



**Addressing Compassion Fatigue, Managing Grief and Loss
Amongst Healthcare Professionals**

COURSE SYLLABUS

2020

Course Facilitator: Dr. Mary Jane Esplen PhD RN

Course Offering: de Souza Institute

Course Format: eLearning and Video Conferencing

Contact Information: support@desouzainstitute.com

Registration: Required

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on teaching health care professionals how to recognize and assess the impact of grief and loss on their practice, and apply effective communication and coping mechanisms to reduce the risk of compassion fatigue. This course was formerly known as Managing Grief & Loss: Acknowledging Impacts and Nurturing Health Care Professionals.

A. COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe the types of grief experiences and their specific impacts on health care professionals;
2. Apply tools for self-assessment to recognize indicators signaling difficulties in coping and managing grief and loss;
3. Plan communication strategies to facilitate coping and build a support systems to facilitate work life balance.

B. MODE OF LEARNING

The main mechanisms to facilitate learning in this course will entail eLearning and six 1.5 hour live videoconference sessions.

eLearning

eLearning, offered through the de Souza eLearning center, will cover the following activities: the application of knowledge, self-directed reading assignments, and discussion forum participation. The eLearning environment fosters a self-directed approach for participants to progress through the modules at a convenient time each week, either at home or work. The course timetable on page 4 of the course syllabus outlines weekly expectations for participants.

- Readings are provided each week, intended for participants to prepare for the weekly videoconference sessions around the key content areas.
- Discussion forum(s) via the eLearning platform are intended to engage all participants enrolled in the course. This is a form of learning that really depends on the active participation of the group. Online discussions regarding module content, readings or activities will enhance knowledge acquisition, understanding, and sharing. It is encouraged that you share experiences, ideas or resources from clinical practice with others in the course.
- Technical support will be provided throughout the course.

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Videoconference Sessions

This course includes weekly 1.5 hour videoconference sessions, during which participants will listen to the course facilitator teach the topic of the week and interact with other participants through the live videoconferencing system. The videoconference sessions will typically occur between 3:30pm to 5:00pm EST.

Course Weight: 0.25 Credits under Developing Professional Practice and Leadership

C. MODES OF EVALUATION

As part of the evaluation process and to receive a certificate of completion you are required to complete the following:

Before the start of the course, you need to complete:

- A baseline evaluation: this survey assesses your knowledge, attitude, confidence, and learning methods before you begin the course.
- A 250 word short description of a clinical scenario on the discussion forum with the following content – "describe a case where the loss of a patient (remove any patient identifying info) had significant impact on the health care provider". This description is to be posted to eLearning centre before the start of week 1 session.

Videoconference session requirements:

- You will be required to attend and actively participate in 4 out of 6 videoconferences.
- Completion of each session evaluation within six days post session.
- Weekly required readings and discussion forum postings: It is expected that you will participate in a meaningful way to demonstrate learning through the weekly collaborative forum discussions.

After the last videoconference session (session six), you need to complete:

- Post course assignment: submit a description on the discussion forum on three strategies to promote self-care and a supportive environment.
- Post evaluation: At the end of the course, you will be required to complete a post course evaluation. This will be facilitated electronically through eLearning.

When you have met the all the above requirements, you will receive a downloadable certificate of completion via your ePortfolio account and will receive a 0.25 credit towards obtaining your de Souza designation. Please note: certificates of completion will be available two weeks after the closing of the online course.

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D. TIME REQUIREMENT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

To be successful in completing this course, you are encouraged to set aside 2 to 3 hours each week to complete each section as learning is primarily self-directed. The total learning hours for this course is **13 hours**.

E. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Participants are expected to engage in four out of six sessions in order to receive a certificate of completion and be able to use this course towards a de Souza designation.

Pre-reading and slides will be provided in advance of each session so that participants may adequately plan their study pace during this course. It is strongly recommended for participants not to plan a vacation during the course offering period. Emergency notice for absence will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Faculty members can be contacted by email anytime. For more information, please see the [Cancellations, Incomplete and No Show Policy](#).

