

8:15-9:45am:

CATCHING YOUR BREATH IN GRIEF: LESSONS FOR GRIEVERS, THINKERS, AND COUNSELORS



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Level of Instruction: Intermediate

Presentation Summary: In this keynote I introduce my thinking of grieving as relearning the world via a reflective walk-through of my book, *Catching Your Breath in Grief* and a simultaneous telling of the story of my personal grieving in response to the death of my life-long friend Bill (who took the photos featured in the presentation). The talk captures the substance of my earlier work and extends and embeds it in descriptions and interpretations of experiences of grief reaction and grieving response, learning how to live from birth to death, learning to carry sorrow, engaging with life's mysteries, and soulful and spiritual dimensions of loss and grief. It also includes commentary on contrasts of my thinking with several of the prominent threads in other contemporary views on loss and grief.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lecture, the participant will be able to:

- Recognize grief reactions (brokenness and sorrows that come over the bereaved when a loved one dies), comfort those experiencing them and guide them in acquiring vital life lessons from them through sorrow-friendly practices.
- Identify grieving responses (the active engagement with loss and grief reactions and reengagement in life transformed by loss) as a process of redefining the world; gain an ability to carry sorrow, and discovering the internal capacity to love in separation.
- Employ sympathetic acknowledgement, guidance, and support in the labors of love involved in reinforcing the process of how to live meaningfully again in the aftermath of loss.

References:

Attig, T. (2012). *Catching Your Breath in Grief...and grace will lead you home*. Victoria, BC: Breath of Life Publishing.

Attig, T. (2011). *How We Grieve: Relearning the World* (Revised edition). New York: Oxford University Press.

Attig, T. (2000). *The Heart of Grief: Death and the Search for Lasting Love*. New York: Oxford University Press.