



Portland Institute

For Loss and Transition

Grief Therapy Learning Retreat

April 2-6, 2027 (Friday-Tuesday)

**Amicalola Falls State Park and Lodge
Dawsonville, GA, United States**

Featured Keynoters

Liza Barros-Lane, PhD, MSW
Darcy L. Harris, RN, RSW, MEd (Couns), PhD, FT
Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD
Sarah Vollmann, DSW, MPS, ATR-BC, LICSW

and Other Presenters

Jill Greenbaum, EdD; Evie Lindemann, ATR-BC, ATCS, LMFT; Carolyn Ng, PsyD;
Samantha Sanderson Brown, PsyD; Sharon Strouse, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT;
Doris C. Vaughans, PhD, LPC-S; and Christina Zampitella, PsyD, FT

NOTE:

This Retreat offers a range of Orientation, Techniques, Case Studies, and Practicum Modules leading to Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy (MFGT), Certification in Art-Assisted Grief Therapy (AAGT), Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses (NDL), Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy (FFGT), or Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss (GTTL) offered by the Portland Institute. For more information about certification, simply click: <https://www.portlandinstitute.org/certification>.

Grief Therapy Learning Retreat

April 2-6, 2027

Welcome to the *Portland Institute for Loss and Transition*, and our Grief Therapy Learning Retreat, a 5-day, 4-night immersion in experiential workshops designed to add conceptual clarity, hone process expertise, and provide learners practical tools to enhance their practice of grief therapy and bereavement support with a broad range of clients across many contexts of clinical practice. Alongside a rich menu of training options, learners can also explore many modalities for self-renewal as persons and professionals.

Join Robert A. Neimeyer, and PI faculty – Darcy Harris, Evie Lindemann, Carolyn Ng, Sharon Strouse, Doris Vaughans, Sarah Vollmann, Christina Zampitella, as well as other guest speakers including Liza Barros-Lane, Jill Greenbaum and Samantha Sanderson Brown for an international, interdisciplinary institute that offers a new meaning-focused model of training in bereavement care.

Target Audience

Psychologists, social workers, counselors, art / music / expressive arts therapists, pastoral care personnel, healthcare professionals, grief coaches, and bereavement volunteers.

Continuing Education (CEs Processing Fee: \$125 for up to 19.5 CE Credits)

To qualify for CE Credits, please kindly note that:

- Full attendance of the respective sessions is required to receive CE credits. No partial credit is awarded.
- You are required to sign on a Sign-In/Out Sheet at the beginning and at the end of each session attended.
- The Certificate of CE Credits will be emailed to you within 10 business days after the retreat based on your signatures recorded on the Sign-In/Out Sheets collected.



Portland Institute for Loss and Transition is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Portland Institute for Loss and Transition maintains responsibility for this program and its content.



Portland Institute for Loss and Transition, [Provider number 1954], is approved to offer social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program. Organizations, not individual courses, are approved as ACE providers. State and provincial regulatory boards have the final authority to determine whether an individual course may be accepted for continuing education credit. Portland Institute for Loss and Transition maintains responsibility for this event. ACE provider approval period: 09/09/2025–09/09/2028.

Disclosure Statement

This retreat is not supported financially by a manufacturer of any commercial product. There is no known conflict of interest for this CE program or the presenters.

Friday (April 2nd)

5:00-6:30 Grief as a Quest for Meaning: Review of a Research Program (Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD)
 1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

Grief can be viewed as a frequently anguished attempt to reaffirm or reconstruct a world of meaning that has been shaken or shattered by loss. This presentation reviews 25 years of research stemming from this constructivist premise, tracing its development through three phases of evolving methodologies in pursuit of a deeper, more empirically informed and practically oriented understanding of bereavement and its implications for professional practice. It will conclude with summarizing the basic clinical model of meaning reconstruction that arises from this work, focusing on three domains of narrative disruption and the pathways suggested by each for a restoration of meaning, connection and post-loss growth.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the philosophic and personal origins of a meaning focused approach to loss;
- Summarize the three main phases in the development of the research program, and the major contribution of each; and
- Outline the three domains of meaning disruption conceptualized in this model and the unique pathway of reconstruction associated with each.

Content Focus:

- Application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that have overall consistent and credible empirical support in the contemporary peer reviewed scientific literature beyond those publications and other types of communications devoted primarily to the promotion of the approach.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- Birth of a Model: Philosophic and Personal Origins (10 min.)
- Phase 1: Sense-Making and Benefit Finding (15 min.)
- Phase 2: Measures of Meaning (15 min.)
- Phase 3: Filling the Gaps in Bereavement Research (15 min.)
- A Closer Look: Representative Research (15 min.)
- From Assessment to Intervention: Meaning Reconstruction in Grief (20 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Orientation Module for [All Certification Programs](#).

Saturday (April 3rd)

8:30-10:00 Reconstructing Identity after Loss: An Embodied-Narrative Integrative Framework [Part I] (Liza Barros-Lane, PhD & Sarah Vollmann, DSW, ATR-BC, LICSW)
 1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

Significant loss can create profound disruptions in one's sense of identity. Grief scholarship has predominantly focused on narrative processes of identity reconstruction, often overlooking the embodied and implicit dimensions of identity disruption and reconstruction following loss. The *Integrative Embodied-Narrative Model (IENM)* bridges this gap. Building on Neimeyer's meaning reconstruction framework and drawing from phenomenological perspectives, IENM views post-loss identity reconstruction as a multi-layered process that unfolds across three overlapping modes of identity reconstruction:

- 1) In embodied mode, loss is experienced through changes in everyday ways of being, often before conscious narrative integration; identity is lived pre-reflectively, often outside conscious awareness. It encompasses the felt sense of self, bodily attunement, automatic habits and ways of being, and a sense of belonging in time that connects past, present, and future. Disruption and reconstruction in this mode are primarily accessible through bodily experience, sensation, movement, and habitual action. Post-loss embodied changes in identity can include shifts in habits, desires, action readiness, bodily attunement, and one's sense of belonging in time and space.
- 2) In hybrid mode, identity is lived with greater intention, bridging embodied experience with purposeful action and emerging meaning. It serves as the integrative space where bodily habits, new ways of doing, and nascent narrative understanding begin to inform and reshape each other.
- 3) In narrative mode, identity is understood and reshaped through reflective integration and re-authoring of self-stories, roles, relationships, and future possibilities.

By recognizing identity-related changes across diverse loss contexts, including bereavement, illness, and injury, IENM offers clinicians a coherent, mode-sensitive framework. Clinical examples will illustrate how mode-sensitive conceptualization can guide therapeutic decision-making and facilitate identity reconstruction following loss.

Learning Objectives:

- Explain how loss disrupts identity across embodied, hybrid, and narrative modes in the *Integrative Embodied-Narrative Model (IENM)*;

- Identify clients' dominant processing modes during grief by recognizing embodied and hybrid indicators that are often missed in traditional talk-based approaches; and
- Apply the IENM framework in practice by selecting mode-sensitive strategies to better support identity reconstruction and reduce mental health vulnerabilities after loss.

Content Focus:

- Application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that have overall consistent and credible empirical support in the contemporary peer reviewed scientific literature beyond those publications and other types of communications devoted primarily to the promotion of the approach.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- What Is Identity? Køster's Four Axes and Four Signs of An Intact Self (35 min.)
- Shattered Self: Identity Disruption after Loss (40 min.)
- Mapping the Road: The Integrative Embodied-Narrative Model (30 min.)
- Putting into Practice: Case Application (40 min.)
- Further Processing: Considering Clinical Implications (35 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Orientation Module for [All Certification Programs](#).

10:00-10:30 Morning Break

10:30-12:00 Reconstructing Identity after Loss: An Embodied-Narrative Integrative Framework [Part II] (Liza Barros-Lane, PhD & Sarah Vollmann, DSW, ATR-BC, LICSW) 1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Orientation Module for [All Certification Programs](#).

