



THE AUSTIN CENTER FOR

Grief&Loss

Hope › Healing › Transformation

Newsletter

Winter

2018

A Message from our Executive Director Mary Dickerson

Happy New Year! Winter is upon Austin and Central Texas. Our days are still short and quite chilly. As we close out the old year and look to the new one, our human instinct is to make resolutions both spoken and unspoken. I recently picked up a small but mighty book by Cherry Harman called *Be-good-to yourself Therapy*. Every page is a wonderful, self-help resolution, and I want to share some of them with you. My hope is that these little pearls of wisdom will be helpful reminders, perhaps even resolutions, to be kind to yourself.

- *Let your feelings be known. They are important.*
- *When you're harassing yourself, stop. You do it when you need something. Figure out what you need and get it.*
- *When you feel anxious, let yourself know that in your head you've moved into the future to something scary and your body has gotten up the energy for it. Come back to the present.*
- *When you need something, don't talk yourself out of it. Even if you can't have it, it's OK to need.*

Our vision and mission at Austin Grief remains steadfast---to help people work through their grief and to provide hope, healing and transformation. We have many wonderful programs planned in 2018, and we invite you to personally attend or share our calendar of events with someone who would benefit from them.

We are able to fulfill our mission because of the generous support of private donors and foundations. Please join us on February 7th at the 3800 North Lamar Kendra Scott store from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for a *Kendra Gives Back* party benefiting Austin Grief. Also, keep us in mind during the 24 hour Amplify Austin campaign which runs from March 1st through March 2nd. If everyone who receives this newsletter gives \$30.00, we will reach our 2018 Amplify Goal. Thank you for your continued support!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Financial Planning During and After Divorce

Friday January 26th, 12:00 - 1:30 pm

Cass Grange and Megan Poore of Lucien, Stirling & Gray will be our guest presenters at this informative 90 minute workshop on financial planning prior to, during and after divorce. The format will be interactive and allow time for questions and answers.

A light lunch will be provided.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

Kitchen Table Conversations: What Are Your End-of Life Wishes?

February 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th 10:30 am - 1:00 pm

Led by: Garrick Colwell and Nancy Walker

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss and Kitchen Table Conversations are offering a FREE 4-part, workshop that includes a screening and discussion of *Being Mortal* a PBS *Frontline* documentary based on the best selling book by Atul Gawande. This is followed by The 3 Ds of Advance Care Planning: Decide - Discuss - Document™, three interactive workshops designed to educate you on how to decide, discuss and document your end-of-life wishes with your loved ones and healthcare professionals. On February 17th Cass Grange, a financial planner with Lucien, Stirling & Gray will be available during lunch to answer questions related to financial considerations. On February 24th, Carolyn Ostrom, an estate planning and probate attorney will be on-hand to address documentation questions.

Lunch will be provided and is generously underwritten by Collins Ostrom PLLC, and Lucien Stirling & Gray.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

Kendra Gives Back

February 7, 5:00 - 8:00 pm

Please join us and invite everyone you know for an evening of sips, sweets and jewels! Make selections from the new line and just in time for Valentines! Proceeds from the evening go to Austin Grief.

Location: Kendra Scott Lamar Central

3800 N Lamar Blvd, Suite 140, Austin, Texas 78756

Brown Bag: Disoriented Grief

February 23, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Led by: Pamela A. Malone, Ph.D., LCSW, FT

Disoriented Grief is a framework for understanding the complex experiences of disaster survivors. Please join us for this Brown Bag to better understand the experience of grief in response to disaster for community members and professionals.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

Amplify Austin 2018

March 1-2

It is Amplify Austin Season! Please consider one of three ways to help us reach our goal. 1) Host a fundraising page on behalf of Austin Grief

2) Share our organizations donation page and encourage those you know to donate 3) Make a donation to Austin Grief. We hope you will join us once again as we honor a community that amplifies giving!

SUPPORT GROUP SPOTLIGHT

LATE PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS

For women and their partners coping with the loss of a pregnancy 21 weeks or later (sometimes referred to as stillbirth) and infants up to 12 months.

EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS

For women and their partners experiencing early pregnancy loss, up to 20 weeks.

EMPTY NESTER

For parents and caregivers looking for support and connection as their children come of age and leave their childhood homes.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Austin Grief Attends IBM and Samsung

Austin Grief was selected as a recommended non-profit in the community for both IBM and Samsung employee giving.

Austin Grief Expands Communities in Schools Project



Austin Grief has expanded to two additional schools offering grief support groups to undeserved children in the Austin community.

Additional Community Outreach

Austin Grief has provided grief support and training for several Austin area schools.

YOUR AUSTIN GRIEF COMMUNITY

A Message from our Clinical Director Becca Van Tassel, LCSW Looking Into The Light

Dear Austin Grief Community,

During my 25 years in Michigan, I often resented the dark days, the overcast sky, and the bitter temperatures that winter brings each year. It wasn't until my grandfather showed me the magic of winter that I understood my perspective was a choice.

On one occasion, my grandfather took my brother and me into the woods to teach us about tools nature has provided. There was plenty of snow, and the journey was not easy in our winter gear and big boots. We arrived at a spot where we were surrounded by a forest of tall birch trees. My grandfather asked us to look up, and as I did, he kicked the tree which allowed thousands of sparkling snowflakes to fall down around me. I asked him to do this again and again as it filled me with joy and awe. It was then that I realized even during the dark times, there are moments of true beauty. My grandfather died unexpectedly a few years later, but this experience allows me to honor him every time I choose to look to the light.

