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## President's Message

Hello everyone,

Like many of you, I imagine, September is the real start of the new year. Maybe you are returning to your academic responsibilities, or getting your kids prepared to return to theirs. Or maybe you are anticipating the uptick in clinical work that tends to occur as summer ends and harbingers of the holidays are suddenly everywhere. Whatever you find yourself in the midst of this month, let me be among the first to welcome you to autumn. More than any other season, the fall is a time to appreciate the cyclical nature of life and death, lavishing upon us a display of beauty that foretells the end of all things green. This group is perhaps the one place where I can say these things with impunity, knowing that you will not make a face and tell me to stop being such a downer. I appreciate that.

We spend a lot of time encouraging our clients to take care of themselves, and hopefully we absorb some of that message and practice a bit of what we preach. But no amount of self-care can alleviate the sharp pain of grief and no amount of experience can keep us from feeling some of that pain when we sit with someone who is grieving. This is the way of empathy – to feel what someone else feels. Empathy has overlap with, but is different from, compassion, the expression of which involves accepting a person's feelings without judgment and conveying a willingness to accompany them on their journey.



***Phyllis Kosminsky, PhD, LCSW, FT***

I have been reading lately about empathy and compassion, in particular Deborah Davis's thoughts about balancing empathy with compassion. If we feel too much of what our clients feel, we may be too quick to try to provide comfort or offer advice. This need to "protect and direct" reflects our need to reduce pain – theirs and ours – and can preempt the necessary processing of grief. With compassion, we understand, and want to help, but we do not absorb our client's pain. From this position, we can "accept and connect." Davis is a psychologist specializing in helping parents after perinatal loss. She makes a compelling case for approaching bereaved parents with compassion, providing support without encroaching on or directing their grief. Of course, this way of being with bereaved people also makes us less likely to burn out, and enables us to continue to do the work that we love and that is so needed.

In your own work, how do you find a balance between making a connection with clients and maintaining a healthy emotional boundary? I'm interested in your thoughts, if you care to share them.

This month's issue of *Connects* includes a report from our Executive Director Isaiah Allen on the progress of a number of initiatives of importance to our members. Top of the list is our new website, which among other things simplifies membership renewal, provides easier access to ADEC publications, and facilitates donations. We are continuing to build up the functionality and content of the website, and while I appreciate your patience with any glitches along the way, please don't hold back if you have a problem. My email is at the bottom of this message. I will in all likelihood not be able to solve your problem, but I will make sure that someone else does.

Talk to you soon.

Phyllis Kosminsky, PhD, LCSW, FT

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## Executive Director's Message

What did you do this summer?

Living in Minnesota, with possibility of snow seven months of the year, we really make the most of those five snow-free months. In the North we try to squeeze in as much of the great outdoors as we can before we retreat to our mittens, scarves, and parkas. As we've enjoyed some beautiful weather this summer, I'm also excited that we've achieved a number of significant milestones on ADEC projects.

**Isaiah Allen**

At the end of June, we announced the launch of the new ADEC website and member online database. This system allows you, as a member, greater control of your member profile. It enables you to customize your resume, add a photo, and easily find and connect with other members. This new system has also simplified the process for accessing your ADEC CEUs and the professional journals, *Death Studies* and *Omega*. Access to all these features simply requires a couple of clicks once you're logged into the ADEC site. You no longer need to log into those systems separately. Accessing your free member benefit webinars is now as easy as entering the promo codes *2019FreeWebinar1* & *2019FreeWebinar2* in the online store. The webinar store is also much easier to navigate, and viewing your purchased webinars is easier and more reliable.

The website itself doesn't look a lot different. However, our team is chipping away at changing dated content and streamlining the site navigation, so it is easier and more intuitive to find your way to the content you want and need. The site also enables employers to post their job openings directly to the Career Center. Did you know members can post job openings free-of-charge and nonmembers can post openings for a reasonable fee? The new web store also allows individuals or organizations to make donations to ADEC without signing in as a member.

