

# Holding On or Letting Go? Wisdom from the Dark Emotions

ASU Fowler Center  
May 20, 2014, 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.



*No registration is necessary - Please share with friends!*

## **Purpose:**

Most of us do NOT want to be negative. We want to live with a “we can” attitude and one which brings out the best in us, and in turn others. Why would we intentionally head down that “scary and fearful road,” actually confronting the elements in our lives we are most concerned about? Grief, fear and despair are those “dark emotions.” They are the ones we most often want to suppress, avoid or deny. They are also the elements which at times keep us “stuck.” This program will explore the “dark emotions” and provide opportunities to learn new interventions with those we care for, their or our own families, and ourselves. Holding On or Letting Go...how do you live your life?

## **Learning Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to:

1. Describe what is meant by the “Dark Emotions” and the “wisdom” that comes from exploring them.
2. Describe effective ways individuals, their caregivers and their families can work with “Dark Emotions” as sources of spiritual empowerment and transformation.
3. Describe the elements of “hanging on” versus “letting go.”

## **About the Speaker**



Ben Wolfe, M.Ed., Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker, Fellow in Thanatology, is a grief, loss and trauma trainer and consultant who previously served for 28 years as the founder and Program Manager/Grief Therapist of the St. Mary's Medical Center's Grief Support Services in Duluth, Minnesota. At the medical center Ben provided life-threatening illness and bereavement counseling for ages that ranged from pre-school to senior citizens through individual and family counseling, and support groups. He has given over 2,000 presentations at the regional, state, national and international levels, taught university graduate courses for over 25 years, and a course on life-threatening illness at the University of Minnesota, Duluth School of Medicine for 23 years. He is an active mental health member of the Northern MN CISD team. Ben is a former president of the 2,000 member Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC), and since 1995 has served as Chair of the Minnesota Coalition for Death Education and Support (MCDES). He was appointed by the National Kidney Foundation from 2001 to 2005 to the eleven member National Donor Family Council Executive Committee which consists of 14,000 members whose loved ones died and organs or tissue were donated after their death, and also professionals. In addition to chapters in books, he has authored numerous articles related to grief and loss and served for ten years on the St. Mary's Medical Center's Bio-Ethics Committee. Ben has received a number of awards, including the ADEC Service Award in 1994, in 1999 the MN School Social Workers Association's "Friend of School Social Workers Award" for his work with schools throughout the state regarding crisis intervention, and in 2002 the "Community Service Award" presented by the International Women Teachers Association. Additionally, Ben received the first-ever U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone Legacy Award presented by the Minnesota School Counselors Association in 2004 for his work with schools and communities in crisis, the ADEC International Death Educator of the Year Award in 2011, and in 2005, was selected as "Employee of the Year" by St. Mary's Medical Center. In January, 2013, Ben received the "Friend of EMS" Recognition Award for Northern, MN. He also loves to bake bread, the old fashion way, by hand!