

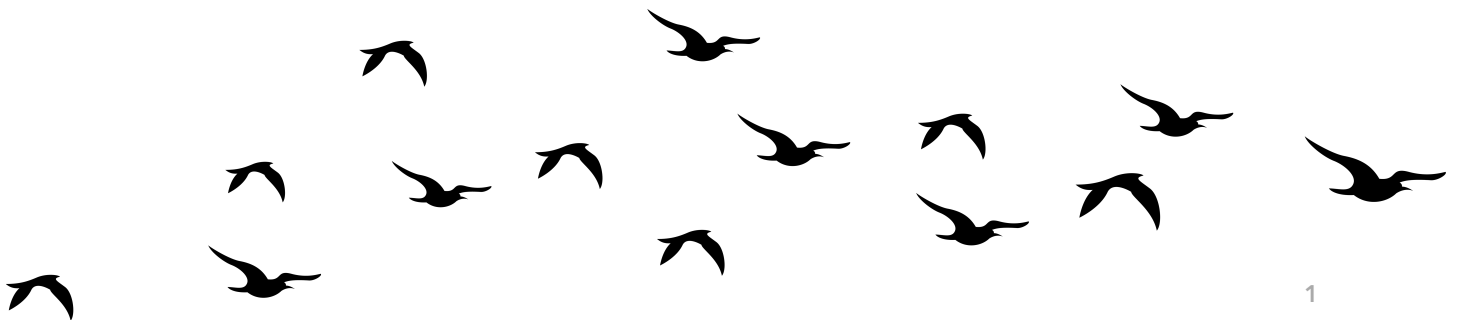


Signature Sunsets

Initiatives To Advance Learning About End of Life

There will be a temporary pause in Signature Sunsets programming during the month of August. Resumption of scheduled informative and experiential offerings can be anticipated next month.

The September newsletter is apt to be distributed a few days later than usual.



ONLINE Offerings

Tuesday, August 4, 11:30-12:30 EDT

After Death Care and Grief Support

Just as we plan a wedding, a baby, or a home or car, we need to discuss funeral planning and associated costs. Avoiding the topic will make it more difficult and likely more expensive for you and your loved ones.

Planning ahead can make a painful time easier to bear for your friends and family. They will find great meaning and peace in carrying out thoughtful funeral plans that honor your wishes. And how are those that matter most to you supposed to cope with the pain, confusion, and sorrow that come with grief? You'll need to plan for that too!

Learn how to:

- Be a Savvy Consumer – Know Your Rights When Dealing with Funeral Homes
- Shop Until You Drop - Pre-Planning vs. Pre-Paying Final Arrangements
- Donate - Organs, Tissues, and Eyes
- Determine Your Body Disposition – Terramation, Cremation, Aquamation, Burial, Recomposting
- Decide on the Type of Interment - Where, How, When
- Plan Grief and Mourning Support for Those Who Matter Most to You in the Days, Weeks, Months, and Years After You're Gone

Whatever you choose, be sure it's based on what's meaningful to you. No amount of money, great or small, can express how we feel about those who have died. Taking an active role in funeral arrangements—whether that means carrying out the whole process without a funeral home or just preparing and delivering the eulogy.

Thinking and talking about end-of-life wishes and making final arrangements, including grief support for loved ones, can be tough. However, deciding, discussing, and documenting your final wishes, then sharing them with those who matter most to you, has proven to ease anxiety and reduce stress. This means "Peace of Mind" for everyone!

Sponsored by AARP

Registration (free):

Sign in to your [AARP.org](https://www.aarp.org) account or create a free non-member account to register for [events](#). AARP membership is not required.

<https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-804-Grief/register?eventId=2fa95a39-560b-4761-951d-a5c93c92b5ef&i=HU19z1JhBkyxc8Wrii0oFQ&rp=476106b2-ed9e-41c6-a981-df560c04a6ce>



Wednesday, August 5, 8:00-9:30pm EDT

Virtual Candlelight Vigil



Let's honor our loved ones, hold space for grief, and reflect on the possibilities of transformation.

Reimagine has been hosting candlelight vigils since March 2020, the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to break down taboos and hold space for all that we've lost. This gathering features a conversation between authors and educators Emily Rapp Black and Sunita Puri. In addition, musical guests include jazz vocalist Vuyo Sotashe and pianist Chris Pattishall.

Emily Rapp Black is the bestselling author of five books. A former Fulbright scholar, Guggenheim Fellow, and graduate of Harvard Divinity School, she is Professor of Creative Writing at University of California-Riverside, where she also teaches in the School of Medicine.

Dr. Sunita Puri is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of California, Irvine School of Medicine, where she is the Director of the Inpatient Palliative Care Service.

Vocalist **Vuyo Sotashe** and pianist **Chris Pattishal**, mainstays of the NYC music scene over the last decade, have toured extensively and have each contributed to a wide range of projects spanning jazz, gospel, theater, and film.

