



Portland Institute
For Loss and Transition

Portland Institute for Loss and Transition

September Institute for Grief Therapy (September 14-18, 2019)

List of Presenters

Coplan, E.

Elizabeth Coplan is a marketing and public relations specialist, a playwright, educator, and speaker, who confronts end-of-life issues. In 2016, Coplan created the non-profit Grief Dialogues. She uses theatre, the ultimate empathy generator, as the artistic expression to open new conversations about dying, death, and grief. In 2019 she joined forces with the Palliative Care team at a Seattle Regional Hospital to create a series of short plays followed by a moderated discussion to build empathy and compassion within the medical profession. Grief Dialogues Health Care Education offers CE credits for attendance and participation in the program and is presented throughout the U.S. Coplan is also the Executive Producer of the short, award-winning film, *8AM* by Mark Harvey Levine.

DeCristofaro, J., LCSW

Jana DeCristofaro is Community Response Program Coordinator at The Dougy Center for Grieving Children and Families, a nationally renowned center. On staff since 2002, Jana coordinates peer support groups and provides consultation and training for grieving families, students, community members, and professionals locally and nationally. Jana is co-author of the chapter, "Adolescents, humor, and death", in *Adolescent Encounters with Death, Bereavement, and Coping (2009)*. She is the host and producer of Grief Out Loud, The Dougy Center's podcast. Jana completed her BA in Sociology at Wake Forest University and her MSW at Portland State University.

Gershman, N.

Nancy Gershman is a memory artist and the developer of Dreamscaping, an imaginal and photo-based approach for working with people emotionally deadened by loss of self, a person, pet, place or thing. Her publications include *Prescriptive Memories in Grief and Loss: The Art of Dreamscaping* (Routledge, 2019) with Barbara E. Thompson, and case studies in Robert A. Neimeyer's *Techniques of Grief Therapy* (Routledge, 2012, 2016). Her work with end-of-life patients and their families at Visiting Nurse Service of NY was featured on NY1's "New Yorker of the Week" (2016). Since 2013, Gershman has hosted Death Café New York City.



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Hoeper, K., LPC, NCC, CT

Kelsey Hoeper is the Suicide Prevention Educator for Elyssa's Mission. Kelsey provides hands-on support to middle and high school implementing the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program and further trains school staff, parents/caregivers and community members in suicide prevention. She assists in facilitating school-based postvention grief groups in the event a student dies by suicide. Kelsey also devotes her time to providing individual and group therapy to children, teens and adults at two Chicago-based private practices. Kelsey is a graduate of Roosevelt University, a Grief Support Specialist and is a certified thanatologist.

Kosminsky, P., PhD, LCSW, FT

Phyllis Kosminsky is a clinical social worker specializing in grief, loss and trauma. Over the past 25 years Dr. Kosminsky has provided individual counseling to hundreds of bereaved individuals, and has helped hundreds more in bereavement support groups. She conducts trainings for mental health professionals nationally and internationally on the treatment of normal and problematic grief and is an Adjunct Professor of Social Work at Fordham University, where she teaches courses on grief and bereavement. Her book with John R. Jordan, *Attachment Informed Grief Therapy: The Clinician's Guide to Foundations and Applications* was published by Routledge in 2016.

Krawchuk, L., MSW, LCSW, MPH

Lara Krawchuk is Co-founder and Clinical Director of Healing Concepts, LLC in West Chester, PA. Her clinical work is focused on individuals and families facing a diverse range of death-related and ambiguous losses, including life threatening illness, end of life, bereavement, attachment injuries, trauma, and professional compassion fatigue. Krawchuk teaches courses on Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice, End of Life, and Loss Across a Lifecycle at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice. She has written chapters for both volumes of *Techniques of Grief Therapy*.

Mahat-Shamir, M., PhD

Michal Mahat-Shamir is a senior lecturer and the head of the MSW program in the School of Social Work at Ariel University, Israel. She is an active scholar in the field of loss, trauma and bereavement and specifically interested in traumatic and disenfranchised grief. She currently maintains an active clinical practice with over 20 years of clinical experience, with her research being closely related to the populations she serves as a therapist.



McCauley, J., LICSW

Jim McCauley is the Co-Founder and Associate Director of the Riverside Trauma Center. Jim provides mental health support for schools, workplaces, and communities affected by traumatic events. He has consulted with numerous schools and communities in Massachusetts and New England on trauma responses. He has presented at statewide, national, and international conferences on suicide postvention, suicide clusters, and suicide prevention coalitions. Jim is a graduate of the Boston University School of Social Work and also was a Senior Lecturer in the Sociology Department at Suffolk University for more than 30 years.

Milman, E., MA, PhD

Evgenia (Jane) Milman is an adjunct Assistant Professor at St Edward's University as well as at the National Crime Victim's Center in the Medical University of South Carolina. Jane has published book chapters introducing novel grief therapy techniques, assessment tools, and therapeutic protocols. She is the chair of the Distance Education subcommittee at the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) and an author contributing to ADEC's upcoming Handbook of Thanatology. Jane is co-editing the Handbook of Grief Therapies and her research examining meaning making following loss has been published in journals within the fields of trauma, counselling, and clinical psychology.

Pitcho-Prelorentzos, S., MSW

Shani Pitcho-Prelorentzos is a teacher and a doctoral student in the School of Social Work at Ariel University, Israel. Along with her doctoral thesis which focuses on violent bereavement, she is an active researcher studying various forms of traumatic losses. She currently maintains a psychotherapy practice and centers her research and clinical interest on individuals who have experienced traumatic life events and losses, including violent death bereavement.

