



Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

# Atlantic Family Forum

May 31 - June 2, 2024

Oak Island Resort & Conference Centre, Nova Scotia

Program as of February 9, 2024. Program subject to change

## Day 1 – Friday May 31<sup>st</sup>

3:00-5:00 pm

Room Check-in  
Forum Registration

5:45 pm

Welcome Supper

7:30 pm

Reflections Ceremony: Honouring our Families - Past and Present

## Day 2 – Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>

7:30-8:30 am

Breakfast

8:45 am

Opening Session: Welcome

9:00 am

Keynote Speaker: The View from Here

9:30-9:45 am

Coffee Break

The 2024 Atlantic Family Forum has been generously supported by:



## Day 2 – Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>

### Workshops

9:45 am-12:15 pm

#### Masks of Grief and Loss for New Participants

Karen Lapierre Pitts, Family Support Manager, Threads of Life

In this session, you'll understand how we wear various masks to get through our daily lives and what we can do to safely take off those masks to deal with our journey. Whether your situation involves the loss of life, a traumatic injury or occupational disease, you will benefit from the insights gained in this session. You'll have a short period of time to share with the other participants a piece of your family story and what brought you here. This session will help you develop a connection to other family members attending the family forum and give you a more meaningful experience.

**Please note:** this workshop is highly recommended for family members attending their first family forum. Members of one family are encouraged to attend different sessions so that each is able to share their own story. **The session will be limited to a maximum of 14 participants.**

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#### Supporting Children in Grief - For Caregivers

Hilary Scott, Owner Healing the Loss - Grief Support

All of us grieve. As a society, we have a hard time understanding grief and being supported and supportive in our experience of it. Children are no different. In this workshop, we will delve into the fundamental aspects of how to provide support to children of all ages who are experiencing grief due to a loss. This loss could be a result of death, injury, accident, illness, moving, or countless other experiences, big and small, that cause us to feel the natural and normal emotion of grief.

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#### Grief and Loss: How Loss Opens Heart and Heals Lives

Roy Ellis, Therapist Educator

The great sage Rumi once said, "we must keep breaking our hearts until they open." Most of us feel grief enters our lives and wounds us. Others think of it as a horrible phase we must pass through. But what if grief and loss are primary paths to human growth, healing and love? This workshop will invite you deep into the mystery of loss and show how throughout time, death, grief, and trauma have transformed humans into deeper, and more loving people. Grief is the teacher, we are the pupils.

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#### Pain Self Management Workshop

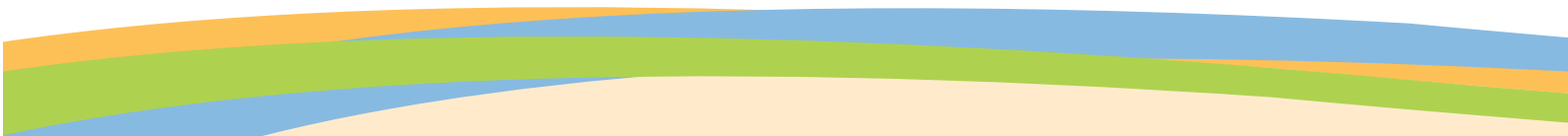
Tyler Dillman, Physiotherapist and Owner: One to One Wellness Centre

This interactive pain self-management workshop provides you with evidenced-based information to empower yourself while living with pain. You will leave this session with:

1. A better understanding of pain and how it relates to you.
2. A communication framework to guide discussions with loved ones, health professionals and employers.
3. A brief action plan to help you attain your meaningful goals.
4. A flare-up plan to reference during those high pain periods.

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Each worker and family member who has been affected by a workplace tragedy is a thread in the quilt of life. Each thread, by itself, cannot stand alone, but when woven together provides strength. Although we are individuals, we are also connected in the fabric of life.



## Day 2 – Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>

12:15-1:15 pm

Networking Lunch

### Workshops

1:30-4:00 pm

#### Finding The Power In Our Stories

CK DesGrosseilliers, Speakers' Bureau Coordinator, Threads of Life

Storytelling is in our human DNA, and in the DNA of Threads of Life too. We believe sharing our losses will lead to healing and contribute to prevention. But how do we find the power in our stories? In this session, we'll examine why stories are powerful and how your grief story fits into your bigger story. With a focus on both telling and listening, we will tap into oral storytelling, writing, and even a little artmaking.