These upgrades were in the works for nine months and I hope that you've experienced added value to your ADEC membership because of these changes. But wait there is more!

We are working on a second phase of technical upgrades to the ADEC website. These upgrades will focus on two areas: recorded webinars and conference sessions, and the CT/FT credentialing processes.

The coming upgrades will allow for recorded webinars and conference sessions to be available immediately when they are purchased. You will no longer need to wait for our staff to manually complete your purchase in the system and grant you access.

We will be moving the CT/FT application and recertification process online. You'll no longer need to gather, print, and ship folders of documents. The entire application process, including CEU tracking, will be an online system through the website. I anticipate this will save the typical U.S. based credential applicant at least \$20 in shipping costs and will be an even greater savings for our international applicants.

All of these system improvements are designed with two goals in mind. First, to improve your ADEC experience as a member. You're busy doing important work, you don't have time to navigate complicated or difficult websites to find professional development resources or access your CEUs to renew your license. We're working to give you the best possible member experience. Second, we need to reduce the amount of time ADEC staff are occupied with administrative tasks. I want to see our talented and committed staff spending more time advancing committee objectives and meeting strategic goals rather than trouble shooting technical problems.

ADEC is a unique and important community that does valuable work and has an incredible impact. I'm excited that this summer we took both big and small steps, increasing that impact and expanding that community.

Best,

Isaiah Allen

Executive Director, ADEC

## ADEC Webinar Series

### *Coping Assessment for Bereavement and Loss Experiences (CABLE)*

presented by Elizabeth Crunk, June, 2019

Participants of ADEC's June webinar, presented by Dr. Elizabeth Crunk, learned about the development and validation of the *Coping Assessment for Bereavement and Loss Experiences* (CABLE; Crunk, Burke, Neimeyer, Robinson, & Bai, 2017), an instrument designed to assess potentially constructive strategies for coping with grief.

Although 10-15 percent of the bereaved population experience a protracted, debilitating, and sometimes life-threatening grief response known as complicated grief, a large subset of survivors responds resiliently, with grief symptoms attenuating in less than two years. What differentiates resilient and complicated grief reactions? Are there differences in what grievers do following loss that distinguish these group of mourners, such as different strategies they employ to cope with their painful grief symptoms? Given the dearth of bereavement-specific instruments designed to identify the precise coping strategies that grievers use, research examining coping strategies that potentially differentiate these groups is conspicuously rare. To address this need, Dr. Crunk and her research team developed the CABLE, a brief, self-report instrument that can be used as both an ongoing assessment tool and as an intervention tool to increase the number and broaden the types of coping strategies used to facilitate healing following loss. In this webinar, Dr. Crunk described the development and validation of the CABLE, as well as recommendations for using the CABLE in clinical settings.



Elizabeth Crunk, Ph.D.

[You can purchase this webinar recording online.](#)

## Student Profile

*So that the ADEC community can get to know its students, Connects is featuring stories on individuals who are ADEC scholarship recipients*

I am Christal Heyward and I lead a grief support group in Charleston, South Carolina. The name of the organization is "A Time of Refreshing" and we meet for the purpose of offering support, resources, encouragement, and fellowship for women who are in the season of grief. We have been meeting for four years and most of our meetings are held in our home or in another intimate setting. We incorporate music and discussions. Currently, I am pursuing a Master's degree in Thanatology to learn more about grief, bereavement, dying, and dealing with loss.



**Christal Heyward**

**Do you have a mentor/role model who has significantly affected your career path in Thanatology? Tell us why you chose this career path.**

I chose the career path in Thanatology to learn more about grief, loss, and bereavement education. I do not really have a role model who has significantly affected my career path in Thanatology. I am still new at it and do not yet know many other people in the field. I do enjoy watching the videos and learning from Dr. M. Katherine Shear. It is my desire to use music as a way to help the grieving community. I also would like to work more with churches in the African American community to bring more awareness to the process and normality of grieving.

