

# Community-Based Primary Palliative Care Community of Practice Series 3

Grief and bereavement: beyond the basics



Facilitator: Dr. Haley Draper

Guest Speaker: Rev. Jennifer Holtslander, SCP-Associate, MRE, BTh

Date: June 26, 2024

# Territorial Honouring



# The Palliative Care ECHO Project

The Palliative Care ECHO Project is a 5-year national initiative to cultivate communities of practice and establish continuous professional development among health care providers across Canada who care for patients with life-limiting illness and their families.

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The Palliative Care ECHO Project is supported by a financial contribution from Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.



# LEAP Core

- Interprofessional course that focuses on the essential competencies to provide a palliative care approach.
- Taught by local experts who are experienced palliative care clinicians and educators.
- Delivered online or in-person.
- Ideal for any health care professional (e.g., physician, nurse, pharmacist, social worker, etc.) who provides care for patients with life-threatening and progressive life-limiting illnesses.
- Accredited by the CFPC and Royal College.



Learn more about the course and topics covered by visiting

[www.pallium.ca/course/leap-core](http://www.pallium.ca/course/leap-core)

# Objectives of this Series

**After participating in this series, participants will be able to:**

- Augment their primary-level palliative care skills with additional knowledge and expertise related to providing a palliative care approach.
- Connect with and learn from colleagues on how they are providing a palliative care approach.

# Overview of Sessions

Session #	Session Title	Date/ Time
Session 1	Communication: Part 1	Oct 25, 2023 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 2	Communication: Part 2	Nov 29, 2023 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 3	Managing the last hours of life	Dec.20, 2020 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 4	Palliative care for the structurally vulnerable	Jan 24, 2024 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 5	Procedural management of complex pain: Nerve blocks, vertebral augmentation, radiotherapy	Feb 21, 2024 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 6	Terminal Delirium and Palliative Sedation	Mar 27, 2024 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 7	Creative art therapy in palliative care	Apr 24, 2024 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 8	What in store for Palliative Care in Canada: policy, advocacy and implementation	May 29, 2024 from 12:30-1:30pm ET
Session 9	Grief and Bereavement: Beyond the Basics	June 26, 2024 from 12:30-1:30pm ET

# Welcome & Reminders

- Please introduce yourself in the chat! Let us know what province you are joining us from, your role and your work setting
- Your microphones are muted. There will be time during this session when you can unmute yourself for questions and discussion.
- You are welcome to use the Q&A function to ask questions and add comments throughout the session.
- This session is being recorded and will be emailed to registrants within the next week.
- Remember not to disclose any Personal Health Information (PHI) during the session
- This 1-credit-per-hour Group Learning program has been certified by the College of Family Physicians of Canada for up to **9 Mainpro+** credits.

# Disclosure

Relationship with Financial Sponsors:

## **Pallium Canada**

- Not-for-profit
- Funded by Health Canada



# Disclosure

## **This program has received financial support from:**

- Health Canada in the form of a contribution program
- Generates funds to support operations and R&D from Pallium Pocketbook sales and course registration Fees

## **Facilitator/ Presenter:**

- Dr. Haley Draper: Nothing to disclose
- Rev. Jennifer Holtslander, CASC Associate, MA, BTh: provides Spiritual Care and Spiritual Direction in fee for service private practice in addition to hospital work funded by a local non-profit organization.

# Disclosure

## Mitigating Potential Biases:

- The scientific planning committee had complete independent control over the development of course content

# Introductions

## Facilitator:

### **Dr. Haley Draper, MD CCFP- PC**

Clinical co-lead of this ECHO series

Palliative Care Physician at Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network

Family Physician at Gold Standard Health, Annex

## Panelists:

### **Dr. Nadine Gebara, MD CCFP- PC**

Clinical co-lead of this ECHO series

Palliative Care Physician at Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network

Family Physician at Gold Standard Health, Annex

### **Dr. Roger Ghoche, MDCM CCFP-PC, MTS**

Palliative Care and Rehabilitation Medicine, Mount Sinai Hospital- Montreal

### **Jill Tom, BSN CHPCN ©**

Nurse Clinician for palliative Home Care

Mount Sinai Hospital, Montreal

# Introductions

## Panelists (continued):

**Elisabeth Antifeau, RN, MScN, CHPCN(C), GNC(C)**  
Regional Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS-C), Palliative End of Life Care  
IH Regional Palliative End of Life Care Program  
Pallium Canada Master Facilitator & Coach, Scientific Consultant

**Thandi Briggs, RSW MSW**  
Care Coordinator, Integrated Palliative Care Program  
Home and Community Care Support Services Toronto Central

**Claudia Brown, RN BSN**  
Care Coordinator, Integrated Palliative Care Program  
Home and Community Care Support Services Toronto Central

## ECHO Support

**Diana Vincze**

Palliative Care ECHO Project Manager, Pallium Canada

# Introductions

## Guest Speaker:

**Rev. Jennifer Holtslander, CASC Associate, MA, BTh**  
Spiritual Care Provider

# Palliative Care and Bereavement

# Session Learning Objectives

**Upon completing the session, participants will be able to:**

- Discuss pearls to identify and support newly bereaved individuals.
- Identify risk factors for complicated grief.
- Identify common barriers to a healthy grief process.

# Palliative Care and Bereavement

## palliative (adj.)

early 15c., palliatif, "serving to mitigate or alleviate" (a wound, disease, etc.); also "serving to cover, concealing;" from Medieval Latin *palliativus* "under cloak, covert," from Late Latin *palliatus*, literally "cloaked," from past participle of Late Latin *palliare* "cover with a cloak, conceal," from Latin *pallium* "a cloak" (see **pall** (n.)). Meaning "serving to extenuate by excuses or favorable representation" is by 1779. As a noun, "that which mitigates or extenuates," by 1724.

also from **early 15c.**

## Entries linking to *palliative*

### pall (n.)

Middle English *pal*, from Old English *pæll* "rich cloth or cloak, purple robe, altar cloth," from Latin *pallium* "cloak, coverlet, covering," in Tertullian, the garment worn by Christians instead of the Roman toga; related to *pallo* "robe, cloak," *palla* "long upper garment of Roman women," perhaps from the root of *pellis* "skin." The notion of "cloth spread over a coffin" (mid-15c.) led to figurative sense of "dark, gloomy mood" (1742). The earlier figurative sense is "something that covers or conceals" (mid-15c.).

<https://www.etymonline.com/word/palliative>



Photo credit: JHoltlander



# Grief support begins with compassion...



Photo credit: JHoltlander

Begin with self-awareness  
and compassion for ourselves.

And then share compassion  
for the other person/people.

# ...and leads us to connection.

- Be present. Hold space. Provide gentle pacing.
- Validate and normalize feelings and experiences.
- Have clear and kind conversations.
- Engage your own curiosity and encourage questions.
- Be open to practices of repair for when we get it wrong.



# so we had to go on (J Holtslander)

when she could not face  
the broken pieces, she turned to lament, tearing

apart the suits  
and dresses she had worn  
out, assembling the shreds,  
remembering how her mother had sewn woollen blankets  
into the core of quilts, knotting together pieced  
tops before creating bias strips  
from cotton skirts for ravel-free experiences

still, their life ravelled

the first week of grade three  
the school called  
because their girl was swelling up



Photo credit: KPang





Image credit: photographer unknown

when the doctor diagnosed galloping cancer  
in the earliest years of cobalt-sixty  
yet, she ended up with no recourse

so they had to go on  
stitching together prayer,  
old clothes transformed  
into building blocks for  
patchwork paintings of boats and forests,  
pulling her out of the everyday

sacred, small bits pieced back together

one psalm,  
one hymn,  
one conversation,  
one memory at a time

**so we had to go on** (J Holtslander)

# Some basic definitions

- Bereavement = the **experience** of becoming bereft (torn apart, stolen from)
- Grief = the whole-body (physical, emotional, psychological, cognitive, relational, spiritual) **impact** of change/loss/transition
- Mourning = the **processes** that are activated as a loss is integrated and a new normal is accommodated



Image credit: JHoltlander

# Beyond the basic terms



Image credit: JHoltlander

- Primary losses
- Secondary losses
- Anticipatory losses
- Acute grief
- Integrated grief
- Disenfranchised grief
- Non-finite losses
- Intangible losses
- Invisible losses
- Chronic sadness
- Complicated grief



# Intervention: Letter of Condolence

Lisa Clark and Jessica Sawyer in *New Techniques of Grief Therapy* edited by Robert Neimeyer, 2022: Taylor and Francis Group.

1. Acknowledge the death using the deceased person's name (except if culturally inappropriate) and don't use euphemisms for death.
2. Express heartfelt sympathy (feeling with) or empathy.
3. Share special qualities or traits that characterized the deceased person.
4. Share a favourite memory of the deceased person.
5. Remind the bereaved person of their strengths or special qualities.
6. Offer to help in a specific way (or don't make any offer!)
7. End with a thoughtful hope, wish, or expression of kindness.



Image credit: JHoltslander

# Case based discussion



# Nola

Nola was in the years long and arduous process of an international adoption and was anticipating the arrival of her son within the month when her adoptive son contracted a respiratory illness and died. The questions, the numbness, and the pain of never getting to bring her son home were so intense. She felt as though she was in a plexiglass cage.

