



Grief Therapy: A Practicum *(Optional Supervision Day at Verbinding in Verlies)*

Primary presenter: Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD
Small group facilitators: Agnieszka Konopka, PhD, An Hooghe, MSc, & Edith Steffen, PsychD

Note: *This course satisfies requirements for one Case Study and two Practicum Modules toward the Portland Institute's Certification in Meaning Reconstruction in Loss.*

You know the techniques, but how do you integrate them smoothly and spontaneously into your encounter with your client's emerging needs, moment to moment, in the process of therapy? Beginning with a brief orientation to grief therapy as the reconstruction of meaning, we shift quickly into a life session with a grieving client to swiftly identify the core pain she is bringing to the session for consultation, as the therapist "leads from one step behind" in a collaborative quest for clarity and hopeful direction. Audience members then have an opportunity to ask questions to both therapist and client regarding their experience of the session, revealing its implicit order and impact on both participants. As a segue to the afternoon of case consultation, learners then engage in a novel form of Visual Supervision, as a means of visualizing both the problems and possibilities in a difficult case with which they are currently working, practicing a form of peer "inter-vision" before processing the experience more fully in the plenary group.

Following this, participants will convene in small practicum groups, each facilitated by one of the four workshop leaders. Several therapists will then have an opportunity to briefly present a therapeutic issue for consultation and possible role-play of alternative approaches to the challenges presented by the case. Rotating to a new facilitator each hour will offer exposure to different

perspectives and practices, before reconvening for a final plenary session to “put it all together” and discuss future directions.

Learning outcomes:

- Conceptualize therapy as the improvisational pursuit of collaborative solutions to ill-defined adaptive problems that resist technical fixes
- Process a life session of actual therapy to recognize openings that suggest the relevance of specifically crafted therapeutic procedures
- Depict therapeutic impasses in the “problem system” enacted by the client and identify new ways forward
- Consult on actual cases of therapy, gaining new perspectives and practices to re-enliven stalled efforts at change

Schedule:

9:00-9:30 Principles of Practice: Engaging Adaptive Problems
 9:30-10:30 Finding an Opening: A Life Session
 10:30-11:00 Break
 11:00-12:00 Reflecting Team: Process and Outcome
 12:00-1:00 Lunch
 1:00-2:00 Visual Supervision: Transforming the Problem System
 2:00-3:00 Small Group Consultation 1
 3:00-3:30 Break
 3:30-4:30 Small Group Consultation 2
 4:30-5:00 Plenary Group Wrap-Up

About the presenters:

Robert A. Neimeyer, Ph.D., is Professor in the Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, where he also maintains an active clinical practice. Since completing his doctoral training at the University of Nebraska in 1982, he has published 30 books, including *Techniques of Grief Therapy* and *Grief and the Expressive Arts: Practices for Creating Meaning* (both with Routledge), and serves as Editor of the journal *Death Studies*. The author of nearly 500 articles and book chapters, he is currently working to advance a more adequate theory of grieving as a meaning-making process, both in his published work and through his frequent professional workshops for national and international audiences. The founder and Director of the Portland Institute for Loss and Transition, Neimeyer also has served as Chair of the International Work Group for Death, Dying, & Bereavement and President of the Association for Death Education and Counseling. In recognition of his scholarly contributions, he has been granted the Eminent Faculty Award by the University of Memphis, made a Fellow of the Clinical Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association, and given Lifetime Achievement Awards by both the Association for Death Education and Counseling and the International Network on Personal Meaning.

An Hooghe is Clinical Psychologist and Marital and Family Therapist in Belgium. She combines clinical work with teaching and qualitative research at Context (University Hospital Leuven), and in her private centre '*Verbinding in verlies*' (Connection in loss). Her main domain of expertise relates to parents who have lost a child and complicated grief processes in families. She published several articles on couple communication in national and international journals, and a book she wrote with bereaved parents '*Anders Nabij*' (Being near in a different way). She is a member of several organisations, including the International Workgroup on Death, Dying and Bereavement (IWG). More information: www.verbindinginverlies.be



Edith Steffen, PsychD, is a BPS-Chartered and HCPC-Registered Counselling Psychologist in private practice and a Senior Lecturer on the Counselling Psychology doctorate program at the University of Roehampton, London, UK. Edith has been involved in a pilot project researching the Meaning in Loss Group protocol for complicated grief and has a special interest in continuing bonds with the deceased, particularly in sense of presence experiences and meaning-making as well as the therapeutic use of letter-writing, chair work and visualization to facilitate and work with continuing attachment. She is co-editor with Dennis Klass of the recently published book, *Continuing Bonds in Bereavement: New Directions for Research and Practice*.



Agnieszka Konopka, PhD, is an Associate Director for the Portland Institute, and maintains a private practice in The Netherlands focusing on expatriates facing major life transition. She is the founder of Composition Work, an art-therapy/coaching method, and offers training and supervision for practitioners internationally. She is co-author (with Hubert Hermans) of '*Dialogical Self Theory: Positioning and Counter-positioning in a Globalizing Society*', and editor of the *Handbook of Dialogical Self Theory and Psychotherapy*, with Hubert Hermans and Miguel Gonçalves. Agnieszka is an author of publications in 6 languages, including *Composing the Self: Toward the Dialogical Reconstruction of Self-Identity*, with Robert Neimeyer and Jason Jacobs-Lentz.



Practical Information:

Supervision day is available for people who are interested in certification in Meaning Reconstruction in Loss in Portland Institute for Loss and Transition and register for three days: two days workshop (21& 22 February) + supervision day (23 February).

Price:

3-Day Registration

Early Bird Registration: \$ 582 [505 Euros] (before 1 December 2018)

Regular price: \$742 USD [643 Euros] (after 1 December 2018)

+ 100\$ certification fee

Price includes lunch, coffee and tea.

Registration:

<https://www.portlandinstitute.org/shop/workshop>

Please register soon taking into account that the number of places is limited.

Venue:

Verbinding in Verlies

Leuvensesteenweg 30,
3370 Boutersem
Belgium

Plan to arrive 30 minutes before the workshop begins to check in and enjoy a coffee with us!



Portland Institute For Loss and Transition

For more information about training and
Certification in Meaning Reconstruction in Loss,
navigate to:

www.portlandinstitute.org

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development with the Portland Institute?*

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