

#WithUkrainianJungians

Walking alongside our Ukrainian colleagues and all those facing erasure



Webinar 9 Tuesday 24th October 2023, 18:00 - 19:45 BST

Verena Kast & Olga Kasianenko

Coping with Grief - Difficulties and Resources.

Chair: Lily Rose Nomfundo Mlisa, PhD

ALL ARE WELCOME

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In association with GAP (Guild of Analytical Psychologists), WorldlyWise, ARAS (Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism) & Sanctus Media

Welcome



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to our next webinar in which **Verena Kast** and **Olga Kasianenko** will explore **coping with grief**.



This summer I came across this artwork by Stefan Knox in a small memorial chapel in the village of Maria Alm in the Austrian mountains. It is a Pietà (Italian: pity, compassion). A seated Mary holds her dead son, battered by torture and crucifixion, before his burial. The Redeemer has himself been subjected to violence and injustice, abandoned by everyone, even God.

The Pietà depicts the liminal space between crucifixion and resurrection. Death agony has been replaced by silent mourning. Mary cannot take away anything of this suffering. She can only bear it.

This Pietà was itself horrifically damaged in a fire. Disfigured, brittle, blackened - destroyed? It nevertheless radiates grandeur and dignity in suffering.

The gold leaf employed by the artist reminds us of the Japanese process of Kintsugi, referenced in #WUJ's first webinar flyer (using the colours of Ukraine). Kintsugi translates roughly into joining with gold. ("Kin" = gold; tsugi = join.) It is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery using gold, with the result that the repaired object is considered more valuable than the original. The breakage is not hidden, rather it is illuminated by the gold that rejoins.

We are all acquainted with grief - from the death of a childhood pet, to the loss of an unborn child, a friend, sibling, parents. We may grieve over the break-up of a relationship, or as we accompany a life-long partner in their dying or as their dementia increasingly takes over. We may grieve for the destruction of places that are important to us and for our planet.

Grief is an inevitable part of life - but that does not make it any the less painful or easy to deal with. So often it is just too unbearable and we lose ourselves in distractions, in being busy, in addictions, in rage and hatred. Or perhaps we just get lost in despair.

Welcome

For our Ukrainian colleagues, the grief must be overwhelming - young people killed in battle, innocent civilians - including children - massacred in their homes, supermarkets, theatres, sometimes having been tortured; historic cultural icons have been bombed; women and girls have been raped; children have been abducted, huge numbers have lost limbs.

Another atrocity is reported on the news - and not just in Ukraine. I do not have the capacity to grieve for them all. But if we cannot grieve and bear the pain, how can we howl in protest and stop the spread of such tyranny? How can I be fully open to my Ukrainian colleagues in their grief? I have to acknowledge a limit to my capacity to stand in solidarity.

In her opening remarks to #WUJ's webinar with Donald Kalsched, Lisa Marchiano observed:

On an individual level, suffering has a way of separating us from others. The grieving mother finds herself shunned and alone because others cannot bear to be close to such misfortune and anguish. The pain feels too big and too unknowable, so we say, "there are no words," and move on. When we become the victim of devastating, wrenching loss, we become cast out of the circle of normal life. We no longer belong to the world of the living, for we have been claimed by underworld forces that others don't want to countenance.

I invite you to come and join us in that liminal space between death and resurrection (rebirth). Perhaps our coming together, and Verena and Olga's talks, will be traces of gold that help piece together the broken fragments in our lives, that increase our capacity to bear grief for now. Jung said: *Embrace your grief, for there your soul will grow.*



Before the presentations start, we will join our Ukrainian colleagues in their grief for one minute in silence. It means a lot to them.

Thank you
Catherine Cox

Verena Kast & Olga Kasianenko

Coping with Grief - Difficulties and Resources



Verena's personal statement:

This destructive, unreasonable war in Ukraine makes me angry and helpless. I am deeply impressed how our colleagues in Ukraine take their difficult fate upon themselves and, despite the most difficult war circumstances, but sometimes also the most difficult personal circumstances, have continued their work with people who need therapy for a very long time now. When you talk to them, they now see this as their task, which they also want to take on. I feel great respect and hope that the little help and good thoughts we can at least send them will have an effect.

Prof. Verena Kast DPhil. Is a psychologist and psychotherapist, who was professor of anthropological psychology at the University of Zurich. She is a teaching analyst and supervisor at the C.G. Jung-Institut Zurich and was President of the Curatorium of the Institute. She was co-director of the Lindauer Psychotherapiewochen, the largest German-speaking continuing education event in psychotherapy. She has written numerous publications in the field of fairy tales, symbolism in general, relationship, mourning processes, emotions also in connection with complex theory and imagination.

About this webinar:

To love someone holds the promise of overcoming existential loneliness. The death of a beloved, therefore, throws us back into existential loneliness.

People react with feelings of grief if they lose someone or something very valuable in their lives. Connected with those feelings of mourning are feelings of grief, anxieties, anger, rage, love, feelings of guilt, and others. If we allow ourselves to be taken over by those feelings, a process of mourning begins, a slow and painful developmental process, that allows us to separate from the departed and gives us the possibility again of getting on in life – without the deceased person, but with all the aspects that the relationship with this person have evoked in the own psyche, that which has been touched in our soul and what we must not sacrifice.

We have to understand the loss of a beloved one in connection with bonding. If we engage with someone, a relationship develops and, in our psyche, a self is created out of the relationship. This communal self differs from the own self but there is also some overlapping. The existence of a good enough own self is important for the process of mourning and separation. In the grief process we reorganise ourselves from the communal self back to our own self. If the own self is not or not sufficiently accessible, those grieving react to a major loss with depression and accessory symptoms, meaning they react with a so-called complicated grief. In this case psychotherapy of depression, focussed on the communal self and the loss is often helpful.

