



THE AUSTIN CENTER FOR  
**Grief&Loss**  
*Hope › Healing › Transformation*

Newsletter

Summer 2022

## **A Message from our Executive Director**

Thank you for your ongoing support and encouragement. We could not do what we do without you! The last few years, and especially the last few months, have been incredibly challenging. We need to give ourselves the opportunity to unplug and to take time for self-



care. "Rest and self-care are so important. When you take time to replenish your spirit, it allows you to serve from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel." Eleanor Brown, author.

At The Austin Center for Grief & Loss, we are seeing the highest demand for our services in our 15-year history. We have responded by hiring new clinicians and taking on 4 interns. Our support groups for children in Title I Schools have grown exponentially. We serve students in 7 Central Texas school districts: Austin, Hays County, San Marcos, Pflugerville, Manor, Lockhart, and Bastrop, and we are expecting to serve 2 new school districts this fall. We have 17 support groups supported by 52 highly trained volunteer facilitators, supervised by our licensed clinicians. We are completing our second session of Camp Red Bird, which is a summer camp for bereaved children ages 6 to 12, this week.

We are working with community partners to provide assistance and staffing for camp for the Uvalde families from Robb Elementary. We are also working with many community organizations to provide mental health services and psychoeducational training to their members or employees, such as Foundation Communities, Team Luke Hope for Minds, Texas Oncology, and many more. In short, we have been busy! Thank you all for your support to help us continue to expand to serve our Central Texas neighbors.

In Gratitude,  
Kim Nugent-Anderson

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**



# HOLDERS OF HOPE

OCTOBER 20, 2022  
UMLAUF SCULPTURE GARDEN

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PRESENTING SPONSOR



MARQUEE STAR



The Austin Center for Grief & Loss is celebrating its annual Holders of Hope fundraiser and gala at Umlauf Sculpture Garden on Thursday, October 20, 2022. This annual event secures the funding needed to provide services to children and adults including therapy, support groups, and school-based groups in Title 1 schools.

The evening includes a fantastic silent auction and introducing an exciting live auction! The evening will feature delicious food and complimentary wine and beer. Enjoy a live music experience by harpist Kristen Gibbs and we are excited to welcome back Baron Wilson, live artist, and Scott James, the Typewriter poet!

Your sponsorship makes an enormous difference in the lives of hundreds of fellow Austinites every single year. Thank you for making this work possible, and for your continued support of thoughtful, meaningful counseling when it's most needed.

[Sponsor Holders of Hope](#)

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## Reopening the Dialogue: Chair Work and Imaginal Dialogues in Grief Therapy

PROFESSIONAL  
TRAINING

Presented by:  
Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD  
Portland Institute for Loss and Transition

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November 11 & 12 | 10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Virtual Training  
6 hours CEs (two 3-hour modules)

Robert A. Neimeyer, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, maintains an active consulting and coaching practice, and also directs the Portland Institute for Loss and Transition, a “university without walls” for international online training in grief therapy. Neimeyer has published 30 books, including Routledge’s series on Techniques of Grief Therapy, and serves as Editor of Death Studies. The author of over 500 articles and chapters and a popular workshop presenter, he is currently working to advance a more adequate theory of grieving as a meaning-making process.

[Registration Professional Conference](#)

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

### **Uvalde Community Support**

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss stands in collective grief with our neighbors in Uvalde. The Uvalde community has many difficult months ahead and Austin Grief will support people to find ways to rebuild, process, and move towards healing.

As the premier grief center in Central Texas, our grief and loss professionals are trained in both grief therapy and trauma. We are in contact with community agencies working in Uvalde to coordinate child welfare services for that region to offer pro bono services for their community members in English and Spanish, as well as trauma-related grief therapy for first responders.

It will take a large community of support to hold and help heal Uvalde as they begin their journey through grief to learn to live, work, survive, and thrive through devastating loss. We are committed to being a part of that support.

### **Art Therapy for Uvalde Students and Families**

In July, Rachel Saffer, LCSW-S, Austin Grief's Director of Children's Programs, and Bryna Hoang, Austin Grief Practicum Student, provided art therapy at a Uvalde children's summer day camp in conjunction with the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas.

