MOUNTAINS OF COURAGE
13th Annual Conference

Creating Safe and Supportive Conversations on Death and Dying



Saturday, April 6, 2024

Best Western GranTree Inn ◆ Bozeman, MT

Mountains of Courage

Hosted by the Gallatin Valley Circle of Compassion

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER | 2024

Reverend Bodhi Be - Warrior of the Heart, Protector of the Sacred



Reverend Bodhi Be is an ordained interfaith minister, a funeral director, end-of-life and bereavement counselor, hospice volunteer and a Reiki practitioner who makes coffins. He teaches and trains death doulas.

Bodhi is the founder and Executive Director of Doorway Into Light. Based in Maui, it provides conscious and compassionate care for the dying, their families, and the grieving. They are creating a new model of land stewardship which includes a natural green burial ground, sanctuary, kids park, a social-model hospice, and ceremony hall and community gathering place where life and death interweave in a healthy community life.

Since 2006 Bodhi has been offering community educational programs and training in the fields of Awakened Living and Dying and The Care of the Dying. He has trained hundreds of people in the spiritual, psychological, emotional, and logistical care of the dying and of the dead.

Bodhi collaborated with Ram Dass who was a neighbor, mentor, and friend. Bodhi continues the work that Ram Dass helped birth in the fields of conscious dying in America. Bodhi and his wife Leilah are organic, off-the-grid homesteaders in Hawaii who have been leading spiritual retreats around the world for over 30 years.

Presenting: Beginners Guide to Aging, Dying and Death in the 21st Century

- How did we get here? Where is 'here'?
- What has aging come to mean in our culture?
- What's the difference between the elderly and elders?
- Is there any value in the 'dying time'? Is there any value in suffering?
- What does 'dying well' and 'death with dignity' look like?
- Do we have the right to end our life?
- What have we lost by giving away care of the dying and dead to businesses and institutions?
- What happens when we accept and embrace that a healthy life includes its death?

Tracy Rassley
What is "Normal" About Grief.



This presentation will provide you with information regarding what the grieving process may look like and how to let your grief be yours. We'll discuss steps to take care of your mental health and use self-care.

Tracy is the Programs Manager for the Montana and Wyoming Chapters of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

After twenty-four years as a paralegal and volunteering with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention for almost seven years she has now been in her current position over a year. She has presented countless trainings for AFSP that include Talk Saves Lives: An Introduction to Suicide Prevention, Supporting Those at Risk, It's Real: Teens and Mental Health, and It's Real: College Students and Mental Health. In addition, she is a certified Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainer.

Let's Talk About Dying For a Change

We teach people in our culture how to drive, how to cook, but we don't have classes on how to die. The way we handle death is so sanitized, and we're so protected that it's a hard topic for us.

Most modern cultures avoid talking about aspects of dying. People don't want to upset each other. Friends and family members fear they will say the wrong thing. The dying don't talk because they are afraid, or don't want to be a burden, or don't want to trigger a feud.

We traumatize each other with our peculiar practices, when we could as easily be transformed by talking.

- Excerpt from Dr. Susan Kreitzberg, MOC Founder

WORKSHOPS 2-3 PM

Experience a Death Cafe

Dr. Marianna Olson



"While death had always fascinated her, it wasn't until 2020 that Mariana Olsen felt called to the death positivity movement. After experiencing two marginalized deaths -- her cat in April and her father in September -- she felt compelled to create a safe, welcoming space for people to talk about this universal, yet taboo, experience.

Death Cafes, the creation of Jon Underwood and Sue Barsky Reid, provide a space to openly discuss death. They are not support groups but, rather, free gatherings where people talk about experiences and ideas related to death and how to make the most of life -- all while enjoying coffee and snacks.

She completed her death doula training in 2021 through Going With Grace and also teaches a course at Montana State University called the Psychology of Death and Dying in which she collaborates with students to navigate behaviors, beliefs, and meaning-making that surround mortality."

Artful Healing: Embracing Grief Through Creativity

Marie Antoinette Kelley



Award winning artist who has done hundreds of commissioned portraits. She is the author and illustrator of Danny's Day in Heaven.

In the journey of grief, words often fall short in expressing the depth of our sorrow, or the multitude of our emotions. Join us in a one-hour therapeutic art class designed to offer solace and self-expression in a compassionate environment, so you can explore your grief without the need for words. We will use the medium of art as a bridge to your inner experiences, celebrating memories of loved ones, and facilitating a deeper understanding of your grief process. You will share space with others who are also walking a path of loss and healing.

All materials are provided, allowing you to freely explore and express your feelings through art.

ATTEND ONE WORKSHOP

Embracing Transition: Integrating Spirituality and Sustainable Practices in Postmortem Care

Chalice Stroebe MDiv



As a chaplain with an integrative health background, I am immersed in the art of nurturing both the spirit and body. My practice is rooted in the belief that true healing and understanding come from harmonizing our narratives with our lived experiences.

My approach integrates the wisdom of Buddhist teachings with a commitment to earth-conscious living, aiming to reshape how we engage with life's transitions, including death, through a lens of sustainability and spiritual depth.

This workshop explores the delicate balance between honoring the deceased and preserving our planet. Drawing upon Buddhist principles and modern green burial practices, participants will learn how to create meaningful, environmentally conscious postmortem ceremonies that celebrate life and respect our earthly home. Through a combination of theoretical insights and practical guidance, this session aims to equip attendees with the knowledge to advocate for and implement sustainable death care practices that reflect a compassionate and holistic approach to the end of life.

Join us to discover how ancient wisdom and contemporary innovations can converge to foster a more sustainable and spiritually fulfilling approach to death.

MOUNTAINS OF COURAGE COMMITTEE

Mountains of Courage is a volunteer group of local community members who are professionally or personally touched by the human experience of death and dying.

A group of interested people came together in 2011 to explore how they could help shift the current paradigm around this very human and challenging subject.

The group and the mission have evolved to meet the interests of the community they serve. The evolution continues today.



Arlene Hoag

Hospice volunteer,
Living/Dying Project.org



Tracy Rassley

Programs Mgr. AFSP MT & WY,
supports those with mental
health struggles



Tami Flannery

Volunteer for CASA, KAIROS
Prison Ministry and CREDO



Tawnya Healy

End of Life Doula,
Sacred Circle Guide,
Reiki Practitioner



Edy Harrington

Honorary Committee Member
Physical Therapist (ret.)
Interested in end of life matters



Jan Young

Honorary Committee Member
Physical Therapist (ret.)
Interested in end of life matters

Our mission: To Connect, Educate, and Empower our Community on Matters Related to Death and Dying

YOUR DAY AT A GLANCE | 2024

8:00	am	Check-in and registration
9:00	am	General Session Begins
9:15	am	Opening keynote address
10:30	am	Break
10:45	am	Keynote Continues
11:45	am	Lunch, Visit Sponsors
12:45	pm	Full Conference Address Tracy Rassley
1:45	pm	Break
2:00	pm	Workshop Sessions
3:00	pm	Break
3:15	pm	Q & A with Presenters
3:45	pm	Closing comments
4:00	pm	Conference completes

My Notes and Bright Ideas!