Registration (\$0-\$30.):

<https://letsreimagine.org/76768/reimagine-virtual-candlelight-vigil>

Thursday August 6, 11:30 am-1:00 pm EDT

What to Say, and Not Say, to the Grieving

Someone you care about has suffered a loss. You want to support them. Instinctively, you want to offer comfort but don't know what to say. Then, in a moment of emotional awkwardness and with the best of intentions, you say something like:

- "He's in a better place."
- "Aren't you over him yet? He's been dead for a while now?"
- "You can still have another child?"
- "She was such a good person that God wanted her to be with him."

You meant no harm; however, what you just said was neither helpful nor supportive! So, what do you say, and what do you NOT say to someone grieving? When you attend this webinar, you'll learn:

- 64 of the Worst Things You Can Say and How to Avoid Them
- 64 of the Best Things You Can Say and the Best Ways to Say Them
- Why Grief is a Journey, NOT a Destination
- How to Deal with the Physical Symptoms of Grief

THIS WEBINAR IS BASED ON TWO BOOKS: "WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY - LOVING A FRIEND THROUGH GRIEF," BY MARK J. LUCERO AND "SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES: WHAT TO SAY AND WRITE TO CONVEY YOUR SUPPORT AFTER A LOSS," BY ALAN WOLFELT, PH.D.



Sponsored by AARP

Registration (free):

Sign in to your AARP.org account or create a free non-member account to register for [events](#). AARP membership is not required.

<https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-806-Grief/register?eventId=d351c08f-52b7-4f00-bde1-f88432492841&i=izs6PiRNU2F2QLdicU7tw&rp=50f88766-3c39-4c34->



Tuesday, August 11, 6:00-7:30 pm EDT

**If You Don't Decide, the Court Will:
Estate Planning 101: Wills, Trusts, Probate,
Guardianship & Conservatorship Explained**



If you don't plan, don't worry the State of Colorado has a plan for you. Want to know what that is? What is probate and how does it work? What happens if you need a guardian? What happens if you need a conservator? How does this all work? Plan on attending the session and get the answers to questions you didn't know that you had.

Cynthia Daughtrey, Esq. is the owner of Beyer & Associates in Hayden, Colorado. She has been an attorney for the past 37 years and is licensed in Colorado and in Wyoming. She practices in the areas of Estate Planning, Wills, Trust, Probate, Business Formations, Contracts and Real Estate.

Sponsored by the Funeral Consumer Society of Colorado

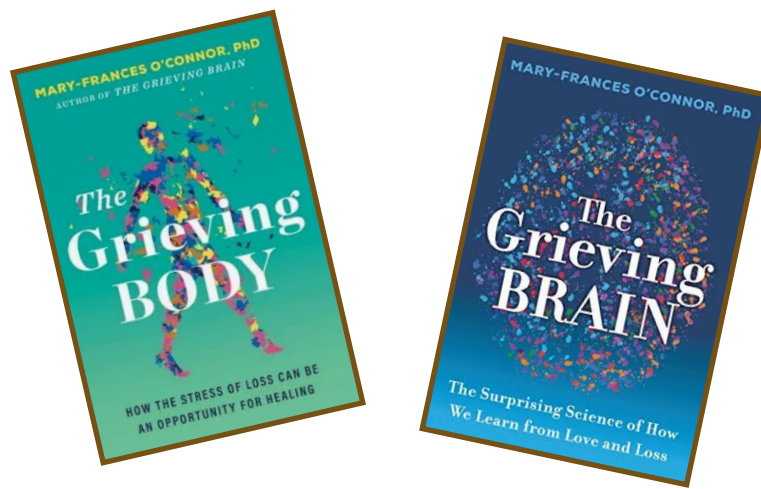
Registration (free, \$10. suggested donation):

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/if-you-dont-decide-the-court-will-estate-planning-101-wills-trusts-probate-guardianship-and-conservatorship-explained>

Thursday, August 13, 12:00-1:00 pm EDT

**The Grieving Body:
A Paperback Book Launch and Discussion**

Join speakers, authors, and bereavement experts Hope Edelman, Lizzie Pickering, and Michelle Hord for a discussion to celebrate the launch of *The Grieving Body* in its paperback edition. It's the latest book by renowned neuroscientist and educator Dr. Mary-Frances O'Connor.



The Grieving Body is a follow-up to celebrated grief expert, neuroscientist, and psychologist Dr. Mary-Frances O'Connor's *The Grieving Brain*, and it focuses on the impact of grief—and life's other major stressors—on the human body. Coping with death and grief is one of the most painful human experiences. While we can speak to the psychological and emotional ramifications of loss and sorrow, we often overlook its impact on our physical bodies. Dr. Mary-Frances O'Connor specializes in the study of grief, and in *The Grieving Body* she shares vital scientific research, revealing imperative new insights on its profound physiological impact. As she did in *The Grieving Brain*, O'Connor combines illuminating studies and personal stories to explore the toll loss takes on our cardiovascular, endocrine, and immune systems and the larger implications for our long-term well-being.