**What advice would you offer a more junior professional in the field on growing their career or keeping their work fresh?**

I would advise junior professionals to keep an open ear to people who are grieving and realize that there is not a one size fits all recovery journey for everyone.

**What do you think the future holds for your work and that of others like you? How will that impact what you do?**

I believe that the future holds great opportunities for those who work in the field of Thanatology, grief support, grief counseling, and care. Grief is a gift that will forever be with us and being able to help as many people to embrace the gift of grief is an opportunity that will always need people who care and who listen.

## What's New: New Books from ADEC Members

### Attention All ADEC Authors!

*What's New* is a column that has been included in ADEC publications since 1996. It is currently included in each issue of *ADEC Connects* and previously in *The ADEC Forum*. It is mostly focused on books, but has also included other items such as video and even a grief board-game.

*What's New* celebrates our members' considerable contribution to the Thanatological literature by offering a brief review of books and other educational materials written or produced by ADEC members. Each review is run once to provide an opportunity for our membership across the world to be aware of resources in the dying, death and bereavement field.

To have your contribution included, please ask your publisher to send a copy (*not just an announcement*) of recent material (2016 to present) to:

The Rev. Paul A. Metzler, D.Min., Editor

Books & Other Media

**ADEC Connects**

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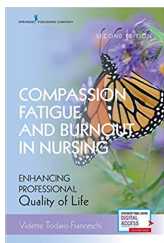
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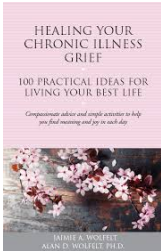
**Rev. Paul A. Metzler, D.Min.**



**Todaro-Franceschi, Vidette.** *Compassion Fatigue and Burnout in Nursing. Enhancing Professional Quality of Life.* Second Edition. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, 2019. ISBN: 978 0 8261 5519 1. Softcover, 305 pages.

**Todaro-Franceschi**, a professor of nursing and doctoral nursing studies, has written a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of her 2012 book. This edition further promulgates the contribution her first book made to professional quality of life for nurses, and is energized by the workforce crisis that continues to undercut quality in health care. Todaro-Franceschi notes with alarm that "no one is safe in a broken healthcare system" (p. xv). Expanded by 74 pages and two chapters, her book includes 14 chapters organized in six sections including: Professional Quality of Life; Unity, Purpose, and the Good: An Ethic of Caring; The Bad: Compassion Fatigue and Moral Distress; The Ugly, Uglier, and Ugliest: Burnout and Workplace Violence; Facing Death; and Beating the Odds. Several appendices provide self-assessment tools and other valuable resources. Although the book is focused clearly on professional nursing, allied health care professionals (physicians, social workers, administrators, technicians, etc.) will learn much from this text and find striking similarities in their professional concerns.

**Wolfelt, Alan D. and Jaimie A. Wolfelt.** *Healing Your Chronic-Illness Grief. 100 Practical Ideas for Living Your Best Life.* Collins, CO: Companion Press, 2019. ISBN 978-1-61722-277-1. Softcover, 110 pages.



Alan Wolfelt is joined by his daughter, Jaimie, a Master's degree student in psychology at Regis University, in considering how chronic illness causes a form of grief that can be faced and embraced as a part of living. They report that six in ten Americans live with a chronic illness (e.g., heart, autoimmune, kidney, mental illness diseases and the like) so this small booklet with its pragmatic suggestions will be relevant to many. Following the "100 Practical Ideas" format used in similar Companion Press titles, the book includes tips, affirmations, and simple activities to help chronic illness sufferers take meaningful steps forward in living. The final section provides "The Chronic-Illness Bill of Rights" organized around self-compassionate principles.

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## Contact Connects

Connects is interested in your thoughts and work. Please reach out to us with content submissions, suggestions or ideas.

For consideration in the October 2019 issue of Connects please submit your ideas/content by **Monday, September 30, 2019**.

### Contact Us

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