

September 1, 2012

Shalom,

My colleagues in Israel and I are very happy to invite participation in a predominantly Hebrew language conference devoted to Loss, Bereavement and Human Resilience in Israeli society. This letter provides a synopsis of the main points of the conference. The majority of the information on our website devoted to this conference is in Hebrew as befitting a meeting aimed at furthering communication on this important topic for a predominantly national audience.

The conference is scheduled for January 28-30, 2013 in Eilat, and the venue's weather at that time is ideally suited for visitors either from Israel or abroad. Our featured keynote speakers include Christopher Hall, from Australia who will be speaking in English on Monday January 28, Professor Yuval Neria from the USA. who will be speaking on Tuesday. Professor Yaakov Raz and Rabbi Yuval Cherlow will be discussing Jewish and Buddhist approaches to loss and bereavement that day as well. Translation for the keynote speakers into English will be made available should there be sufficient demand for this. Until October 15, 2012, the conference is accepting abstracts for presentations of research, clinical, or theoretical matters devoted to loss, bereavement and human resilience. Workshop submissions are possible as well. Until December 1, it will be possible to submit abstracts suitable for posters. On these matters, as well as on questions related to costs for registration and lodging for non-Israeli guests, please contact our center by email only: Ovdan.mercaz@gmail.com

This conference is the product of the University of Haifa's International Center for Loss, Bereavement and Human Resilience's focus on broadening Israeli society's

understanding of loss and bereavement. The conference committees include leaders in this field from the academic and clinical arenas, key personnel in government and non-governmental agencies, and persons representing lay and professional leadership. In addition to the University of Haifa and our own center's involvement, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Defense's Bereaved Families and Memorialization division, the Israel Defense Forces, the Health Ministry, the National Insurance Institute of Israel (Bituach Leumi), Or Yehuda College, the Yad Lebanim Organization representing bereaved parents and families from the uniformed services, the Organization for Widows and Orphans of the Israel Defense Forces, the Israel Trauma Coalition, Amcha (families affected by the Holocaust), the University of Haifa's Multi-disciplinary Clinical Center have also been active in supporting the conference. We can truly say that this conference in Eilat is one of the fruits of a unique partnership devoted to furthering the appreciation of the challenges and opportunities faced by bereaved individuals, communities, and Israel's multiethnic multicultural society.

The conference is designed to offer two groups of people with interest in bereavement and human resilience a conference suited to them. On the one hand, professionals representing an array of fields will feel at home both sharing and learning from others. Mental health professionals and clinicians involved in service delivery, faculty and students from the academic and research aspects of the field, healthcare personnel and policy makers, persons involved in service delivery and policy development from social services, the military and police, will find much of interest. On the other hand, additional persons with an interest in the field, including persons who have experienced bereavement and want to learn and contribute, will find much to interest them here as

well. Some of the events planned will be aimed at one or the other of the groups, while much of what is presented will be suitable for persons seeking to learn and to influence the developments relevant to Israeli society today.

Despite decades of active involvement in furthering the theoretical, applied, clinical and research aspects of the field of loss and bereavement, the establishment of the center as the first (and currently only) center devoted to bereavement and human resilience per se is a very new development. All losses are painful, and yet, we cope, manage and grow. It is our ability to maintain respect for the bereaved alongside the memory and love of those who no longer walk the earth with us, that allows us to go on with the work of living. Your support will help us continue to minimize suffering and maximize respect for those affected by loss.

The Jewish New Year is celebrated this year in September. May it be a wonderful year for all.

Sincerely,

Dr. Simon Shimshon Rubin - Professor of Clinical Psychology

Conference Chairman and Director of the Center

Dr. Ruth Malkinson,

Chairwoman of the Scientific Committee and Director of Training at the Center