The Grieving Body addresses questions about how bereavement affects us, such as:

- Can we die of a broken heart?
- What happens in our bodies when we're grieving?
- How do our coping behaviors affect our physical health?
- What is the cognitive impact of grief?
- Why are we more prone to illness during times of enormous stress?

Hosted by Reimagine

Registration (\$0-\$30.):

<https://letsreimagine.org/76768/the-grieving-body-a-paperback-book-launch-and-discussion>

Monday, August 17, 7:00-8:00 pm EDT

Death Rituals Around the World

Death. We all do it, but most of us don't like to talk about it. How do we use ritual—from burying people twice, to eating one's in-laws—to help cope with the pain of loss, and the inevitability of death? And what can we learn from studying how people in other cultures ritualize death and dying?

Naomi Westerman was an anthropologist who travelled the world studying how people in other cultures use ritual to come to terms with death, when her entire family died suddenly. Now, Naomi is a death acceptance activist and author of the UK best-seller *Happy Death Club*, a collection of personal and anthropological essays exploring various facets of death and grief across cultures.

This talk covers her years working as a death anthropologist, covering diverse death rituals past and present, from the double burial practice in rural China, and mortuary endo-cannibalism in the Amazon jungle, to Mexico's Day of the Dead, Irish wakes and Jewish shiva ceremonies.

Naomi will also briefly read from *Happy Death Club* and discuss her work as a death acceptance activist. She will illuminate why it's so crucial that we talk openly about death, and why we need to create more secular communal grieving rituals.

Naomi Westerman is a playwright, screenwriter and author, a former anthropologist, and a death acceptance activist.

Sponsored by Morbid Anatomy

Registration (\$8.00):

<https://www.morbidanatomy.org/events-tickets/p/online-talk-death-rituals-around-the-world-with-author-naomi-westerman>



A Zoom invite is sent out two hours before the event to the email used at checkout.

Please check your spam folder and if not received, email hello@morbidanatomy.org

A link to a recording of this talk will be sent out to ticket holders after its conclusion

Tuesday, August 18th, 12:00-1:00 pm EDT

Having Family Conversations About End of Life

Planning for the end of life involves more than completing documents or talking with our doctors. Some of the most challenging conversations can happen with the people we love, especially when our wishes may differ from theirs.

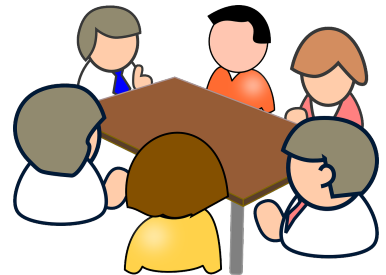
Together, we'll explore how to begin these deeply personal conversations, navigate differing perspectives with compassion, and help ensure your wishes are understood and honored. This session will offer practical tools, thoughtful communication strategies, and trusted resources to help you approach these tender conversations with greater confidence, clarity, and peace.

Zeena Regis, M.Div., is the Director of Priority Populations at Compassion & Choices, where she helps individuals and families navigate end-of-life decisions with clarity and compassion. A hospice chaplain, bereavement coordinator, and certified grief recovery specialist, she has extensive experience guiding conversations about serious illness, advance care planning, and grief.

Presented by EXIT MATTERS

Registration (free):

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/zg3u7ax>



Tuesday, August 18, 7:00-8:30 pm EDT

Misery Vessels

Come along for a hands on workshop where Tricia Enns shares an accessible process of creating misery vessels, objects made of paper pulp, meant to decompose when you are ready to let go.

Misery vessels not only carry your grief, but they release it, when you are ready, into the wild land, by disintegrating, when placed outside in the wind and the rain. Misery Vessels speak to our desire to off load miseries from our hearts and shoulders. As the vessel decomposes, so do the miseries, becoming nutrients for something new to grow.

This playful, and slightly witchy, session offers a tool, and perhaps a ritual, for letting go of the miseries held inside. Together, with the artist (and sometimes goblin) Tricia, who will guide the group through the making process of forming your own sculptures out of pulp infused with your miseries and maybe a little magic.



In order to create your own misery vessel please bring:

- a piece of paper,
- pen/pencil,
- bowl of water,
- towel, and
- [optionally] organic fragments (dried flowers, twigs, etc.).

