQVL8EOpWZJnzylx2g2>



Participate in a Study About How People Perceive a "Good Death"

Participants are asked to complete an online survey which asks them to reflect on a recent experience of loss. To complete the survey, you must be at least 18 years of age, and experienced the loss of someone close to you in the past 12 months. The survey will be completed online, and should take approximately 10 to 20 minutes to complete. The survey will ask questions about services that the deceased utilized and their overall experiences throughout the dying process.

[FIND THE SURVEY HERE](https://utampa.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bpx7hilzvFCtO8C)

https://utampa.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bpx7hilzvFCtO8C





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Signature Sunsets

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