



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

Newsletter

Spring 2017

Grief can be the garden of compassion. If you keep your heart open through everything, your pain can become your greatest ally in your life's search for love and wisdom. - Rumi

Austin Grief has much to celebrate. We are looking forward with excitement to our future, while carrying with us, gratitude for our history. We welcomed our new Executive Director, Mary Dickerson; we are expanding our therapeutic programs and events; we have many wonderful connections that have made an impact in our community; and of course connecting with YOU as a part of that community.

Welcome Mary Dickerson Executive Director



“We have a beautiful new home and an outstanding mission...let's get to work!”

Mary Dickerson, RN, CPA, joined The Austin Center for Grief and Loss as its new Executive Director effective April 10, 2017. Mary comes to Austin Grief from Catholic Charities of Central Texas where she managed

a homelessness prevention program. Mary was the interim Chief Financial Officer at United Way and worked in several nursing positions including St. David's Healthcare System and private practice. She is excited about the future of Austin Grief commenting, “We have a beautiful new home and an outstanding mission...let's get to work!”

Mary and her husband Charles live in Northwest Hills and have two daughters, Ellena, a junior

at Anderson High School, and Mary Catherine, a sophomore, at St. Michael's Catholic Academy. Mary enjoys reading, gardening and cooking as well as exploring the Texas Hill Country.

A Message from our Executive Director

I'm honored and humbled to be invited to lead The Austin Center for Grief and Loss into its next decade. While Austin Grief has faced challenges over the years, the commitment of its founder, Khris Ford, long-time friends, volunteers, staff and therapists is extraordinary. It demonstrates why it is so important for Austin Grief to thrive. We are adding programs and activities including movie nights, an ice cream social, therapeutic yoga, and a children's day camp, Camp Redbird. We are reaching out to schools, places of worship, and businesses to let them know Austin Grief is a resource to be used when times of grief and loss occur.

Austin Grief is beautifully poised with its wonderful new home. In order to sustain and grow our services, we will be cultivating relationships with foundations and individuals. We also hope to build a circle of more than 100 friends of the Center who will commit to giving \$83.33 per month or just under \$2.75 per day. This level of support and above is designated as a **Leader of Hope**. That being said, any support you are able to provide as a **Supporter of Hope**, is appreciated and will be used wisely. Your financial commitment sets us on solid footing as we expand our outreach and services.

On Saturday, April 22nd, Austin Grief had over 100 people attend its open house. This enthusiasm is so appreciated and reinforces the interest in and need for the work we provide in our community. Thank you for your continued support.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Family Movie Night

Join us for a fun evening as we eat pizza and watch the movie *Trolls!* Friday May 12th, Dinner will be from 6:00-7:00 pm and the movie *Trolls* will play from 7-8:30 pm.

You can enjoy pizza and the film together with your family, or drop off your kids at 7:00 and pick them up at 8:30.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

Redbird Summer Camp

Austin Grief will be hosting a summer day camp for children ages 6-12, August 7th - 11th.

It will be a week filled with fun, therapeutic games and activities, arts and crafts.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

More information can be found on our website, www.austingrief.org.

Healing from the Heart Therapeutic Yoga Group

Led by: Rachel Saffer, LMSW and Yoga Instructor

This therapeutic yoga group will provide an opportunity to deepen your sense of well being and connection to your own wisdom through the mind/body connection, in a community of shared understanding, healing, and support. Each class is customized to the needs of the group and includes meditation, yoga and yoga inspired practices. These practices are blended with rich discussion and experiential learning opportunities to deepen your capacity to receive and experience nourishment, love, healing and wholeness in each moment as we go through our own personal grief process.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

Summer Sundae Funday

Join us for an ice cream social on Sunday July 16th from 2:00 - 4:00 pm.

