

Creative, innovative, cutting-edge approaches

Bereavement Professional Chat– Chat box Transcript

November 9, 2016

**NHPCO Staff:** Hello!

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Hi everyone. My contact information is [dscowan@hospicewr.org](mailto:dscowan@hospicewr.org).

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Here is where you can ask questions and type in innovative techniques you currently or would like to try.

**NHPCO Staff:** If you are getting your audio through the computer and would like to ask a question by phone, dial 323-920-0091, Access code 862 3670#, then press \*6 to unmute when you are placed in the conference.

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** What innovative techniques are you currently using to meet the grieving needs of your clients?

**Stephanie Page from Perrysburg:** do you charge for your yoga?

**Anonymous:** We are using some of Kristen Neff's self-compassion techniques and tools. We find these tools help with emotion regulation and self-soothing during grief.

**Lisa J. Bartoszek from St. Joseph, Michigan:** We offer walking grief groups; participants gather outside in warmer weather and inside in cooler weather, and walk and talk about their grief.

**Barbara Albinder from Woodbury, NY:** we offer reiki to our individuals for 30 minutes a week while they are seeing us

**Anonymous:** We have a program called "Comfort in Motion". It is a walking bereavement support group as well. It was a rollover from a caregivers support group.

**Barbara Albinder from Woodbury, NY:** also, for an extra week of our groups, we offer reiki to the group

**David Neese from 1718 Patterson St.:** Can anyone speak a bit more about mindfulness offerings?

**Anonymous:** Also we are offering Complicated Grief Treatment as per Katherine Shear's treatment protocol. It has been successful but is very intensive and so we struggle to keep our limited resources available to non-complicated grievers.

**Lisa J. Bartoszek from St. Joseph, Michigan:** We offer a 3 session Memory Stone making opportunity; participants can bring artifacts of their loved ones or any other items and we create cement garden memory stones. This is very well received and some amazing stones are made!

**Anonymous:** Here's a great link to some of Kristen Neff's techniques: <http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/>

**Deborah Gonzalez:** we are going to offer a Cooking for one class for those may find cooking a challenge or

**Anonymous:** Cooking for one is a great idea. We've thought of this. Who teaches? Is it a chef or grief counsellor or both? Or other?

**Jean Francis from Philadelphia:** We are looking for different ideas for our memorial services, which we hold twice a year. We do a candle lighting ceremony but it's with battery candles (too many people in the room are on oxygen). Are there other ideas people have tried with success?

**Anonymous:** I was going to implement a recipe book with our support groups where members bring in their ideas on cooking for one and favorite recipes so share with new members and the community

**Dairine Pearson from Santa Barbara:** We have offered a Healing Day retreat, a full day of healing modalities such as Restorative Yoga, Tai Chi, Art workshops, Writing to Heal and Reiki. Participants enroll for a full day, once a year. We also offer periodic Memory Box, Memory Pillow, Writing to Heal and Grief Walk and Talk groups.

**Anonymous:** Our spiritual care has created a clootie tree on our unit where people are invited to tie a ribbon in memory of their person.

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Great ideas! Keep them coming. We hope to incorporate these comments into comments that will be loaded into the resource library.

**Anna Butler from Johnson City, TN:** Jean Francis--At our spring memorial service, each attendee receives a flower and we trim it and use it to make a wreath, pinning each on as we announce their loved one's name. It works well.

**Anonymous:** Love the idea of a healing day. Do the facilitators volunteer? What is attendance/turnout like?

**Nancy Carst from Akron, Ohio:** Sand tray therapy

**Jean Francis from Philadelphia:** Anna, thanks for the idea. Are you using artificial or real flowers?

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** mindfulnessandgrief.com is a website you may find helpful. Heather Stang recently spoke at the intensives on this topic.

**Anna Butler from Johnson City, TN:** I use real daisies. Either would work. We have a plain wreath wrapped in burlap ribbon that is easy to pin into.

**Jean Francis from Philadelphia:** Anna, great thoughts. I am also thinking about doing something with colored sand. Haven't worked out all the details.

**Anna Butler from Johnson City, TN:** Ooh, cool!!

**Deborah Pausig, LMFT, CT from North Haven, CT:** We have a volunteer who has "writes personalized songs" and plays the guitar.

**Jaci Bartley from Tallahassee, FL:** I am planning a two-day grief and loss camp for bereaved children in our area. We do one each year, and include both therapeutic and play activities. Last weekend we made "memory jars" with LED tea light candles and held a remembrance ceremony at night. It was INCREDIBLY powerful for both older and younger children

**Anna Butler from Johnson City, TN:** With kids (and really, kid stuff is always good for adults), I use malleable clay and cookie cutters to create ornaments. The child and the patient (or whomever) can press their thumbprints into the figure. Also works well at a death visit. Bake it and then use a crayon to emphasize the print.

