



INDIGENOUS WHOLISTIC HEALING SERVICES

National Indigenous Trauma Recovery & Grief Healing Initiatives

GRIEF & LOSS SUPPORT TRAINING

5-DAY INTENSIVE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Building practical knowledge, confidence and skills for frontline workers and leaders supporting people through grief, loss and bereavement.

PROGRAM LENGTH	Five consecutive days • Monday to Friday
TRAINER	Andrew Bear
FORMAT	Interactive instruction • practical exercises • case studies • skills assessment

A practical, culturally respectful training program designed to strengthen local capacity to respond to grief with compassion, safety and appropriate boundaries.

1. Program Overview

Grief touches every community. Frontline workers, health and wellness staff, peer supporters, youth workers, leaders and other helpers are often among the first people approached after a death or significant loss. Yet many have never received structured training in how to listen, respond, recognize risk, provide practical grief support, facilitate healing conversations, or determine when a referral is needed.

The Grief & Loss Support Training: 5-Day Intensive Certificate Program is designed to help close that gap. The program provides a structured learning experience that combines grief and bereavement knowledge with practical helping skills, culturally respectful approaches, crisis awareness, ethical boundaries, referral practices and frontline-worker wellness.

This is a certificate-of-completion program for frontline and community-based support. It is not presented as a clinical licence, regulated professional designation, or substitute for professional mental-health treatment.

2. Program Purpose

The purpose of this five-day program is to strengthen the ability of participants to:

- Understand grief, loss and bereavement and recognize the many ways grief can affect individuals, families and communities.
- Communicate with grieving people using compassionate, respectful and practical helping skills.
- Recognize needs, risks, protective factors and circumstances that require additional or specialized support.
- Provide structured, non-clinical grief support within the participant's role and scope of practice.
- Support individual and group healing conversations while respecting culture, spirituality, family systems and personal choice.
- Recognize crisis and suicide warning signs and follow appropriate safety, escalation and referral procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality, ethical boundaries, documentation practices and professional responsibility.
- Protect their own wellness and recognize compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and burnout.

3. Who Should Attend

The program is suitable for people whose work brings them into contact with individuals and families experiencing grief or significant loss, including:

- Community and frontline workers
- Health and wellness staff
- Mental-health and addictions support staff working within their scope
- Peer supporters and outreach workers
- Youth and family support workers
- Crisis-response and victim-support personnel
- Program staff and coordinators
- Elders, leaders and volunteers involved in community support

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the five days, participants should be able to demonstrate increased knowledge and practical competence in:

- Recognizing common grief responses and different forms of loss.
- Using active listening, empathy, validation and appropriate questions.
- Conducting a basic grief-support conversation and identifying immediate support needs.
- Developing an appropriate support and referral plan.
- Facilitating safe individual and group grief-support activities.
- Recognizing when grief intersects with trauma, crisis or suicide risk.
- Applying ethical boundaries, confidentiality and scope-of-practice principles.
- Using practical grief-support tools and culturally respectful approaches.
- Developing a personal plan for frontline-worker wellness and resilience.

5. Five-Day Training Curriculum

DAY 1 — FOUNDATIONS OF GRIEF & LOSS

- Understanding grief, loss and bereavement
- Types of loss and common grief responses
- Myths and misconceptions about grief
- Emotional, physical, cognitive, behavioural, social and spiritual responses
- Anticipatory, cumulative and disenfranchised grief
- Culture, spirituality and historical/cumulative loss
- Understanding that grief is individual and does not follow one fixed timetable

DAY 2 — SUPPORTING & ASSESSING THOSE WHO ARE GRIEVING

- Communication and helping skills
- Active listening, empathy, validation and the appropriate use of silence
- Helpful questions and language to avoid
- Identifying needs, strengths, risks and protective factors
- Basic grief-support planning
- Knowing when frontline support is appropriate and when referral is required
- Practice conversations and case-based learning

DAY 3 — FACILITATING HEALING & GROUP SUPPORT

- Structuring a supportive one-to-one grief conversation
- Facilitating grief-support groups and circles
- Creating emotional and cultural safety
- Working respectfully with youth, adults, Elders and families
- Practical coping, grounding and stabilization strategies
- Remembrance, storytelling, meaning-making and healing rituals
- Managing difficult emotions and group dynamics