Bring your family and friends to enjoy the sweet treats to beat the heat.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

Brown Bag Lunch and Learn: Trauma Informed Care

Friday July 28th, 12:00 - 1:30 pm

Led by: Lori Pelliccia, LPC-Intern, Asst. Clinical Director ACGL

CEU's included for LPC, LMFT, LCSW

Trauma Informed Care involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. Trauma Informed Care also emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety. It helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

Location: Austin Grief, 2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin TX 78757

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Amplify Austin Celebration

Amplify Austin was an amazing experience and a great success in so



many ways! We made new friends, connections and partnerships and we raised over **\$30,000 in 24 hours!**

We can't wait to do it again next year!

Asterra Properties Happy Hour

Thank you Asterra Properties for hosting a fabulous Happy Hour benefiting Austin Grief! This is a tremendous group of generous people and was a wonderful opportunity to share our mission with the community.



Social Solutions

A BIG thank you to Social Solutions for coming out to volunteer at the Center! We were wowed with this positive group of people and the amount of work that was accomplished! They revamped the play room, art room and helped set up our new training and event space!

Parenting and Co-Parenting

The Austin Center for Grief and Loss presented a successful Parenting and Co-Parenting Workshop, Loving your Teen in a Complex World. The film, *Teen Truth: Parents & Family Communication*, premiered at the event.



Open House

Thank you all that came out to celebrate our new home! We had over 100 visitors including, our founder, Khris Ford, original board members, friends of Austin Grief, volunteers, and neighbors! Thank you to **Atria at The Arboretum** for sponsoring the event.

YOUR AUSTIN GRIEF COMMUNITY

A Message from our Clinical Director

Currently there is a lot of attention focused on teenage suicide because of the TV series *13 Reasons Why* as well as violence on college campuses. With the recent violence occurring on the University of Texas campus and what seems to be an increasing number of child and adolescent suicides, it often leaves us with endless questions. What are we doing wrong? Why does this keep happening? What are we supposed to do?

These are indeed important questions to ask, and I would encourage each of us, with bold support from one another, to **TALK** about these issues--not just via text and on social media, but in person! Ask your friends, family, and your children about the hurtful or difficult things they are dealing with in their lives. Invite these conversations before something bad happens. We need to know how to genuinely ask for and receive help.

It's difficult to admit, when we're struggling to ask for help, but we should be modeling this for one another as well as for our children. At Austin Grief, we see pain and suffering every day, but what we also see is the power of loving, accepting, healing CONNECTION to one another. Grief and suffering are a natural (and healthy) part of life. That doesn't mean we are meant to face it alone, behind closed doors, and with no connection to people who can help.

Let's work together to have the courage to speak our truth, the patience to withhold judgement, and the willingness to love through the pain. As humans we are made to be in loving connection to one another. Let's have these conversations about grief, loss, and struggle, using one another for support. Utilize your mental health professionals and community resources BEFORE things get out of control. Our doors at Austin Grief are always open to you.

Sending you hope and love,
Brittany Neece
Clinical Director, Austin Grief



Our Community is your Community: Client Testimonials

Take a look at our [website](#) for first hand reports of Austin Grief's client relationships with you... our community. If you would like your testimonial to be considered, please contact us.

Volunteer Appreciation Month

Our volunteers breathe life into our organization, giving the gift of self in providing vital support to our office staff, facilitating support groups, representing us in the community and so much more. We

want to extend our deepest gratitude to the volunteers that are the heart of this special community. From all of us at The Austin Center for Grief & Loss, to each of our amazing volunteers -- THANK YOU!

Volunteer Opportunities

Austin Grief has a compassionate volunteer community. If you would like to be a part of transforming lives after loss, please consider joining our volunteer community. There are numerous ways you can support hope, healing and transformation, including child care during our evening support groups, event coordination, fundraising, special projects and group facilitation. Please contact Rachel Saffer at Rsaffer@austingrief.org for more information.

How can you support your Austin Grief Community?

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, 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.

[DONATE TODAY](#)

www.AustinGrief.org

2413 Greenlawn Pkwy., Austin, TX 78757

512.472.7878