Austin Grief will also be sending therapists to help staff and provide art therapy at a camp for Uvalde families most impacted from Robb Elementary on August 9 and 10, in collaboration with the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas and the National Alliance for Children's Grief.

### **Association for Death Education**

Clinical Director, Pamela Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S, Fellow in Thanatology, presented at the Association for Death Education and Counseling in April on *COVID Gains and Losses of Teenagers*.

### **Central Texas Grief Consortium**

Clinical Director, Pamela Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S, Fellow in Thanatology, presented at the Central Texas Grief Consortium symposium in May on *Loss of the Assumptive World: COVID Impact on Professionals*

### **Portland Institute for Loss and Transition**

Austin Grief is an Organizational Affiliate with the Portland Institute for Loss and Transition. This is a national alliance with select partner organizations who share our core mission of providing state-of-the-art professional training in grief therapy and bereavement support. Only select organizations are invited to participate in this alliance and we are humbled to be a partner.

### **Austin Junior Forum**

Special thanks to the Austin Junior Forum for volunteering for Camp Red Bird end-of-camp ice cream social.

## **YOUR AUSTIN GRIEF COMMUNITY**

### **A Message from our Clinical Director Pamela A. Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S, Fellow in Thanatology**

It has been 5 months since I joined The Austin Center for Grief & Loss





community. Much has happened during this short time! I am getting to know our wonderful therapists, staff, and graduate students. The authentic passion, compassion, and presence that everyone brings to the hope and healing involved in loss and grief is evident. This is especially important now as we witness the impact on our assumptions about the world.

Loss of the assumptive world is a theme that entails grief and adjustment to what is lost. The assumptive world refers to the assumptions, or beliefs, that create an implicit knowing that life is somewhat predictable, and there is a sense of security in that the world is a safe and good place. Our assumptive world is like a mental map composed of how we tend to view others and their intentions, how we believe the world should work, and how we tend to view ourselves. The problem is that when the map doesn't match reality, when things are not as we expect them to be, we can grieve for the loss of what we are expecting.

The fundamental assumptions we hold about ourselves, the world, and the relationship between these two, which normally go unquestioned or unchallenged, are shattered by traumatic events. Death and non-death losses include: the death of a loved one be it expected or unexpected; divorce or partner break-up; the COVID-19 pandemic; mass shootings, social unrest, and racial reckoning; political issues; and global unrest. Currently, we are all experiencing collective, community, familial, and individual grief in response to this variety of loss. Coping with grief involves rebuilding our inner world, reestablishing meaning, and adjusting old assumptions, or at least partly, accepting new ones. Over time, most grieverers reestablish an assumptive world that is not completely threatening. Effective coping from this perspective would be to search for meaning and to integrate these events into broader, positively meaningful structures, rather than focusing on the malevolence of the world.

The grieving process helps us to rebuild the assumptive world so that we can feel safe and functional again in this new awareness and experience of the world that differs greatly from our previously held beliefs about how the world should work. Grief is a multifaceted adaptive response and needs to be allowed to unfold without hindrance, so that the loss experience can be assimilated into our existing assumptive world, or the assumptive world can be rebuilt in a way that makes sense of the loss that has occurred.

As therapists at The Austin Center for Grief & Loss, it is important for us to help ourselves and our clients to name and describe experiences of death and nondeath loss. In doing this, we validate grief, we acknowledge that something precious has been lost. We bear witness, support, and offer comfort without judgment. We recognize that our assumptions about the world have been disrupted

and that we must undergo a process of accommodating to those disruptions. During this process, and in this solidarity with others and ourselves, we realize that we belong and are connected. I am so grateful for the opportunity to work with such caring people.

Pamela A. Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S, Fellow in Thanatology  
Clinical Director

## Children's Programs

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

Bereavement  
**Summer CAMP**

**CAMP REDBIRD**  
DAY CAMP FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN

June 13th - 17th  
July 18th - 22nd  
**Free**  
ages 6-12

Outdoor games, yoga,  
fun therapeutic  
games, arts, and crafts  
[www.austingrief.org/  
campredbird](http://www.austingrief.org/campredbird)  
Call Us 512-472-7878