Neimeyer, R. A., PhD

Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD, is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, maintains an active consulting and coaching practice, and also directs the *Portland Institute for Loss and Transition*. Neimeyer has published 30 books, including Routledge's series on *Techniques of Grief Therapy*, and serves as Editor of *Death Studies*. The author of over 500 articles and chapters and a popular workshop presenter, he is currently working to advance a more adequate theory of grieving as a meaning-making process. In recognition of his contributions, he has been given Lifetime Achievement Awards by both the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the International Network on Personal Meaning.



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Ng, C., PsyD, FT, MMSAC, RegCLR

Carolyn Ng maintains a private practice as a trainer, supervisor and therapist in Singapore, while also serving as Associate Director of the Portland Institute. Previously she served as Principal Counselor with the Children's Cancer Foundation in Singapore, specializing in cancer-related palliative care and bereavement counseling. She is a master clinical member and approved supervisor with the Singapore Association for Counseling (SAC) a Fellow in Thanatology with the Association of Death Education and Counseling (ADEC), and a consultant to a cancer support and bereavement ministry in Sydney, Australia. She is certified in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Narrative Therapy, and holds an MA in Pastoral Ministry from Trinity Theological Seminary in the USA.

Rubel, B., MA, BCETS, DAAETS

Barbara Rubel received a BS in psychology, and a MA degree in community health, with a concentration in thanatology, from Brooklyn College. Barbara is a Board-Certified Expert in Traumatic Stress and Diplomate with American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. Her publications include *But I Didn't Say Goodbye: Helping Families After a Suicide* (3rd ed.). (2020), and the nursing continuing education course book, *Loss, Grief, and Bereavement: Helping Individuals Cope* (4th ed.). She is the co-author of the Dept. of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime Training Curriculum, Compassion Fatigue, and a contributing writer to *Grief and Renewal; Fresh Grief; and Keys to a Good Life*. Barbara is a consultant and trainer with the Dept. of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center.

Stang, H., MA, C-IAYT

Heather Stang holds a master's degree in Thanatology from Hood College, and is a certified yoga therapist through the International Yoga Therapy Association. She is the author of *Mindfulness & Grief*, founder of the Mindfulness & Grief Institute. Heather offers onsite and online programs for bereaved people and grief professionals who want to learn how to use mindfulness and compassion to cope with grief, cultivate resilience, and prevent burnout.

Strouse, S., MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT

Sharon Strouse is a board-certified, licensed clinical professional art therapist and Associate Director: Portland Institute for Loss and Transition. Her art therapy practice, national presentations and trainings focus on traumatic loss with parents, who have lost a child, suicide bereavement, and military loss/ Gold Star Families. Her work is grounded in meaning reconstruction, attachment informed grief therapy, continuing bonds and restorative retelling. She authored *Artful Grief: A Diary of Healing*, (www.artfulgrief.com) twelve years after the suicide of her seventeen-year-old daughter. She is co-founder of The Kristin Rita Strouse Foundation (www.krsf.com) a non-profit that increases awareness of mental health through education and the arts.



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Thompson, B. E., OTD, LCSW

Barbara E. Thompson is a Professor of Occupational Therapy, Russell Sage College in Troy, NY, where she also maintains an active psychotherapy practice. She founded the Hospice Day Program and ALS Regional Center at St. Peter's Hospice in Albany, NY and has published articles, book chapters and two books on use of contemplative practices and the creative arts in palliative, end-of-life and bereavement care. Her books include *Grief and the Expressive Arts: Practices for Creating Meaning* (2014) with Robert Neimeyer, and *Prescriptive Memories in Grief and Loss: The Art of Dreamscaping* (2019) with Nancy Gershman, both published by Routledge.

Vollmann, S., MPS, ATR-BC, LICSW

Sarah Vollmann is a registered, board-certified art therapist and a licensed independent clinical social worker with over 20 years of clinical experience. She maintains a private practice with a focus upon grief and loss and she is a counselor for adolescents at Buckingham Browne and Nichols School in Cambridge Massachusetts. As a member of the Artful Grief team of art therapists Sarah works with Gold Star families facing suicide bereavement and traumatic loss. She has published articles and book chapters on grief and loss, and she presents both nationally and internationally on art therapy, grief, and bereavement.

Whitmore, S., BSBM, CGC

Susan Whitmore is the founder of griefHaven (www.griefHaven.org), a national and international organization in Pacific Palisades, California, started in 2003 after the death of her daughter and only child, Erika Whitmore Godwin. Susan's grief work has been the subject of her many professional presentations, workshops, TV and radio appearances, and educational seminars. Susan's story and her work have been included in numerous articles and books. Today, griefHaven provides a grief support website that is used around the world, grief groups and private support, workshops, newsletters, articles, podcasts, special events, and more. Susan's work includes creating new grief support methods using the latest scientific research on the grieving brain. Susan holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Management degree and is a Certified Grief Counselor.



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Zampitella, C., PsyD, FT

Christina Zampitella is a licensed clinical psychologist, Fellow of Thanatology, owner of The Center for Grief Therapy and Education and Integrative Psychology Group, adjunct professor, and professional speaker. She focuses her clinical practice, research, course development, and teaching on bereavement studies, spirituality, nature-based therapy, and integrative psychology. She served as the chair for the Continuing Education Committee for the San Diego Psychological Association and the Delaware Psychological Association. She is the former resident psychologist for Fox 5 News in San Diego, and often appeared on NBC News. She has been featured in Elle Magazine, BuzzFeed, and The Huffington Post.