Tricia Enns (she/they) is an artist, educator and student based somewhat regularly in Tiohtià:ke (Montreal, Canada). Their work is heavily rooted in walking, participatory, and playful low- and high-tech practices that bring people together to create, discuss, and critique what it means to care for ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

Organized by Queer Community Deathcare

Registration (PWYC including free):

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/misery-vessels-tickets-1994671435960>

Wednesday, August 19, 8:00-9:30 pm EDT

Back to the Garden: Jewish Burial and Cemetery as Sacred

The Hebrew word, *Gan* (Garden) is often in the name of a cemetery, like *Gan Shalom*. Our burial grounds are considered *kadisha*, sacred spaces set apart to care for the remains of our dead. Since death has no regard for social status, no amount of privilege can stop it. And when a beloved dies, grief visits each of us in our own unique way.



Jewish tradition requires that we spend time in communal mourning. When grieving "takes us back to The Garden" we can become Grief Gardeners, supporting one another in bringing back life after a death. Please join us as we explore Grief Gardening together.

Devorah Brous (she/her), a traumatic grief counselor, herbalist, and ritualist, is the founder of FromSoil2Soul, a regenerative healing practice. She designs immersive collective healing rituals and plant-spirit journeys. A TEDx speaker, and two-time nonprofit founder, she holds two master's degrees and is currently completing a book on Jewish Grief Tending that weaves ancient and emergent practices.

Holly Blue Hawkins is a Natural Deathcare advocate, educator, community organizer, cemeterian, author and poet. In 2022 she co-created and launched two twelve-module courses on the subject of Natural Burial: in partnership with Lee Webster The Green Burial Master Class; and with David Zinner Jewish And Green: Cemetery Management For The 21st Century. She has visited countless natural burial sites, presented at international conferences, trained home funeral guides, consulted with cemetery management and mortuary personnel, taught community college extension courses and is a passionate advocate for environmentally sustainable and culturally-sensitive burial practices.

Presented by the Jewish Association for Death Education

Registration (free):

https://luma.com/j1s7nbd3?blm_aid=123367482



Thursday, August 20, 11:30 am-1:00 pm EDT

Men and Grief: Supporting Men Through Loss

Men grieve differently than women. Their grief languages are not the same. Yet grief does not have to divide. We will explore the differences and learn practical, loving ways to support men in grief.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Our grief as a man or a woman is as unique and individual as we are, however, there are differences.



Men tend to think their way through grief; women seem to feel their way. Women often perceive men as being void of emotions, reluctant to share their feelings. Maybe it's because men are taught to honor the pain of loss, then hide any feelings associated with it.

And when men and women try to talk with one another about their grief, they quickly find they are speaking two different grief languages.

In this webinar, we will explore the root cause of these differences. We will discuss how to replace expectations and judgment with understanding and compassion. You will learn practical helping skills you can use to offer heart-centered support to the men in your life.

Sponsored by AARP

Registration (free):

Sign in to your AARP.org account or create a **free non-member account** to register for events. AARP membership is not required.

<https://events.aarp.org/event/TX-820-Grief/register?eventId=be849cab-6286-4eec-a4ec-dcd9d8020cca&i=ot9Z8WINPkevMW0YZ81xOA&rp=ffa67bbb-2aa4-40dd-a054-6044c39a7f82>

Friday, August 21, 11:00 am-12:00 pm EDT

Grief After Caregiving Support Group

A support group specifically for caregivers whose care partner with dementia has died. The group provides an opportunity for you to share your own experiences, feelings and coping strategies with others going through a similar experience.

The group is facilitated by trained Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute staff.

Sponsored by Lifespan

Registration (free):

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/8tzcttu>



Wednesday, August 26, 7:00-8:00 pm EDT

Beyond Burial: Building Community in Green Burial Spaces

This webinar explores how intentional programming and community engagement, ranging from workshops and land-based gatherings to partnerships with local organizations, support the families we serve, deepen connection to the land, and build lasting trust. We'll share how these efforts not only demystify death and expand awareness of green burial, but also cultivate belonging, sustainability, and long-term support for the mission of natural end-of-life care.

Featured Speakers: Laura Faessel & Deanna Mance

Sponsored by Green Burial Council

Registration (free):

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/beyond-burial-building-community-in-green-burial-spaces-tickets-1983911379341?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>



IN-PERSON OPPORTUNITY

Saturday, August 15, 1:00-4:00 pm

Creating Space for Pet Loss Grief: A Shrine Building Workshop

At the Friend's Meetinghouse, 120 3rd St, Ithaca NY 14850



Open to all adults over 18. If you are grieving the loss of a beloved pet, you are invited to create a small shrine out of found objects and collage materials. It can be a literal altar to your beloved or something from your unconscious, that is seeped in your experience. The idea is to be in a safe container with your grief around other people who won't judge. No pressure to do or say anything.

Registration (free or \$10. donation toward materials and rental of space):

Email molru31@gmail.com by Saturday, August 8th



MARY ELLEN MARKANT

Signature Sunsets

<https://www.signaturesunsets.com>

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