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:30 Mini-workshops. Choose between:

A. *An “Epic” Approach to the Underworld of Loss: Mask Making and Body Casting [Part I]* (Sharon Strouse, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT & Evie Lindemann, ATR-BC, ATCS, LMFT)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

Mask making and body casting are ancient and powerful tools, used in the process of healing and the journey toward wholeness. *An “Epic” Approach to the Underworld of Loss* is a dyadic and experiential master class that introduces the archetype of mask making and body casting as an art therapy modality that reveals, conceals and memorializes. The Odyssey will provide the mythic structure for a deep dive into the underworld of loss. The “Epic’s” themes of departure, descent, return and restoration will be engaged in a safe, creative, ritual space. Case studies will explore the challenges of death and non-death loss and the subsequent impact of the masking and casting process on identity and personal growth. Odysseus’s journey and its personal relevance in the mask making and body casting process is grounded in Neimeyer’s Meaning Reconstruction, Rynearson’s Restorative Retelling and Worden’s Task Model of Bereavement.

The experiential learning process will include Rigid Wrap Plaster Cloth (wet gauze casting material) applied to your face or body part, thereby creating an authentic face mask or body cast. This will set and dry, be removed, continue to dry and be ready for decorating, processing, and sharing in pairs and with the group. The creation of a personal mask or body cast is an opportunity to explore and express an embodied internal landscape that opens to a fresh, intimate sense of the Self. In this module, we examine the creative process of making and shaping what is given and engage masking and casting through a creative lens. Learners should also be aware that this process can elicit strong emotional responses. The emphasis will be on safety as an entry point, thereby helping learners titrate the depth of their experience. The creative process and exchange between participants will be an opportunity to widen and amplify a rich personal experience of transformation.

Learning Objectives:

- Summarize the principles of departure, descent, return and restoration as key components of the Hero’s journey as it applies to grief and loss;
- Explain art therapy mask making and body casting from Odysseus’s perspective, and the challenges he faced as symbolic for survivors of death and non-death loss;
- Summarize the benefits of mask making and body casting from a grief-informed approach that is grounded in meaning reconstruction’s event, back and personal stories, as seen in one of the case studies;
- Identify three benefits of art therapy mask making and body casting from a grief-informed approach grounded in the case study of restorative retelling;

- Summarize three art therapy benefits of mask making and body casting as a multi-faceted container that reveals, conceals and memorializes in one of the case studies; and
- Describe Worden's four tasks of bereavement as applied to art therapy mask making and body casting with one of the case studies on death and non-death loss.

Content Focus:

- Topics related to psychological practice, education, or research other than application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that are supported by contemporary scholarship grounded in established research procedures.

Instructional Level:

- Advance

Content Overview:

- Setting the Ground: Introduction, Disclosures and Objectives (10 min.)
- The Epic of the Odyssey: Departure, Descent, Return and Restoration (25 min.)
- A Glimpse of the Process: TAPS Case Study (25 min.)
- A Deep-Dive Experience: Mask Making and Body Casting (60 min.)
- Emerging from the Experience: Processing and Sharing (60 min.)

* This is a fully immersive, connected module that contains 4 parts in total. To get the most out of this interactive experience, we strongly encourage learners to attend the module in its entirety.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Techniques Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Art-Assisted Grief Therapy \(AAGT\)](#), [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#), and [Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

B. Retirement as a Non-Death Loss: Reconstructing Identity in Professional Transition (Samantha Sanderson Brown, PsyD)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

In the United States, retirement is often celebrated as a natural milestone, yet for many people it can be an inflection point that triggers a crisis of self, especially if it is unanticipated. Some people have been working toward their careers from a young age. Others have been working in their positions for the majority of their adult lives. The significant amount of time spent at work leaves people vulnerable to losing their sense of self, community, and purpose once they retire. Despite the common difficulties that come with retirement, this plight often goes unrecognized, leaving people to navigate this transition with little to no guidance from others.