F. FACILITATOR AVAILABILITY

Facilitator for this course will be responsible to answer questions related to the course content, guide online discussion, lead video conferencing session, and be available for questions from participants throughout the course. The response time for an enquiry is within 24-hour during the week and 48 hours on the weekend. Technical support is available at support@desouzainstitute.com

G. COURSE TIMELINE

The following sections/modules are to be completed in sequential order.

Section/ Module	Topic	Date to complete session evaluation
Orientation	eLearning Center Orientation, baseline survey and submission of a case	Completion by the end of 1 st week
1	Grief and Loss: Recognizing the Signs of its Impacts	Completion by the end of 1 st week
2	Factors Contributing to Ability to Manage Loss: Personal Factors	Completion by the end of 2nd week
3	Reflections on Strategies that Health Care Professionals can Integrate into their Practice to Support Living with the Grief	Completion by the end of 3rd week

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4	Reflections on Experiences of Loss and Grief: Where Have We Come From? Where are We Going?	Completion by the end of 4th week
5	Team and Organization Strategies	Completion by the end of 5th week
6	Managing pitfalls and reaping the rewards in working in the field of oncology or palliative care: Opportunities for optimal communication and healthy work/life balance	Completion by the end of 6th week
Post course tasks	Online submission of three self-care strategies Completion of post course evaluation	By course closing date, two weeks post course

FACILITATOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Mary Jane Esplen, PhD. RN. Dr. Esplen is a Professor and Vice- Chair, Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto and Executive Director of the de Souza Institute. She is also a Clinician and Affiliate Scientist at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre and has held prior career scientist awards from CIHR and NCIC for her research program in psychosocial oncology. She has conducted studies of psychotherapeutic and counseling interventions, designed and validated psychometric instruments and completed descriptive research on various cancer populations, including those individuals and their families who carry genetic mutations.

Dr. Esplen has a PhD with a fellowship specialty in psychosomatic medicine from the Institute of Medical Science, University of Toronto. Her PhD work was a randomized trial of guided imagery. Following her PhD, Dr. Esplen completed a post-doctorate fellowship in cancer genetics and psychosocial oncology at the prestigious Samuel Lunenfeld Research Institute in Toronto. Dr. Esplen is a scientist, educator, therapist and scholar and has received several awards, given numerous workshops and keynotes in psychosocial oncology- from prevention to palliative care. She has a strong interest in professionals' experience of grief and loss and offers workshops and a course through de Souza on the topic. Dr. Esplen is a past President of the Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology (CAPO) and a prior recipient of the CAPO's lifetime achievement award.

Additional Information Regarding Learning at de Souza Institute

A. GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE DISCUSSION

Discussion related to course content will take place in the collaboration discussion forums. The collaboration discussion forums provide you with the opportunity to share ideas and clarify your understanding of course content and readings.

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B. SOCIAL FORUM

The social forum is provided for you, the participants, to post news, items of general interest, to share information about yourselves and to raise topics of interest beyond the specific questions being discussed in the module-specific forums. All messages of a social nature can be posted in the social forum. This forum is open to all participants, including the facilitator.

C. VIRTUAL LIBRARY

The de Souza Institute has a virtual library that can be accessed to those registered in this course or any other de Souza Institute continuing education program. This invaluable resource enables you to access over 1500 e-Journals, 200 e-books and 8 on-line databases such as CINHALL or Ovid-Medline. You can use the virtual library to access the required reading materials for your course. The virtual library can be accessed 24 hours a day at any location that has internet access using a login and password.

The direct link is <http://links.desouzainstitute.com/library>

D. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

eLearning Centre Orientation

If this is the first time you are taking a course offered by the de Souza Institute, please complete the eLearning Centre Orientation course (free of charge). The Orientation course is designed to introduce you to online learning and help you understand how to navigate through the de Souza Institute eLearning centre and courses.

de Souza Support

If you have questions about the content of a course please email your course facilitator. If you need assistance accessing or navigating the eLearning Centre, please refer to the eLearning Orientation course. If you have questions or have any general technical difficulties please contact support@desouzainstitute.com

E. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

[Academic Honesty and Copyright Policy](#)

[Cancellations, Incomplete and No Show Policy](#)

Course content and resources provided in this course are based on best practice guidelines from provincial and national bodies. Please consult your educator if you have specific questions related to local protocols and policies as they vary among healthcare organizations.