



Signature Sunsets

Initiatives To Advance Learning About End of Life

Thursday, January 22, 7:00-8:15 pm EST

Death Cafe

This is an opportunity for informal dialogue about end-of-life thoughts and concerns. Hosted by Mary Ellen, it is conducted in accordance with established guidelines, per <https://deathcafe.com/>, with no agenda or preconceived focus.

Conversation will proceed spontaneously according to whatever is on the minds of participants.

Participation is active, not passive, so it is expected that all cameras will be turned on for face-to-face contact (or notify if not possible for some specific reason).

If you choose to attend, please email ponderingleaves@gmail.com, stating, "I plan to attend."

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89102186276>

Meeting ID: 891 0218 6276

Other ONLINE Offerings

Tuesday, January 6, 6:00-7:30 pm EST

Dementia & Your End-of-Life Options

Two leading experts will discuss Medical Aid in Dying (MAID), euthanasia, voluntary stopping of eating and drinking (VSED), dementia directives involving the withdrawal or withholding of food and fluids, and other key end-of-life topics.

Dr. Karl Steinberg has been a nursing home, hospice, and home health agency medical director and chief medical officer in the San Diego area since 1995. He is a speaker for educational programs, serves as a consultant and testifying expert witness in civil lawsuits and regulatory matters, and hosts two regular podcasts.

Dr. Stanley Terman has devoted the last 15 years of his career in psychiatry and bioethics to developing a user-friendly, clinically effective patient decision aid plus a set of strategies that will likely succeed where other living wills/advance directives may fail. The goal is to facilitate private, peaceful, and timely dying and to avoid prolonged dying with suffering for any terminal illness, especially advanced dementia.

Hosted by Funeral Consumer Society of Colorado

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

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/dementia-and-your-end-of-life-options>



Wednesday, January 7, 12:00-1:00 pm EST

Creating My Tombstone Changed My Life

The completely unexpected happened when I created my tombstone -- I found my life. Hear about the chain of events that gave intention, vision, direction, and mission to my aging process.

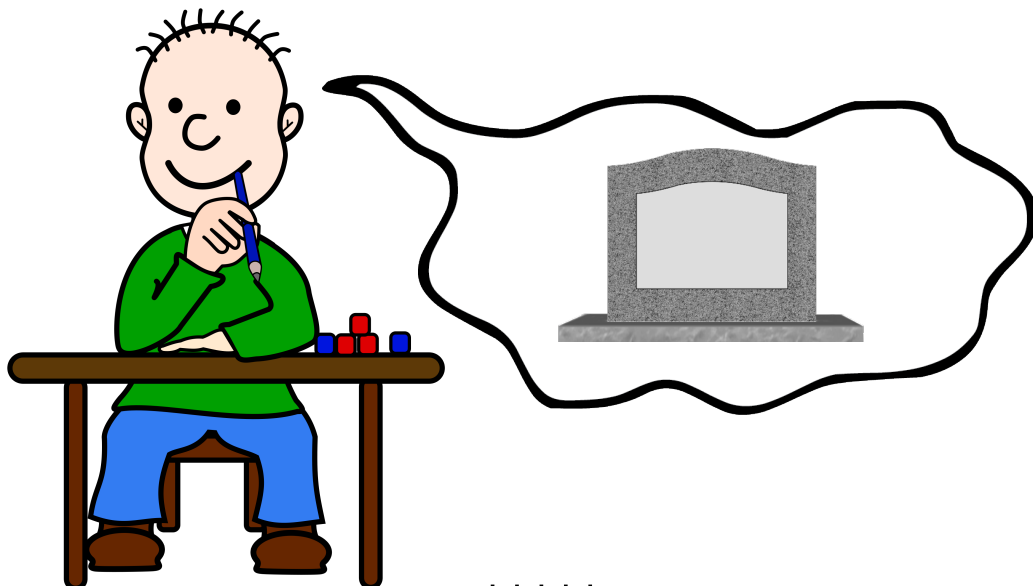
It may have been my mental decline, it may have been my feeling old in many ways, it may have been some inner sense speaking to me. In any case the message I got was clear: create your tombstone. I was surprised by this feeling because I plan to be cremated, but I flowed with it. One step after another this process created its own path.