Drawing from clinical experience and research, this module examines retirement from a holistic perspective as a non-death and ambiguous loss that is often experienced with disenfranchised grief. While this analysis is predominantly focused on societal norms in North America, considerations for other cultures will also be discussed. This presentation highlights the importance of understanding retirement through a grief lens and conveys the application of meaning making strategies and identity reconstruction to an actual case study in a small group exercise, thereby fostering translation of principles to practice.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify three secondary losses of retirement;
- Examine cultural norms that complicate the grief process during retirement; and
- Describe the impacts that unrecognized grief has on post-retirement mental health, identity reconstruction, and meaning making.

Content Focus:

- Application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that have overall consistent and credible empirical support in the contemporary peer reviewed scientific literature beyond those publications and other types of communications devoted primarily to the promotion of the approach.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- Introduction: Non-Death Loss, Ambiguous Loss and Disenfranchised Grief (10 min.)
- A New Lens: Re-Conceptualization of Retirement (25 min.)
- Putting into Practice: Application of Rituals and Meaning-Making in Retirement (30 min.)
- Harvesting the Wisdom: Case Presentation and Small Group Discussion (25 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Techniques Module for [Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

2:30-3:00 Afternoon Break

3:00-4:30 Mini-workshops. Choose between:

A. *An “Epic” Approach to the Underworld of Loss: Mask Making and Body Casting [Part II]* (Sharon Strouse, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT & Evie Lindemann, ATR-BC, ATCS, LMFT)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Techniques Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Art-Assisted Grief Therapy \(AAGT\)](#), [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#), and [Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

B. *Legacy after Loss: A New Lens for Meaning Making in Grief Counseling* (Doris C. Vaughans, PhD, LPC-S)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

This module introduces a broadened perspective of legacy as a component of meaning reconstruction, moving beyond the traditional understanding of legacy as something left behind. It will explore how the values, relationships, stories, and influence of the deceased continue to shape the griever's lives and inform their own sense of meaning and purpose. This offering is applicable across diverse cultural, spiritual, familial, and social contexts. Learners will consider practical ways to incorporate legacy exploration that supports meaning-making, continuing bonds, and the reconstruction of a meaningful life following loss.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe legacy from an expanded perspective, recognizing it as an evolving source of meaning that can extend beyond what a person leaves behind;
- Summarize how meaning reconstruction and continuing bonds can inform the integration of legacy into aiding the bereaved; and
- Create a case scenario of a culturally responsive legacy-based approach with the bereaved that includes diverse beliefs, values, relationships, and expressions of continuing bonds.

Content Focus:

- Topics related to psychological practice, education, or research *other than* application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that are supported by contemporary scholarship grounded in established research procedures.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- Living Legacies: An Expanded Conceptualization (10 min.)
- Integration of Loss: Meaning and Bonding (10 min.)
- Culture and Connection: Ceremonies, Rituals and Traditions (10 min.)
- Legacy Work in Practice: Case Studies and Discussion (50 min.)
- Closing: Questions and Conclusion (10 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Techniques Module to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy \(FFGT\)](#) or [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#).

Sunday (April 4th)

8:30-10:00 Mini-workshops. Choose between:

A. An “Epic” Approach to the Underworld of Loss: Mask Making and Body Casting [Part III] (Sharon Strouse, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT & Evie Lindemann, ATR-BC, ATCS, LMFT)
1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

Content Overview:

- Welcome Back: Orientation and Continuation (10 min.)
- Building The Foundation: History, Case Studies and Theory (40 min.)
- Decoration and Embellishment: Revisiting the Masks and Casts (60 min.)
- A Deeper Dive: Processing and Sharing (60 min.)
- Wrapping Up: Closing Questions and Discussion (10 min.)

* This is a fully immersive, connected workshop that contains 4 parts in total. To get the most out of this interactive experience, we strongly encourage learners to attend the workshop in its entirety.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Practicum Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Art-Assisted Grief Therapy \(AAGT\)](#), [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#), and [Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

B. A Touching Conversation: Addressing Trauma and Bonding in Perinatal Loss
[Part I] (Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD)
1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

We may know the techniques of grief therapy, but how and when do we deploy them in an actual session with a real client suffering a traumatic loss? In this module, we will trace the moment-by-moment unfolding of the process of a full therapy session with Christina, a young woman contending with a tragically compounded experience of perinatal loss, and its long-term effects on her life and identity, as well as her relationship with her deceased child.