DAY 4 — CRISIS RESPONSE, TRAUMA & SUICIDE AWARENESS

- Understanding the relationship between grief and trauma
- Recognizing stress and nervous-system responses
- Recognizing warning signs and suicide risk
- Immediate safety, escalation and referral procedures
- Supporting people after sudden, traumatic, overdose, suicide or other complex loss
- Postvention considerations after suicide loss
- Compassion fatigue, secondary traumatic stress and helper wellness

DAY 5 — ETHICS, BOUNDARIES & PRACTICAL COMPETENCY

- Ethics, confidentiality and professional boundaries
- Scope of practice and limits of the certificate
- Consent, information sharing and documentation principles
- Referral pathways and collaborative care
- Frontline-worker self-care and resilience planning
- Case studies, role plays and practical skills demonstration
- Knowledge review, competency evaluation and certificate requirements

6. Training Approach

The program is designed to be highly practical rather than lecture-only. Learning methods may include instructor-led teaching, guided discussion, lived-experience perspectives, case studies, role plays, small-group activities, reflective exercises, practical demonstrations and resource development. The training is intended to honour diverse cultural and spiritual approaches while allowing participants to support people without imposing a particular belief system.

7. Participant Training Package

Each registered participant will receive a comprehensive learning package designed to support both the five-day training and continued application afterward. The package may include:

- Participant workbook/handouts covering key training topics
- Practical grief and loss support tools introduced during the program
- Personal notes and action-planning pages
- Selected grief and loss resource information
- Certificate of Completion for participants who successfully complete the program requirements

8. Certificate Requirements

Participants who successfully complete the program requirements will receive a Certificate of Completion in Grief & Loss Support Training — 5-Day Intensive Program.

Certificate requirements include:

- Participation in the full five-day program, subject to the attendance requirements established for the event.
- Participation in practical exercises, discussions and case-study activities.
- Completion of the program knowledge assessment.
- Demonstration of appropriate helping, boundary, safety and referral decision-making through practical activities.
- Understanding of the limits of the training and the importance of working within one's role and scope of practice.

9. What This Training Is — and Is Not

This program is designed to increase frontline grief-support knowledge and practical capacity. Completion recognizes that the participant has completed the training and its competency requirements. It does not confer a regulated clinical title, authorize psychotherapy or diagnosis, or replace professional education, licensing, clinical supervision or emergency services where those are required.

10. Organizational Benefits

Organizations sending staff to this training can strengthen local capacity by developing personnel who are better prepared to:

- Respond compassionately when grief and loss occur.
- Have difficult conversations with greater confidence.
- Recognize concerns earlier and connect people with appropriate services.
- Support families without rushing, minimizing or trying to 'fix' grief.
- Contribute to safer and more consistent grief-support practices.
- Bring practical tools and resources back into their workplace and community.
- Recognize their own limits and protect against burnout and compassion fatigue.

11. Trainer

Andrew Bear

Andrew Bear brings more than two decades of workshop facilitation and community-based helping experience to his training. His approach combines professional education, extensive frontline and community experience, lived experience, grief and trauma-focused learning, and teachings received through years of working alongside Indigenous communities, Elders, leaders, families and frontline workers across Canada.

The training style emphasizes practical application, compassion, cultural respect, dignity, safety and the belief that communities become stronger when local helpers are equipped with usable skills and appropriate referral pathways.

12. Hosting & Delivery

The program is delivered over five consecutive days, Monday through Friday. A host organization may register multiple participants or coordinate participation with neighbouring communities and agencies. Final daily training hours, venue requirements, participant capacity and local logistical arrangements are confirmed with the host prior to delivery.

13. Registration & Investment

A separate Registration & Investment Sheet can accompany this proposal. This keeps the main proposal focused on program quality, learning outcomes and certification requirements while allowing registration deadlines, early-registration incentives, group arrangements and event-specific details to be updated without rewriting the proposal.

Current individual registration: \$1,995 per participant. **Early registration:** \$1,495 per participant, subject to the stated early-registration deadline and available spaces.

14. Contact & Enrollment

PROGRAM	Grief & Loss Support Training — 5-Day Intensive Certificate Program
ENROLLMENT	1-855-544-2777
DIRECT	306-580-9445
WEBSITE	www.iwhscanada.com

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