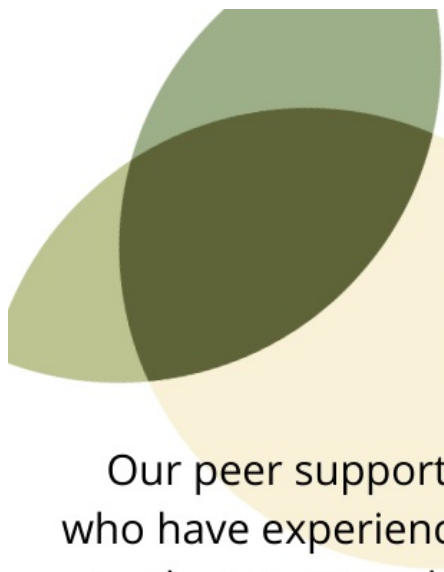
**Safe & Supportive**

Camp Red Bird is wrapping up this week after two fantastic sessions serving over 30 bereaved children. Camp was featured on Fox 7 News Austin, highlighting the voices and perspectives of the children experiencing camp.

*"My favorite thing about camp is the community of people because it's really nice to be around people who have experienced similar things,"* said Jake George, a Red Bird camper.

**CAMP RED BIRD on FOX 7 Austin**





# Grief and Loss Support Groups

Our peer support groups provide a safe space to connect with others who have experienced a similar loss. Our groups provide the opportunity to share personal experiences, learn new ways of coping, and increase feelings of hope. The following groups are accepting members.

- Bereaved Spouses and Partners
- Bereaved Parents
- Beyond Suicide
- Beyond Divorce
- Adult Parent Loss
- Spanish Grief Support Group
- High School Teens Group
- Middle School Teens Group
- Elementary Aged Children's Group

Austin Grief peer support groups have two trained facilitators and are supported by a clinically licensed coordinator. Peer support groups meet online two times per month. To join please call 512.472.7878.



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info@austingrief.org  
www.austingrief.org

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## Individual Counseling Services

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss offers individual, couples, and family therapy for both adults and children. Our therapists have training specific to grief and loss in children and adults. The need for mental health services is greater than it has been in all our 15 years of operation. We are serving 175% more people today than we did prior to the pandemic. We strive to help anyone in need of hope and healing, regardless of one's ability to pay. We offer a sliding fee structure for those in need and a care assistance subsidy.

## AUSTIN GRIEF TEAM



Executive Director  
Kim Nugent-Anderson



Clinical Director  
Pamela A. Malone, Ph.D., LCSW-S,  
Fellow in Thanatology



Director of Children's Programs  
Rachel Saffer, LCSW-S



Intake Care Coordinator  
Bea Casarez



Administrative Assistant  
Tyrec English



Volunteer & Events Coordinator  
Ariana Valadez



Operations & Marketing Manager  
Jessica Owens

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss is happy to introduce and welcome Tyrec English to the Austin Grief Team as Administrative Assistant. In addition to our outstanding core staff, Austin Grief has a strong team of dedicated and compassionate therapists. To learn more about our therapists, please visit our website to read our therapist's bios.

[Meet Austin Grief Therapists](#)

## HOLDERS OF HOPE GIVING CIRCLE



our mission.

Please consider becoming a member of our Giving Circle, by contributing a gift of \$10, \$25, \$50, or \$100 per month.

Receiving help after experiencing a trauma can change the trajectory of a person's life. When children receive support in their grief process, it helps the entire family cope and heal together. Please help us sustain this important work and

[Holder of Hope Giving Circle](#)

You can easily support Austin Grief when you shop on Amazon with





AmazonSmile. Designate The Austin Center for Grief & Loss as your charity of choice with one click and donate while you shop. Easily select Austin Grief on your computer and phone. Doing good while shopping, that's a reason to smile.

[Amazon Smile - Austin Grief](#)

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## Support Austin Grief

**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.

**Holder of Hope Giving Circle**, by contributing a gift of \$10, \$25, \$50, or \$100 per month, you will become a [Holder of Hope Giving Circle](#) member and will help sustain the much-needed work of providing hope, healing, and transformation.

**Sponsor** Holders of Hope 2022. For more information visit our website, [Holders of Hope](#) or email Kim at [knugentanderson@austingrief.org](mailto:knugentanderson@austingrief.org).

**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 TODAY](#)

[www.AustinGrief.org](http://www.AustinGrief.org)

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512.472.7878