Viewing extensive video recordings of the actual therapy, we will first characterize the nature of the therapeutic relationship as the therapist and client conduct a restorative retelling of the event story of the loss and then map the impact of Christina's experience using the *Tripartite Model of Meaning Reconstruction*. Finally, we will witness the improvisational use of embodied dialogue to seek visceral answers to existential questions, before practicing this same procedure in small groups.

Learners should complete the session with a fuller appreciation of the role of presence, practice and procedure in grief therapy, sharpened awareness of the multifaceted impact of traumatic loss, an approach to clearer conceptualization of therapeutic goals, and greater adroitness in using a somatic procedure to reaffirm a continuing bond with the deceased in highly challenging circumstances.

Learning Objectives:

- Analyze the character of the therapeutic alliance in restorative retelling of a multifaceted traumatic bereavement;
- Apply the *Tripartite Model of Meaning Reconstruction* to identify relevant primary and secondary losses in a case of perinatal death; and
- Practice embodied dialogue to foster symbolic experiential meaning reconstruction and facilitation of the continuing bond.

Content Focus:

- Application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that have overall consistent and credible empirical support in the contemporary peer reviewed scientific literature beyond those publications and other types of communications devoted primarily to the promotion of the approach.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- Mapping the Terrain of Loss: Retelling the Trauma of Perinatal Death (30 min.)
- Compounding the Cruelty: Circumstantial Complications and Secondary Losses (30 min.)
- Identifying Domains of Meaning Disruption: The Tripartite Model (30 min.)
- Questions in Search of Answers: A Deeper Dive (15 min.)
- A Touching Conversation: Restoring Dialogue with a Deceased Child (15 min.)
- Embodied Dialogue: An Experiential Practicum (45 min.)
- Wrapping Up: Questions and Discussion (15 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Case Studies Module to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy \(FFGT\)](#) or [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#).

10:00-10:30 Morning Break

10:30-12:30 Mini-workshops. Choose between:

A. An “Epic” Approach to the Underworld of Loss: Mask Making and Body Casting [Part IV] (Sharon Strouse, MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT & Evie Lindemann, ATR-BC, ATCS, LMFT)
1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Practicum Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Art-Assisted Grief Therapy \(AAGT\)](#), [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#), and [Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

B. A Touching Conversation: Addressing Trauma and Bonding in Perinatal Loss [Part II] (Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD)
1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Case Studies Module to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy \(FFGT\)](#) or [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#).

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00 onwards Free-and-Easy Time

Monday (April 5th)

8:30-10:00 Political Grief: Personal and Professional Implications
[Part I] (Darcy L. Harris, RN, RSW, PhD, FT)
1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

Political grief encompasses the direct losses experienced by individuals and groups resulting from political policies, ideologies, and oppression enacted and/or perpetuated at sociopolitical levels. We are currently living in a world that is increasingly polarized and unpredictable, with much suffering experienced both personally and professionally as a result of specific political leaders, policies, and laws. As therapists, we are certainly affected by current events; however, we are now seeing how political events also directly affect our clients and what they bring to the therapeutic relationship. This module will examine how political grief is experienced by therapists and their clients, explore ways to better understand the underlying dynamics of this experience, and identify potentially constructive approaches to grief originating from sociopolitical sources.

Learning Objectives:

- Define three aspects of political grief and their implications in therapeutic work;
- Describe the impact of threat activation and political polarization on affected individuals and groups; and
- Demonstrate at least two constructive approaches to political grief.

Content Focus:

- Topics related to psychological practice, education, or research other than application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that are supported by contemporary scholarship grounded in established research procedures.

Instructional Level:

- Advanced

Content Overview:

- Current Affairs: Relooking through the Lens of Grief and Loss (30 mins.)
- Political Grief: Personal and Professional Impacts (30 mins.)
- Clinical Implications: Unique Aspects for Therapists (30 mins.)
- Political Grief in Real Life: A Clinical Case Study (30 mins.)
- A Therapeutic Anchor: Three Circles Model of Compassion-Focused Therapy (15 min.)

