

Loss: Grieving and Healing
Workshop for the Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association Annual
Conference, October, 2008

David Morrison & Mary Lou Morrison

Patients, staff, palliation caregivers, and affected families experience loss in a myriad of ways. Frequently the losses experienced through the palliative journey have antecedents in other life losses. Dealing with any loss necessitates grieving. Appropriate skill-sets can lead to healing of the self and the other. Grieving gives rise to various reactions, unique for each person. This workshop will explore the dimensions of loss – behavioural, emotional, spiritual and physical. The Morrises will guide participants through a review of potential positive outcomes of the grieving process and explore ways to help those who grieve to move their loss through grief into healing.

The ninety minute interactive workshop will have two plenary sessions, with working group challenges and feedback from the various disciplines. The workshop will also draw from the participants' experience in palliative and hospice care. Participants in the workshop will learn various coping skills. A second learning component will be the strategies for communication. Each participant will be given a workshop kit which contain material such as: the do's and don'ts of grieving; coping with death, grief and loss; sudden death; common reactions to grief/loss; strategies for communication; the healing state; meditation; listening; care for the caregiver; thoughts and emotions; beginning the healing journey; the hospice and palliative care worker's own grief.

The Presenters

The Morrises have combined their professional interests on several occasions to lead workshops on loss, grieving and healing, in Canada and in Europe. The presentations, given to large groups of health care professionals, education counselors, and clergy, have received exceptionally high evaluations.

Mary Lou Morrison, B.A., B.Ed. (Dalhousie University) Ed.M (Boston U), M.Ed. Counseling (Acadia U.) Mary Lou is former Director of Student Services for the Eastern School District, Prince Edward Island. She has specialized training in grief counseling from the University of Kent and the University of London. For the past fourteen years she has also had a private practice through her Counselling and Training Centre where she offers support for individuals, couples and families who experience relationship problems, stress or loss.

David Morrison is a well-known author, teacher and speaker, internationally and in Canada. He is part of a multidisciplinary team at the PEI Cancer Treatment Centre where he specializes in psycho-social oncology and is spiritual care provider. Dr Morrison is also active on the Integrated Palliative Care Team. He has extensive experience in counseling and in the process of healing, with specialized advanced training in Clinical Pastoral Psychology as well as degrees in theology. For many years Dr Morrison was Professor at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada.