

The Skill of Grieving Weekly Gathering Description

When the way we see ourselves in the world is fundamentally altered, grief is the process by which we work with identity, relationship, and worldview such that we heal, reorient, and transform. We might then say that the skill of grieving is the skill of consciously engaging that process of healing by repeatedly, courageously turning toward our felt experience, particularly in the midst of transition, ending, and death. In this context, grief is not the injury, but the treatment, not the fragmentation, but the gathering again into wholeness. Therefore, grief is not to be avoided, but met, listened to, even revered... Paradoxically, this framework empowers each of us to choose our grief—not begrudgingly or with resentment, but with resolve and whole-hearted commitment.

While there is good reason for grief groups to be limited in scope, often focusing on a specific disease or on death in a particular relational context, I believe our present circumstances call for a broader and more inclusive vision of collective grief. In this weekly drop-in online group we will make space for grief related to physical death; medical diagnosis; the loss of a job, role, or home; isolation and the loss of interpersonal connection; socio-economic and ecological destabilization; cultural, racial, and ancestral trauma; as well as other disorientation related to meaning, structure, and pattern. This is an opportunity to practice and receive generosity as speech, witness, and deep listening. Everyone is encouraged to share, but no one will be required to do so.

The four foundational trainings of this group are:

1. Authenticity – Healing and integration require first and foremost that we are radically honest with ourselves and each other.
2. Compassion – We approach pain, our own and that of others, with kindness and courage.
3. Respect – We work to hold each other and ourselves resilient, capable of working with our experience without needing to rescue or be rescued.
4. Wisdom – Each of us is capable of deep and liberating insight. We hold as sacred the wisdom of the grief process, of the group, and of our own hearts.

Attached are the guidelines that will be read at the beginning of every meeting and a handout that describes the way that Asher understands and works with grief as a facilitator. Please look through them in advance of your first time attending the group.

Asher Wallis is a grief counselor, former hospice chaplain, and founder of Inviting The Conversation. You can read a brief bio here: <http://www.invitingtheconversation.com/bio>. Please feel free to email with questions or comments: InvitingTheConversation@gmail.com.

There is no fee for attending this group. Donations are gratefully accepted and half of everything collected will rotate between charities: 1) First Nations Covid Response Fund: <https://www.firstnations.org/covid-19-emergency-response-fund/>, 2) Blanchet House: <https://blanchethouse.org/>, and 3) the Know Your Rights Camp Covid Relief Fund: <https://www.knowyourrightscamp.com/covid19>

Donations can be sent electronically to Asher on the following apps:

Venmo (@Asher-Wallis)

Paypal (invitingtheconversation@gmail.com)

Zelle (Asher Wallis or I believe by phone number 323 559 1980)