

Greetings Funeral Home Staff,

My name is Holly Mitton, and I am the founder and proprietor of Sacred Journey Pathways, a Community Centre for Death Care and Education. In addition to being a Forensic Morgue and Autopsy Specialist employed by contract with the BC Coroners Service, I have an extensive background in funeral service. I am also a certified celebrant.

As a Forensic Autopsy Technician, I desire to strengthen the relationship between the morgue staff and the funeral home. It is important to educate morgue staff on best practices in order to preserve the arteries and best care for the skin so future embalmings and viewings are done with ease.

Sacred Journey Pathways aims to support those in their time of dying, comfort those who grieve, educate those who don't know their options, and advocate for those who need a voice. We do not replace the role of a funeral director but work in collaboration with funeral homes. First and foremost, we are in service to the family.

The idea for Sacred Journey Pathways was born through my past 15 years of experience working in grief and death but reached its culmination in 2016 when my dear lifelong family friend, Anna, died in a tragic motor vehicle accident. In being close to her family, I was able to provide support and guidance during their difficult process of making decisions for the funeral arrangements. As a funeral home staff member, I was able to pick Anna up from the morgue, wash her body and hair, and lay her to rest in her casket. I also had the honour of driving her and her mourning mother back to Kamloops to reunite Anna with her family.

As a Community Centre for Death Care and Education, we offer a wide variety of in-person training and workshops throughout the year, including Trauma Loss, Pregnancy Loss, Equine Facilitated Grief Support, and a Children's Grief Support Groups.

The support groups for children are designed to teach kids the tools they need to process their loss, as well as healthy ways to grieve and communicate their feelings. Through the use of mediums such as art therapy, mindfulness, and relationship building, we resolve to engage children in a safe environment alongside a community experiencing similar losses, which serves to show them that they are not alone.

We have a special place in our hearts for perinatal, infant and child loss. Holding Space for Pregnancy Loss is an in-person training session meant to empower healthcare professionals to best support bereaved families following perinatal and infant loss. We also offer our Seed to Soul program, which includes companionship during difficult medical appointments, emotional support during home visits, and communication/liaison with the families chosen funeral home to assist in wishes regarding burial or cremation. This type of hands-on support is unique from any other service provider.

Our main goal is to assist those grieving in exploring and understanding their relationship with death. As such, we believe it would be a mutually beneficial exercise if you were to consider offering some of these workshops at your location(s). As we both know, grief does not end once the funeral is over. The workshops aim to help the bereaved navigate the landscape of their grief and ease the transition into a world without their loved one.

If this prospect interests you, I welcome the opportunity to speak more on the subject. A detailed overview of our resources and services can be found on our website at www.sacredjourneypathways.com/healthcare-professionals/

Sincerely,
Holly Mitton

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