At first it was all questions: I don't need it to mark my grave, so what is the purpose of my tombstone? What do I want my tombstone to express? I'll be ashes, so what will my tombstone be and where will it be? What do I want visitors to my tombstone to feel? This journey was in unexplored territory.

This process pulled me in and I flowed with it. Creating my tombstone took several weeks, and in the end I got something I didn't imagine: a beacon, a lighthouse to guide me on how to live however much life I have left. This event will go over the process I went through and its results, and how it can benefit others who are approaching aging.

Hosted by Wally Klatch

Registration (free): <https://letsreimagine.org/76768/creating-my-tombstone-changed-my-life>



Thursday, January 8, 7:30-9:00 pm EST

“It’s Complicated” Support Group

A monthly, peer-led group for people who had a strained relationship with someone who’s died. It can be tough to be in a group with other folks who were close with their parent, sibling, grandparent, partner, co-parent, friend, etc. Sometimes it is nice to be with people who “get it.” When addiction, mental health challenges, conflict, estrangement, abuse, etc. were a part of the picture, it can affect the grief journey in unique ways. This is a space for us.

Hosted by Talk Death

Registration (\$5-\$20): https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScJJbKKWr7LYbZwWGUVCzdRdxkYf5kc57TyEQ_UKbhjGZIOrg/viewform?pli=1

Sunday, January 11, 4:00-5:00 pm EST

Jewish Women Caring for the Dead: A Worldwide Conversation

This panel discussion shares *taharah* and *Chevrah Kadisha* experiences from around the world (six countries) through the eyes of women who have helped to implement Jewish death practices in their communities. Join us in exploring the depth and beauty of local customs and universal approaches woven into this sacred work.



With panelists Susan Sperber (London), Miri Eckstein (Melbourne), Fradel Laine (Panama), Tal Bassali (Venice), and Esther Benmaman (Santiago).

Moderated by Elissa Felder, the Coordinator for Core's Communities of Practice (See ElissaFelder.com). Core is an international organization that aims to create warm and inspiring Jewish communities by nourishing and networking observant women in leadership roles. Core offers training, resources and support for women who want to strengthen their communities on an intentional and ongoing basis.

Registration:

Contact JADE... Jewish Association For Death Education

Mailing list: <https://jadeinfo.org/add-name-to-mailing-list>

Sunday, January 11, 5:00-6:30 pm EST

Decomposition Isn't a Dirty Word - Let's Talk Green Burial

Science doesn't lie... our bodies are designed to decompose and return to the earth, but green burial is limited in the US.

Join us for a guided conversation on how burial in the United States drifted from our ancestral roots - and how green burial and conservation cemeteries can reconnect us with what's natural, human, and quite literally in our DNA. Science doesn't lie... our bodies are designed to decompose and return to the earth, but green burial is limited in the US.

Together, we'll unpack how we got here and why restoring time-honored burial practices matters for both our bodies and the planet.

This is a space to bring your questions - we honor open, honest dialogue. With transparency and knowledge, our hope is to help everyone understand their full range of options so end-of-life choices can be made with clarity and intention.

Hosted by Penny Waugh of [The Death Network](#), with panel guests Ed Bixby of [The Global Green Burial Alliance](#) and Jamie Phillips of [Spirit Sanctuary Conservation Cemetery](#).

Tuesday, January 27, 7:00-8:00 pm EST

Palliative Care 101 with Dr. Diana Barnard

There is much confusion around palliative care. What is it? When is it appropriate? How can you talk to your doctor? How are palliative care and MAID related?

