

Walking with our Grief

First Nations Teachings for the Winter Holidays

Facilitated By:

Chey Johns (she/her) and Nicole Lightning-Strongman (she/her)

Welcome & Introductions



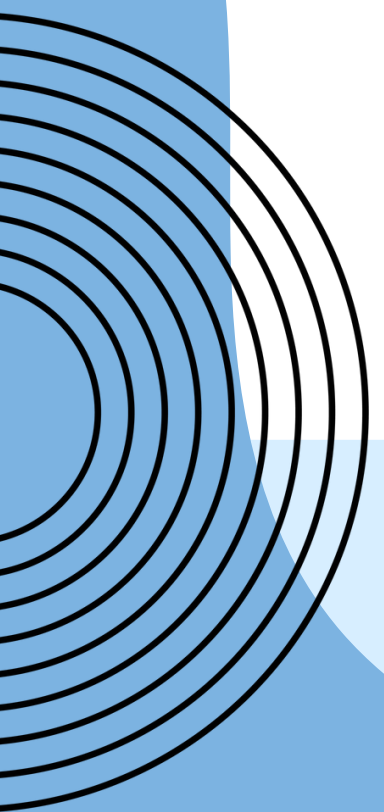

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Intentions for our time...

- Develop personal grounding and safety practices to support emotional well-being during times of grief and loss.
 - Identify personal and community-based protective factors that foster resilience and healing.
 - Learn and share culturally-relevant teachings that offer comfort and perspective through challenging times.
 - Create a personal “Coping Bundle” of supports, (e.g., people, practices, and cultural connections) to carry forward beyond the session.
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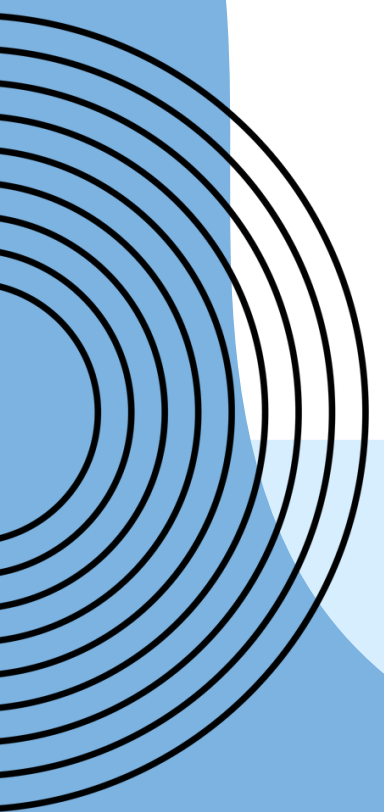

Who's in the Virtual Room?

- Name
- Pronouns
- A recent moment of joy or delight
- Accessibility needs
- One thing you'd like to learn today or a question you have





Shared Space Agreement

- Anything shared here stays here, anything learned here leaves here.
 - We practice non-judgment, non-harm, and kindness.
 - We honour our own boundaries and value the boundaries of others.
 - We choose how much we want to share.
 - We practice deep listening to understand.
 - We practice sharing to be understood.
 - We practice sharing from a place of lived personal experiences.
 - We refrain from advice giving.
 - We invite and allow silence for deeper reflection.
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Honouring the Land





Overview

- Commitment to Safety
- Grief & Loss
- Grounding & Awareness
- Coping Strategies
- Closing Circle



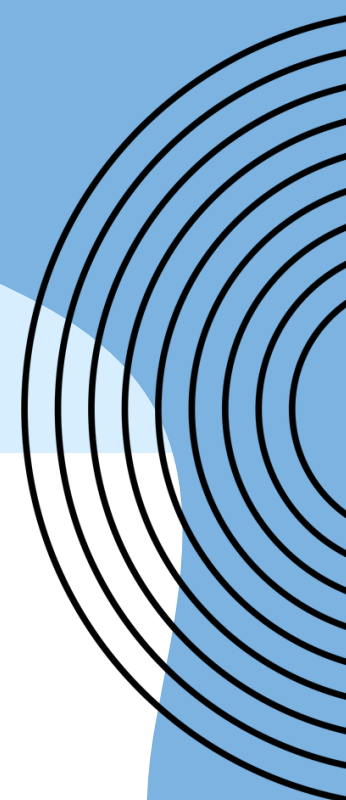

Commitment to Safety

- What does safety mean to you today?
- Who can you reach out to if you feel overwhelmed?
- One grounding object, word, or teaching for calm.



Navigating & Coping with Grief & Loss

First Nations Prospective

- Grief as a collective journey.
 - Honouring ancestors and loved ones.
 - Connection to land as medicine.
 - Ceremony and cultural practices.
 - Supporting each other.
 - Honouring your own way of grieving.
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Grounding & Awareness

- Grief can affect body, mind, emotions, and spirit.
- Grounding practices help maintain balance.
- From a mental health perspective, grounding is a coping technique to help reorient yourself to the present moment, often by focusing on the "here and now" through your senses.





Grounding Practice

- Draw, write, or describe how it feels when you are grounded.
- Practice three intentional breaths.
- Choose a word, image, or teaching to repeat when feeling overwhelmed.



Awareness Reflections

What is one truth, warning sign, or protective factor you recognize in yourself?





Coping Strategies

- Cultural practices
- Community support
- Connection to land
- Creativity
- Mindfulness



Coping Bundle

- Healthy coping strategies already used.
- New strategies to try.
- Draw or write a “bundle” of supports (people, practices, songs, land, animals).



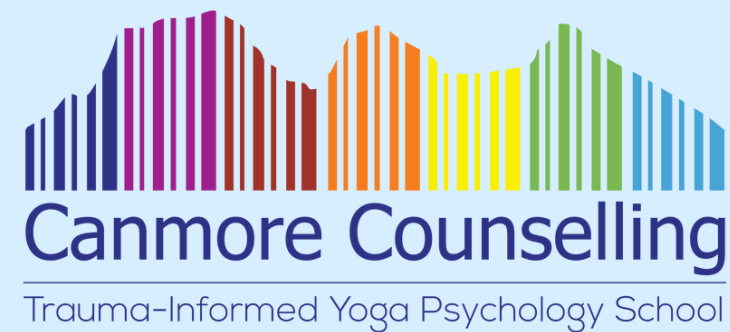
Invitation to share...

One word, teaching, or intention you will carry forward.

Resources

- **Hope for Wellness Help Line** – 24/7 crisis support
 - Phone: 1-855-242-3310
- **Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line** – 24/7 support for survivors and families
 - Phone: 1-866-925-4419
- **Kids Help Phone (Indigenous Youth Support)** – 24/7 crisis line for youth
 - Phone: 1-800-668-6868
 - Text: 686868
- **National Native Alcohol & Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP)** – Addictions support and treatment referrals
 - Alberta referral line: 780-495-2345
- **Alberta Mental Health Help Line** – General mental health support and referrals (available province-wide)
 - Phone: 1-877-303-2642
- **First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)** – Mental wellness supports
 - Phone (General): 1-855-550-5454
- **Indigenous Friendship Centres** – Urban Indigenous mental-health and wellness programs
 - (Contact your local Friendship Centre)
- **Local First Nation Health Offices** – Elders, counselling, land-based healing, cultural support
 - (Contact your community health centre)

Mârsî • Miigwech • Niitsíniiyi'taki Nia:wen • Wela'lin • Îsnîyes Gunalchéesh • Haw'aa



We offer low-cost virtual counselling sessions available to
anyone residing in Alberta

Please visit canmorecounselling.com for more information
or email us at connect@canmorecounselling.com

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