- Responding to Political Grief: Some Constructive Approaches (15 min.)
- Moral Outrage: A Constructive Response (15 min.)
- Closing: Summary and Discussion (15 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Orientation Module for [All Certification Programs](#).

10:00-10:30 Morning Break

10:30-12:00 Political Grief: Personal and Professional Implications [Part II] (Darcy L. Harris, RN, RSW, PhD, FT) 1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Orientation Module for [All Certification Programs](#).

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:30 Mini-workshops. Choose between:

A. Regret, Guilt and Shame in Grief: A Meaning Reconstruction Approach [Part I] (Christina Zampitella, PsyD, FT) 1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

Regret, guilt, and shame often overlap following death and other significant losses and trauma, but each affects the grieving process in a different way. Regret tends to focus on what might have been, guilt on what a person believes they did or failed to do, and shame on what the experience has come to mean about who they are. Using a meaning reconstruction approach, this module will examine how these emotions can shape self-concept and become part of the story grieving people tell about the trauma and loss, themselves, their relationships, and the way they understand and relate to what happened. A de-identified case study will be woven throughout the module to illustrate how regret, guilt, and shame appeared during treatment and how the client used art to express her movement from trauma toward healing and greater integration. Learners will also be introduced to practical interventions for helping clients explore regret, distinguish responsibility from what was outside their control, and begin loosening shame-based beliefs. Brief attention will also be given to the role of spirituality and nature-based therapy in healing, as well as how family roles and social expectations can shape the way these emotions are understood, expressed, and integrated into a person's assumptive world.

Learning Objectives:

- Differentiate regret, guilt, and shame by identifying how each relates to lost possibilities, perceived responsibility, and changes in self-concept following trauma and loss;
- Describe how spirituality, family roles, relationships, and social expectations may shape the meaning and expression of regret, guilt, and shame and influence how the experience is integrated into a person's assumptive world; and
- Apply meaning-oriented interventions to help grieving clients explore regret and guilt, distinguish responsibility from circumstances that were outside their control, and begin loosening shame-based beliefs about the self.

Content Focus:

- Topics related to psychological practice, education, or research *other than* application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that are supported by contemporary scholarship grounded in established research procedures.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- Regret, Guilt and Shame: A Continuum in the Clinical Context (20 min.)
- Fork in the Road: Regret and Lost Possibilities (30 min.)
- Naming Our Responsibilities: Guilt, Moral Responsibility and Control (30 min.)
- Are We Alone in Our Shame? Shame, Identity and Belonging (40 min.)
- A Compassionate Gift to Self: Holding the Same Story Differently (40 min.)
- Closing: Questions and Answers (20 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Techniques Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#) or [Certification of Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

B. Death and Dying in a Family: Facilitating Family Communication and Remodeling [Part I] (Carolyn Ng, PsyD)
1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 General CE Credits (ACE)

Death is a crisis that all families will encounter and grief is a family affair. Be it through a terminal illness or other death circumstances, the aftermath can profoundly challenge the functioning of the family and the individuals within it. Thus, it is essential for us to go beyond individual perspectives on loss and examine its systemic impacts on the bereaved family, as well as to facilitate post-loss adjustment and meaning making within and among family members, including children. In this module, an intra- and interpersonal assessment frame will be introduced to identify

both risk and protective factors in a family and to guide our subsequent formulation of interventions. Thereafter, we will practice a conversation guide, *Talking about Talking and Listening*, that helps assess family members' need and readiness for conjoint sessions to share and process their grief experience together. Lastly, we will experiment with an art-assisted technique, *Remodeling My Family*, to explore family members' roles and positions before the loss and to facilitate relational coregulation, realignment and redeployment in the family as they contend with the shared loss.

