

# Intervening in Meaning: Working with Grief for Traumatic Loss

**SPEAKER:**

**PROF ROBERT A.  
NEIMEYER**

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*Director,  
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Transition*



Viewed from a meaning-focused perspective, a central process in grieving is the attempt to reaffirm or reconstruct a world of meaning that has been challenged by loss. Whether we encounter such loss in the form of bereavement or in the wake of non-death losses, such as those arising from illness, injury, and interpersonal violence or violation, traumatic transitions of all kinds can leave grievors struggling to process the event story of what happened, to make sense of their changed identity in its wake, and to realign their relationship with relevant others in a way that restores their sense of secure attachment or resolves unfinished business.

In this session, we summarize the *Tripartite Model of Meaning Reconstruction* and its application to complex losses of people, projects, professions and protections that our clients had once counted on to navigate life. Brief clinical videos illustrate how such losses violate the core beliefs that sustain survivors' assumptive world, prompting anguishing but essential review and revision of their life stories. We conclude by sketching diverse meaning-oriented practices that help people find growth through grief, providing a conceptual frame for therapeutic practice.

## **Learning Objectives:**

- Describe a meaning-focused roadmap to identify obstacles to adaptive grieving;
- Distinguish defining features of non-death losses that complicate their recognition and remediation;
- Summarize evidence that struggles in sense-making and violation of core beliefs mediate the impact of traumatic loss; and
- Identify three practices to facilitate meaning reconstruction in the context of working with grief.

 **11 Aug 2023, Friday**

 **2:30pm - 5:15pm**  
(inclusive of 15-minute break)

 **NUS LT 11** CHANGE OF VENUE  
Blk AS2, 1 Arts Link, S(117568)

Thank you for the overwhelming response.  
Registration for the seminar is now closed.

**1 CPE Credit per hour of attendance**

## **DISCUSSANTS:**



Ms Chee Wai Yee



Ms Yogeswari Munisamy

## **MODERATOR:**



Dr Carolyn Ng

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



**Professor Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD**, is a Professor Emeritus of the Department of Psychology, University of Memphis, and maintains an active consulting and coaching practice. He also directs the Portland Institute for Loss and Transition ([www.portlandinstitute.org](http://www.portlandinstitute.org)), which provides onsite and online training internationally in grief therapy. Prof Neimeyer has published 33 books, including the *Handbook of Grief Therapies and New Techniques of Grief Therapy: Bereavement and Beyond*, and serves as Editor of the journal *Death Studies*. The author of over 600 articles and book chapters and a frequent workshop presenter, he is currently working to advance a more adequate theory of grieving as a meaning-making process. Prof Neimeyer served as President of the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) and Chair of the International Work Group for Death, Dying, & Bereavement. 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 ADEC and the International Network on Personal Meaning.

ABOUT THE MODERATOR



**Dr Carolyn Ng, PsyD, MMSAC, RegCLR**, maintains a private practice, Anchorage for Loss and Transition ([www.anchorage-for-loss.org](http://www.anchorage-for-loss.org)), for training, supervision and therapy in Singapore, while also serving as an Associate Director of the Portland Institute. Previously she served as Principal Counsellor with the Children's Cancer Foundation in Singapore, specialising in cancer-related palliative care and bereavement counselling. She is a master clinical member and approved supervisor with the Singapore Association for Counselling (SAC) and a Fellow in Thanatology with the Association of Death Education and Counselling (ADEC), USA, as well as a consultant to a cancer support and bereavement ministry in Sydney, Australia. She is certified in Solution-Focused Brief Therapy and Narrative Therapy. She is also trained in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, USA, community crisis response by the National Organisation for Victim Assistance (NOVA), USA, as well as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) by LivingWorks, Canada. She conducts training workshops and consultations on various topics, as invited by different organisations both in Singapore and other countries like Malaysia, Taiwan, Bhutan, Australia, Spain, Mexico and the United States over the years. Her recent writing concerns meaning-oriented narrative reconstruction with bereaved families, with an emphasis on conversational approaches for fostering new meaning and action.

ABOUT THE DISCUSSANTS



**Ms Chee Wai Yee** is a veteran social work leader who has assumed practice and management roles, with health and social service agencies. Since receiving her MSc in Palliative Care from King's College London, she has contributed to training and teaching roles to build competencies of social workers and healthcare professionals, to promote advance care planning, psychosocial care for patients, and caregiver support, including bereavement support. She received the Outstanding Social Worker award in 2016.



**Ms Yogeswari Munisamy** graduated with Masters in Social Work from Washington University (USA) in 2003 and she is currently a PhD NUS research scholar candidate. Her PhD topic is on trauma-informed supervision and its impact on secondary traumatic stress, vicarious trauma and post-traumatic growth in social work supervisees. Yoges's 25 years of experience includes being a Senior Principal Social Worker in Child Protective Services in the Ministry of Social and Family Development. She led clinical matters in the Safe and Strong Families pilot which involves intensive in-home family preservation for children who were abused. She did transition work with children in care and life story work. Yoges has honed her skills in trauma work with children, youths, and adults through her work in MSF, Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centres and Perth District Child Protection in Western Australia. She is trained in Somatic trauma therapy and assists Babette Rothschild in her trauma training for international practitioners. Yoges has also provided supervision, training and coaching in the areas of trauma and supervision for local and overseas practitioners.