Diana Barnard is board certified in Family Medicine as well as in Hospice and Palliative Medicine. She is a founding board member of Patient Choices Vermont. Dr. Barnard has worked across the country on educational and legislative efforts related to Medical Aid in Dying. She was an Associate Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Vermont Medical Center for more than a decade. She is a passionate advocate for high quality, genuine patient centered care.

A program of EXIT MATTERS:

Facing the End with Humor and Heart

Sponsored by Patient Choices Vermont

Registration (free): <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/68ds8dp/lp/a7f75fa2-7f23-4b84-8400-a13138a89829>



IN PERSON, Rochester, New York

Wednesday, January 7, 3:00-4:30 pm EST

Your Digital Afterlife

What happens to your digital estate when you die? Do you have an email account? How about a Facebook account? Bank online? Shop online? Pay your bills over the internet? Join technology instructor Daniel Jones for this informative seminar where you'll learn how to get your digital assets in order. You'll learn about:

- Tips for getting your digital estate in order
- Creating a digital assets will
- How to close online accounts upon death
- How to live forever (online)
- Valuable resources

Presented by technology instructor, Daniel Jones

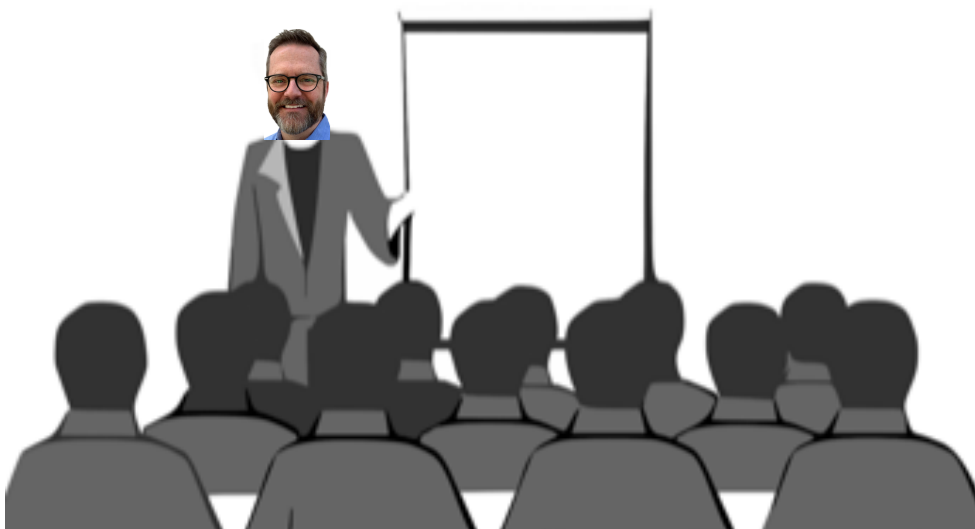
Location: Gates Public Library, 902 Elmgrove Road

Registration: <https://gateslibrary.libcal.com/>

Tuesday, January 20, 12:30-2:00 pm EST

Location: Pittsford Community Library, 24 State Street

Registration: <https://calendar.libraryweb.org/>



The Transition Month

January is a time for shifting from the old year and adapting to a new one. The past is not completely gone because it is still perceptible, though in a different way... through memory.

Likewise, though the death of someone is manifested by physical absence, that person is still perceptible by way of a different perspective... through mental presence.



Gone From My Sight

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship, at my side,
spreads her white sails to the moving breeze and starts
for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength.
I stand and watch her until, at length, she hangs like a speck
of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.

Then, someone at my side says, "There, she is gone."

Gone where?

Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in mast,
hull and spar as she was when she left my side.
And, she is just as able to bear her load of living freight to her destined port.
Her diminished size is in me -- not in her.

And, just at the moment when someone says, "There, she is gone,"
there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices
ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"

And that is dying...

Presumably written by the Rev. Luther F. Beecher, though often attributed to Henry Van Dyke



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