Learning Objectives:

- Examine a bereaved family's vulnerabilities and resources through an intra- and interpersonal assessment frame;
- Assess family members' need for talking and not talking and their readiness to listen to and witness each other's grief; and
- Apply *Remodeling My Family* as an intervention tool to facilitate the family's post-loss adjustments.

Content Focus:

- Topics related to psychological practice, education, or research *other than* application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that are supported by contemporary scholarship grounded in established research procedures.

Instructional Level:

- Intermediate

Content Overview:

- Shockwaves of Grief: Systemic Impacts in a Family after a Death (15 min.)
- Read the Need: An Intra- and Interpersonal Frame of Reference (30 min.)
- Talking and Listening: Sharing Difficult Emotions and Addressing Secrets and Taboos (60 min.)
- Remodeling My Family: Repositioning and Redeployment (75 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Practicum Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy \(FFGT\)](#) or [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#).

2:30-3:00 Afternoon Break

3:00-4:30 Mini-workshops. Choose between:

A. Regret, Guilt and Shame in Grief: A Meaning Reconstruction Approach [Part II] (Christina Zampitella, PsyD, FT)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 Clinical CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Techniques Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#) or [Certification in Grief Therapy for Non-Death Losses \(NDL\)](#).

B. Death and Dying in a Family: Facilitating Family Communication and Remodeling [Part II] (Carolyn Ng, PsyD)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 General CE Credits (ACE)

A continuation of the above workshop.

NOTE: This session confers 0.5 credit of Practicum Module leading to [Certification in Meaning-Focused Grief Therapy \(MFGT\)](#), [Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy \(FFGT\)](#) or [Certification in Grief Therapy for Traumatic Loss \(GTTL\)](#).

Tuesday (April 6th)

9:00-12:00 Nature Rituals and Creativity in Work with Grief and Loss (Jill Greenbaum, EdD)

1.5 CEs (APA) / 1.5 General CE Credits (ACE)

Engagement with the natural world can help ground us in the turbulent throes of grief. To begin our exploration of this practice, we will identify our intention for the session, discuss the importance of meaning-making, and highlight recent research about working in and with nature to offer comfort and support. Our focus then shifts to learning the seven-step healing modality that will ground us in the present moment and move us toward creation. Learners will be guided through a structured process for constructing ephemeral earth art altars / memorials / remembrances. Mindfully arranging natural elements into intricate designs encourages everyone to turn inward, slow down, attune to self, wonder, and create with intention.

This process supports our needs for quiet, contemplation, and creation. We will recognize the ways in which we focus, attend to, work with, and reflect on our experiences with loss. The work and play of self-reflection, beauty-making, and discussion give learners the opportunity to design meaningful, personal, and symbolic experiences and remembrances. This impermanent earth art serves as a way to tell personal stories and provides opportunities to share our experiences with

others. This work encourages learners to develop even more strategies for navigating loss, grief, change, and transition. Learners will leave the session with new resources, having stepped into many roles – as observers, explorers, sharers, and witnesses – and feeling more connected to themselves, nature, and their fellow explorers.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify our personal and/or professional intent for engaging with nature as a healing modality and resource when working with loss and grief;
- Apply the *Morning Altars* seven-step practice and construct impermanent earth art as a memorial / remembrance; and
- Synthesize the healing effects of nature, rituals, creativity and agency, and adopt impermanent earth art in personal and/or professional practices.

Content Focus:

- Topics related to psychological practice, education, or research *other than* application of psychological assessment and/or intervention methods that are supported by contemporary scholarship grounded in established research procedures.

Instructional Level:

- Introductory

Content Overview:

- Grounding the Work: Introduction, Agreement and Agenda (10 min.)
- Morning Altars: An Experiential Practice (80 min.)
- Consulting the Data: Current Research on Nature-Based Practices (30 min.)
- Building a Bridge: From Practice to Theory (20 min.)
- Integrating the Pieces: Planning for Clinical Practice (30 min.)
- Closing: Questions and Answers (10 min.)

NOTE: This session confers 1 credit of Practicum Module for [All Certification Programs](#).

For inquiries regarding accommodations for disability, cancellations, refunds, and/or other issues, please email [Carolyn](#).