EOLPC
A JOURNEY TO LIVE FOR

End-of-Life Doula Training Program

Course Overview and Objectives

This course provides an in-depth review of the role of End-of-Life Doulas with a plant medicine component. It includes the issues, challenges, and rewards around working with individuals and their families at the end of life. The course consists of 8 live, Zoom sessions, plus relevant assignments outside of class. The program prepares you to work in any end-of-life caregiving field but also to successfully pass the National End of Life Doula Alliance's micro-credentialing exam to earn their Proficiency Badge.

Each online session is 90 minutes, allowing for time to discuss the previous session's assignment and cover that day's topic. You are expected to participate in all the classes, but we understand there may be times when there is another priority. Each session is recorded and sent to students within 24 hours, but you must notify the instructor and work to make up any assignments.

Upon completion of the online training, participants will receive a Certificate of Completion and Digital Badge.

Throughout the program, we will present a wide variety of published information as well as opportunities for learners to examine their own experiences, beliefs, hopes, and fears about death. This is a supportive experience with opportunities to learn and grow in a subject that can be intense and life changing. Please note, this course is not designed to delve deeply into the use of psychedelics, there are other EOLPC courses that will complement this program that do.

Time commitment for the course:
Class hours: 12 hours total
Pre-work: 2.0 hours
Homework/Individual work: 14-15 hours
Post Class Work: 2-3 hours
Total 30-32 hours

Participants will learn how to:

- Describe the role and scope of a death doula and how to provide unconditional positive regard and nonjudgmental support. We will review how to comfortably hold space and companion during this sacred time.
- How plant medicine helps alleviate fears such as near-death anxiety and process grief.

- Become prepared to work in harmony with a client's care team as needed to emphasize the client's feelings of empowerment.
- Understand common terminal conditions, pain management, the dying process, and helpful non-medical strategies to ease suffering.
- Recognize and support the stages and expressions of grief.
- Understand the importance of networking with local professionals, organizations, and businesses that provide services for those at the end of life.
- Engage in meaningful conversations and life reviews with clients, including helping with legacy projects.
- Develop effective ways to decrease anxiety/suffering by creating a peaceful space for clients.
- Support clients in developing vigil wishes, stopping food and hydrations, and writing advance directives.
- Nurture a protective, calm presence and environment while clients are actively dying.
- Prepare for the NEDA-credentialing exam.

Your instructor is Catherine Durkin Robinson. She is credentialed through and a member of the National End of Life Doula Alliance. She received her certification through the University of Vermont Medical School (UVM) with additional certification in LGBTQ+ inclusion. In addition to her service as an EoL Doula, she teaches classes at University of New England, Northwestern University and DePaul University. She also works with clients before, during, and after their psychedelic journeys.

For more information on the training program, please contact Catherine Durkin Robinson at catherine@anityadoulaservices.org.

CURRICULUM

Module 1

Catherine leads a 90-minute discussion in which participants learn about the role of a doula at the end of life as well as the three main categories for end-of-life suffering. They will review the Death Positive Movement and how NEDA developed its core competencies for death doulas.
Assignment: Reflect on the past, present, and future. What did you think about dying as a younger person? What do you think of it now? What insight do you hope to gain in the future?

Document: Reading and viewing assignments about dying options. This includes palliative care, hospice, at-home, hospitals, medical aid in dying, etc. Also a video about how psilocybin helps at the end of life.

Module 2

Catherine leads a discussion about grief and how it looks different for everyone. (And that's OK!) This also includes and in-depth discussion about healthy v. normal grief and grief rituals.

Homework: Complete personal Advance Planning Documents. Read NEDA's Conditions of Participation and a handout discussing common terminal illnesses and pain management. Video about psychedelic-assisted therapy for grief.

Module 3

Catherine leads a discussion about common experiences when dying, pain management, and non-medical ways to ease suffering.

Assignment: What has been your greatest loss in life? What has been your greatest comfort?

Document: A reading assignment about best practices for death work and a webinar about psychedelics at the end of life.

Module 4

Catherine leads a discussion about the importance of Unconditional Positive Regard and the Ring Theory. How do we care for difficult people at the end of life?
Homework: Reading/Listening assignment about hospice work. A video about the 5 key statements that frame end-of-life care and near-death awareness. And a NEDA-study guide to read.

Module 5

Catherine leads a discussion about how, as doulas, we care for others with a dying checklist and ourselves with self-care.
Assignment: What is your self-care plan?

Documents: Reading about death practices, religious/cultural beliefs, how to choose the best hospice in your area

Reading about death practices, religious/cultural beliefs, psychedelics, and death, and a book review to prepare for the NEDA exam.

Module 6

Catherine leads a discussion about traditional post-death options as well as newer and more eco-friendly options.

Homework: What are your post-death plans? Also, begin a spreadsheet of local resources.

Reading: Information about liability insurance for doulas. And more helpful hints about how to start your doula business.

Module 7

Catherine leads a discussion about bereavement support, bereavement aids, and the basics of psychedelics in deathwork.

Assignment: How would you offer support to someone dealing with grief?

Document: Two readings about how psychedelics help people with near-death anxiety.

Module 8

Catherine leads a discussion about VSED and Medical Aid in Dying.

Homework: Many different doulas offer different kinds of services. What services do you want to offer to your clients?

Viewing Assignment about “What Matters at End of Life.”

Last Class Handouts: To be read on their own – how to set up your first client visit, questions to ask, additional books, podcasts, videos to explore, sample contracts, and more.

End-of-Life Doula Certificate of Completion

All students who earn 70% or greater, based on the criteria below, will receive a digital badge and a certificate of completion. Successful completion of this course is determined by the following factors:

- Assignments: 50%
- Homework: 50%
- Participation in Discussions