Bereavement  
Grief  
Mourning

Primary losses  
Secondary losses  
Anticipatory losses  
Non-finite losses  
Intangible losses  
Invisible losses

Acute grief  
Integrated grief  
Disenfranchised grief  
Chronic sadness  
Complicated grief

Yearning  
Reactive distress  
Preoccupation  
Social disruption  
Identity disruption

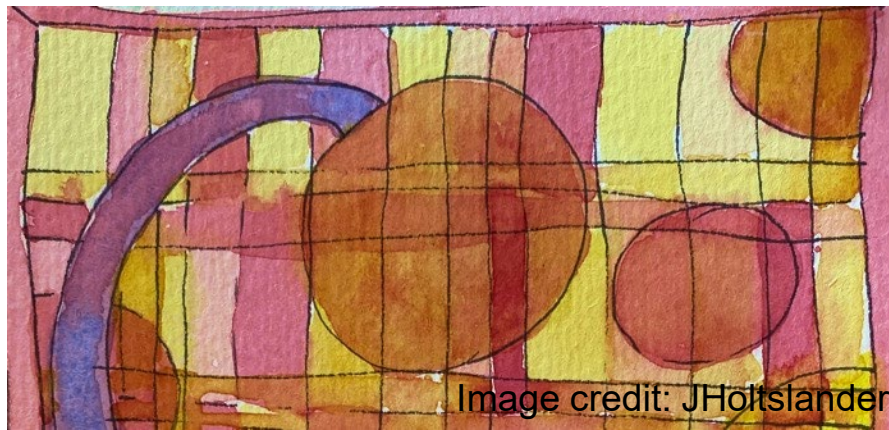


Image credit: JHoltlander

# Taylor

Taylor is non-binary, with the pronouns they/them/theirs, and was diagnosed with cirrhosis about a year ago. Not long after that their child was identified as neuro divergent. They have a pet who recently died and the 2nd anniversary of their mother's death is coming up in a few days. They express that their feelings are all over the map, "bigger than they should be for the death of our dog," and that "I'm not really even sure what I believe."

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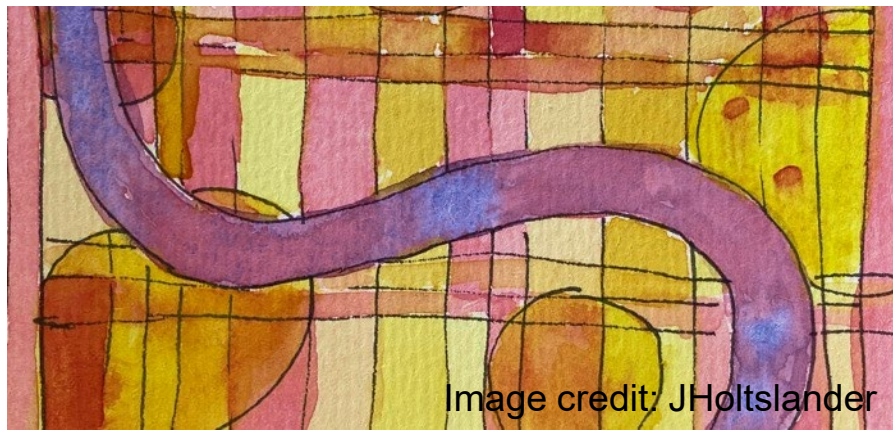


Image credit: JHoltlander

# Daveed

Daveed and Jacinda lived together for fifteen years before they decided to go their separate ways. They have gone on to other partnered relationships, but they both continue to live in the same rural area. When Jacinda is diagnosed with advanced metastatic cancer and dies, Daveed's sobriety goes by the wayside for a time. He expresses that he can't understand why her death impacts him so much.

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Reactive distress  
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Identity disruption



Image credit: JHoltlander

# Resources

- Didion J. *The year of magical thinking*. New York: A.A. Knopf; 2005.
- Plett, Heather *The Art of Holding Space*; 2020.
- Hawley PH. The bow tie model of 21st century palliative care. *J Pain Symptom Manage*. 2014;47(1):e2-e5. doi:10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2013.10.009
- Hawley, Philippa. (2017). Barriers to Access to Palliative Care. *Palliative Care: Research and Treatment*. 10. 10.1177/1178224216688887.
- Dr Pippa Hawley talks about the Bow tie model for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Palliative Care. <https://vimeo.com/169795444>
- Lee, Sherman A and Evgenia (Jane) Milman, “Persistent Complex Bereavement Inventory (PCBI)” in *New Techniques of Grief Therapy* edited by Robert Neimeyer, 2022: Taylor and Francis Group.
- MyGrief.ca
- KidsGrief.ca
- Shear, M Katherine (2015) [http://complicatedgrief.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CG-and-Its-Treatment\\_short.pdf](http://complicatedgrief.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CG-and-Its-Treatment_short.pdf)
- Holtslander, Jennifer “So we had to go on,” unpublished poem, 2022.

Questions?

# Session Wrap Up

- Please fill out our feedback survey, a link has been added into the chat.
- A recording of this session will be emailed to registrants within the next week.
- Thank you for your participation during our third series!



# Thank You



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