As we move into the new year, it can be helpful to take a moment to reflect on the journey. Rather than focusing on the darkness, below are a few questions that might help you realize your strength, determination, and connections as you grow in your grief experience. Even in the darkness of grief, we still have moments of hope and light to help us transform our loss.

Do I give myself permission to grieve freely, at my own pace, and in the ways I needed to?

How do I express my grief in a way that is meaningful for me?

Do I open my heart up to healing moments?

In what ways have my connections with others helped me grow?

Have I helped others grow?

What personal qualities have been strengthened as a result of this experience?

Wishing you lightness and peace,

Becca Van Tassel, LCSW

Clinical Director

Board of Directors

Austin Grief extends a big thank you to Julie Bowman for her six

years of dedicated service as a board member. Julie served on the Marketing Committee for several years and as the chairwoman of the Marketing Committee and the Holders of Hope gala. She has been a tireless evangelist for our mission and the services that we provide the Austin community. While Julie has reached her term limits as a director, her ongoing dedication to Austin Grief is evidenced by the Mindful Photography workshop she will be leading in March and April with Clinical Director, Becca Van Tassel. The Austin Grief community also extends best wishes to Julie and congratulations to her fiancé, Monty Northrup. We wish you joy and happiness.

In 2017 Austin Grief added five new members to its board of directors. They are Elaine Cavazos, Sarah Marshall, Jesse Everline, Reverend Dave Scheider, and most recently we welcomed Gracie Matthews. Gracie is with Samsung Austin Semiconductor where she is the Manager of Systems Innovation and Cost Engineering. She is also the co-founder and chief operating officer of Ship Party Return, a purveyor of



designer party packs for the modern host. A portion of all proceeds from Ship Party Return directly benefit families in Austin area NICUs honoring her son, Madden. Gracie is married to her husband, Chris, a real estate broker with Austin Homeseekers. They have two active boys, Ryden, 5, and Reston, 2. Gracie is quad-lingual as she speaks English, Korean, Japanese, and Spanish. She is the 2018 Holders of Hope gala chairwoman.

Jesse Everline is the Director of Operations at Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas. He was also the founder and chief executive officer of Ambulatory Express Imaging and Diagnostic Services Inc. of Houston. Jesse is the middle child of eight siblings. When he was a young boy, his mother died after battling cancer for ten years. Jesse credits his mother for instilling in him the importance of family and the significance of faith in his life. That faith has fueled his passion for helping non-profits, and Austin Grief is honored to have Jesse on its board. Jesse lives in Dripping Springs with his wife and family. Jesse will serve on the Governance Committee.

Reverend Dave Scheider is the Director of the Loise Henderson Wessendorff Center for Christian Ministry and Vocation and Lecturer in Counseling, Chaplaincy and Spirituality at Seminary of the Southwest. Dave is an Episcopal priest and served as a United States Army chaplain for 25 years where he specialized in family therapy. Reverend Scheider earned his Masters of Divinity from Andrews University and his Doctor of Ministry from the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Bev, have three

grown children and live in Belton. Dave will serve on the Governance Committee.



Volunteer Spotlight

Austin Grief is so grateful for Rachel Carnahan-Metzger and her 10 years of dedicated service to My Healing Place and The Austin Center for Grief & Loss. Rachel and her husband are awaiting the birth of their third child in February. Rachel was one of the first six volunteers recruited by founder, Khris Ford back in August, 2007 when there were just two support groups - one for grieving children and one for bereaved spouses. She has been an important member of the Austin Grief team and has helped us grow from those first two support groups to over 15 groups today. Rachel has worn many hats these past 10 years including being a facilitator for school support groups and children's grief support groups and most recently she was the Tuesday evening group coordinator. She has given countless hours to help grieving children and families as they journey through their grief process.

Thank you, Rachel, for your service, your humor, your dedication, and your compassion. Your impact on the children and families you have helped will continue to ripple in each of their lives and the lives of everyone you have touched. We are very thankful for your time at Austin Grief and wish you and your family the best.



THE AUSTIN CENTER FOR
Grief&Loss
Hope > Healing > Transformation

The Austin Center for
Grief & Loss appreciates the
important role of loved ones
within the healing process

A Careopolis is a
Metropolis of Love & Empathy
~ Create yours today with
our warmest wishes ▶

For more information about creating a Careopolis for yourself or a loved one, visit our home page at Austingrief.org or click the link provided.



Our Community is your Community: Client Testimonials

Take a look at our [website](#) for first hand reports of Austin Grief's client relationships with you...our community. We would love to hear YOUR story, please contact Jessica Owens at jowens@austingrief.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Austin Grief has a compassionate volunteer community. If you would like to be a part of transforming lives after loss, please consider being a volunteer. There are numerous ways you can support hope, healing and transformation, including child care during our evening support groups, event coordination, fundraising, special projects and group facilitation. Our sought after Volunteer Group Facilitator Training is now open for registration! Please contact Rachel Saffer at Rsaffer@austingrief.org for more information.

'Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.'

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

How can you support your Austin Grief Community?

Referrals, individuals can schedule an intake appointment by phone at: 512.472.7878 or [online](#) anytime. For consultations or trainings in the community please call 512.472.7878.

Shop and give at the same time! When you shop using Amazon Smile, Freytag's Austin Community Bloom's program and even using your Randall's card!

Spread the word and let your community know why you support The Austin Center for Grief & Loss.

Donate, without your support, we could not continue to change lives providing hope, healing and transformation. To make a donation visit our [website](#) or click the link below.

[DONATE TODAY](#)

www.AustinGrief.org

2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin, TX 78757
512.472.7878