Olga Kasianenko



Olga writes:

When I was in Germany in the summer of 2022 and I was experiencing the loss of Home and the death of my mother that happened when I was away, I was offered to participate in the translation of Verena flast's article. Naturally, I couldn't even imagine that a year and a half later I'd have an opportunity to lead a seminar together.

Working on the article helped me in my own grieving process. At that moment I was in a deep depression that I couldn't find a way out of, and maybe the reason was that my relational Self was quite developed unlike my individual Self, the contact with which became weaker. Understanding this helped me to make certain decisions that I still consider to be important in my life.

I was filled with joy, inspiration and at the same time fear when it was suggested I present with Verena flast. What will I say, what new and important things will I say to people who lost so much? Will I find the words to express all my feelings? And once again the project "together with Ukrainian Jungians" came to my aid, namely the initiative of the Archive for Research in Archetypal Symbolism (ARAS) ...with the possibility to share symbols - such a simple, very Jungian and really genius idea - if you lack words, the images will come to your aid: artistic, musical or poetic.

It's not even a presentation, but only a mosaic of images that I came across on the terrain of war and that became the symbols of farewell and grieving for my past carefree life, for fantasies of immortality and a lot of losses that we all experienced.

If I share my grief with you I hope you will also have the opportunity to share your grief with me, with all of us, with the whole world because we are together.

Olga Kasianenko was born and grew up in Kyiv. She graduated from the psychology department of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, and together with a group of interested colleagues studied classical psychoanalysis courtesy of Tuebingen Institute of Psychotherapy Psychosomatics and Psychoanalysis. In 2008 Olga was lucky to enrol in the first IAAP Router program and was granted the status of Jungian analyst in 2019 and subsequently trained as a group analyst and studied infant-parent relationship therapy at the Anna Freud Centre. Olga works with children & adults and leads Infant Observation groups.

Lily Rose Nomfundo Mlisa, PhD



Nomfundo writes:

It is an honour for me to be invited to participate in this project.

Ukraine citizens, families, friends and relatives including those in other countries such as South Africa where I live, share whatever, uncertainty, distress, pain, fear and loss of hope faced by Ukraine families today. This is a traumatic life experience many countries are going through today. Pain is pain. So is fear and hopelessness. In South Africa, today, we are faced with similar situations where we have all just been recovering from the painful dilemma of COVID-19 pandemic which left the global world in serious pain, due to not just only losing lives of dear ones, but also emotionally traumatic traces that may take time to heal. The world is crumbling. There is no longer joy and peace but a shadow of darkness hovering over all of us on daily basis.

In spite, of all that, many hours of prayer are held for Ukraine and all countries where peace is no longer experienced. These sessions are powerful in that we are able to connect spiritually with each other, support each other, share the pain together and instil positive hope and faith that, we are all in this together. As a wounded healer myself, and with those Jungians in Ukraine and around the world, we shall heal the wounds of those wounded by using various strategies, such as these sessions.

With me today are the two warriors to bring supportive and positive hope initiatives to all human life in Ukraine.

Lily Rose Nomfundo Mlisa (Phd), South Africa is a practising and registered Clinical Psychologist since 1995; attended more than 60 conferences, internationally and nationally. She has organised various panels at various conferences, chairing sessions and presenting. She achieved more than 15 publications on accredited journals. She also participates in Peer Review process for certain journals. Is an independent researcher in the fields of: indigenous Knowledge Research; African Traditional Religions; Community Engagement and Psychology. She is a Research Fellow in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at University of Zululand in Kwa Zulu Natal, South Africa and Research Fellow at the Department of Religion, Studies, University of Free State, Free State Province, South Africa. She is also one of the founders of 'Rainbow Group' psychotherapy pioneered with South African Jungian psychotherapist and Professor Peter Amman, a Jungian Analyst in Zurich. The group project promotes integrative psychotherapeutic strategies between Jungian and Traditional Healers in South Africa. She also practices various meditation strategies to support traumatized individuals and families from diverse cultures around the world. She is also a fully-fledged Traditional Healer and Faith Healer. (lillymlisa@gmail.com) +27834940433

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front line with Ukrainians:** Free

2.

Book your ticket

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- **Webinar 9: October**
Verena Kast & Olga Kasianenko

Please note that this
webinar will be available
in Ukrainian and English
only (& possibly Chinese)

Recordings

All webinars are recorded.

#WUJ is very fortunate to have had a team of professional interpreters who have provided their services without charge in support of Ukraine (although we pay our Ukrainian interpreters) and most are available to view in English, Ukrainian, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Chinese. We thank them for their generosity and expertise.

#WUJ is also grateful to **ARAS** for hosting the recordings, enabling colleagues in other time zones also to participate.

As well as providing support to all those colleagues in fear of erasure, the webinars are intended to raise funds for those colleagues in Ukraine who are suffering severe financial hardship. Whether you attend live or join us via a recording, please do consider donating a gift to our Ukrainian colleagues.

Would one hour's fees be possible?

To view a recording, please click:

[HERE](#)

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We usually play a slideshow whilst people arrive in the Zoom room.

To watch the slideshows, please click:

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Please note that in future, webinars will be available in Ukrainian and English only (& possibly Chinese)



Image by Carola Mathers

Abstract 1, oil and ink on paper.

Carola is a UK based artist working with watercolour, oils and mixed media who has recently retired from clinical practicing as a Jungian Analyst.

https://www.alternativeartsales.com/photo_12105445.html