#### Nature and Adventure: Essential Aspects of the Wellness Equation

Nick Cardone, Registered Counselling Therapist/Clinical Lead

Have you tried to buy a bike lately? Cross-country skis or snowshoes? There is a reason these items are in short supply over the last 18 months, and it has taken a global pandemic for many people to start exploring the benefits of time in nature and adventure activities. Similarly, physicians and therapists are increasingly prescribing 'time in nature' as a form of vaccination against the other pandemic in our society — the staggering rates of depression, anxiety and addictions. This presentation aims to highlight the nature-wellness connections, provide deeper insights into the impacts of a life lacking in nature or adventure, and explore sustainable and accessible ways to weave the natural world into our personal, familial, social and professional lives.

#### Facilitated Healing Circle

Roy Ellis, Therapist Educator

Roy Ellis has been leading reflecting sharing circles for people experiencing loss, trauma and death for over 35 years. Come join him and your peers to sit together and be present to our struggles and joys in a special kind of dialogue. Share circles help create a sense of belonging, an opportunity to see others and be seen, and to share in each other's lives in a deep and profound manner. These circles are informal and welcoming to all ages. Nobody is required to speak, and all are welcome to share what they feel comfortable offering. Roy facilitates to make sure the conversation moves respectfully and that we are nudged toward healing opportunities.

#### Art Therapy, Celebrating Hope in the Wake of Loss

Evie Dunville, Art Therapist

Join Art Therapist Evie Dunville for a workshop utilizing art to process grief and celebrate hope in the wake of loss. Many lack the words to describe their feelings and thoughts after experiencing loss. Others feel fear or shame around such expressions, compounding their grief. Art Therapy provides a tool to communicate this complex experience without the necessity of words. Evie will provide context and a safe place for guided creativity. **No art experience is necessary.**

2:45-3:00 pm

Coffee Break

4:00-6:00 pm

Free Time

6:00-8:00 pm

#### Supper followed by Volunteer Recognition Presentation

Join us in celebrating our amazing volunteers & learn some of the many opportunities you could volunteer to support families and work together towards prevention.

## Day 3 – Sunday June 2<sup>nd</sup>

7:30-8:30 am

Breakfast

8:30-8:45 am

*Please check out of your room. The Front Desk can hold your luggage if needed*

8:45-9:00 am

Morning Welcome

### Workshops

9:15-11:30 am

#### Stress, Somatics & Self-regulation

Caelin Nadin, Anxiety Coach & Somatic Practitioner

Whether you have stress, anxiety and/or PTSD, your body plays a large role in healing. We often focus on thoughts and talking to work through things. The body has a whole language of its own, and when we learn to listen, we can begin to take back control.

We will explore the language of the body, how to listen and how to use this knowledge to begin to heal.

#### FREE + CLEAR with Music and Stories: The Stop Doing List

Mackenzie Costron, Heart Centred Coach. Music Therapist. Registered Counselling Therapist

Enter: THE STOP DOING LIST. Prepare for massive relief. This exercise is potentially life-changing. Or at least sanity-saving. So it is. So it shall be. Let's rock it! This music therapy workshop will be accompanied by intentionally curated live music and mindfulness reflection practices.

#### How to Feel and Heal: Using Your Emotions As Medicine

Roy Ellis, Therapist Educator

Feelings are wonderful when they are happy and excited, but they can be troubling when we are angry, sad or fearful. We often seek the "positive" emotions and avoid the "negative" ones. But our brains and hearts are wired to feel so that we can be truly safe and alive in our bodies and in our relationships. When we learn to be open to our feelings, we connect with our deepest authentic selves, we find our place as individuals and as part of something larger. Without our feelings, we can sink into lonely places of isolation, cut off from our awareness of how we really feel about our experiences. This can lead to anxiety, depression and relational disconnection. Come learn how to awaken your feelings, and open your eyes to your life.

10:30-10:45 am

Coffee break

11:30-1:00 pm

Closing Lunch and departure at 1:00 pm

**Safe travels home and hope to see you again next year!**

**Save the date: May 30 - June 1, 2025**