**Jaci Bartley from Tallahassee, FL:** I'm having an equine portion of our camp this year...I feel that there is a healing relationship between horses and humans, but what language would you use to introduce that to children and debrief them>

**Valerie Height from Bellevue, NE:** I was going to implement a recipe book with our support groups where members bring in their ideas on cooking for one and favorite recipes so share with new members and the community

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Has anyone used a labyrinth for grief work?

**Jaci Bartley from Tallahassee, FL:** Valerie that is very cool. I worked with a terminal patient to put together a "culinary legacy" for her daughter before she passed

**Anna Butler from Johnson City, TN:** Another camp idea--we break clay pots, then glue them back and paint them. We send the kids home with soil and flower seeds. Also, we make papier Mache masks and talk about masking our feelings.

**Jaci Bartley from Tallahassee, FL:** Anne, I LOVE that! I was going to do a memory activity with a "butterfly bush". I might need to work the pot breaking in!

**Sharon Neumann from Traverse City, MI:** I have a reiki volunteer who offers service both to patients and bereaved, individually and in groups. This volunteer also provides a regular "Quiet Time" in our medication room for bereaved and staff. This is very well received. Our volunteer is also trained in hospice and grief support.

**Gretchen Seidler Gibbs from Valparaiso:** I just found granulated wax in different colors. The families in our grief center, at the end of the year, make a candle using the different colors to share their memories. They, then have a candle to burn at home.

**Anonymous:** I am not a yoga teacher but, a long time practitioner. I use very simple mindfulness based and yoga and DBT based breath techniques, very simple twists and stretches to incorporate moments of stress relief and relaxation in grief groups and also imagery with individuals.

**Jaci Bartley from Tallahassee, FL:** Diane, we used a labyrinth with children and teens last week and it was pretty neat. There are a lot of metaphors built in, and allows time for quiet reflection. We invited the children to take a stone from the center marked with words like "love," "courage," "bravery," "joy," etc. They were also invited to use chalk to write thoughts or feelings they wished to shed along the way  
11/09/2016 19:38:54 **Sharon Neumann from Traverse City, MI:** \*meditation room (not medication room)

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Has anyone done Dinner and a Movie or a book discussion group related to grief?

**Jean Francis from Philadelphia:** Any chance you could include a photo of the stone labyrinth after this chat?

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Has anyone done to poetry or writing workshop related to grief?

**Dairine Pearson from Santa Barbara:** I have done a Writing to Heal group many times. We use free writing with a prompt, and an emphasis on using written words to deeply express the grief.

**Nancy Carst from Akron, Ohio:** Diane, we have volunteers from the Wick Poetry Center at Kent

**Holly Farmer from Mishawaka, IN:** We have had dinner and movie for a couple of years now. We have had people attend that aren't ready to come to a group. We have also had very successful and well received writing to heal groups.

**Holly Farmer from Mishawaka, IN:** Hello!

**Kam Flynn from Lexington, VA:** Can you suggest some movies you have shown that have been particularly effective in prompting group discussion?

**NHPCO Staff:** If you are getting your audio through the computer and would like to ask a question by phone, dial 323-920-0091, Access code 862 3670#, then press \*6 to unmute when you are placed in the conference.

**Holly Farmer from Mishawaka, IN:** We Bought a Zoo, Under the Tuscan Sun, PS I Love you

**Anna Butler from Johnson City, TN:** The Way.

**Mary Dowcett from Wilmington NC:** Sharon, can you say more about your meditation room for bereaved and staff?

**David Neese from Nashville, TN:** Can you give a short list of some of the journaling exercises you mentioned?

**Marney Thompson:** Here's a great link to some of Kristen Neff's techniques: <http://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/>

**Mary Dowcett from Wilmington NC:** I am not a yoga teacher but, a long time practitioner. I use very simple mindfulness based and yoga and DBT based breath techniques, very simple twists and stretches to incorporate moments of stress relief and relaxation in grief groups and also imagery with individuals.

**Sharon Neumann from Traverse City, MI:** Our meditation room is an office-sized well-appointed meditation room. The exterior wall is all windows overlooking the woods. We have a water wall on an interior wall. Lights are dimmable. The furniture includes several very comfortable chairs and a cushioned window bench. There are pillows that can be used on the carpeted floor.

**Mary Dowcett from Wilmington NC:** Diane, thank you for the waiver suggestion.

**Diane Snyder Cowan from Cleveland:** Thank you everyone for your great suggestions and ideas.

**NHPCO Staff:** If you are getting your audio through the computer and would like to ask a question by phone, dial 323-920-0091, Access code 862 3670#, then press \*6 to unmute when you are placed in the conference.

**Mary Dowcett from Wilmington NC:** Really appreciate opportunity to hear from other Bereavement professionals! THANK YOU!

**Martha Gunter from Centra Hospice - Lynchburg, VA:** In order to develop rapport with family members prior to the passing of the patient, does anyone shadow the active care team for introductory purposes? This is outside of anticipatory grief services from bereavement.