

Presenter Biographies

Richard F. Groves JCL, MA, MDiv

Professor Richard Groves is an internationally respected teacher on topics related to the science and spirituality of wellness. A chaplain and counselor for thirty years, Richard speaks nine languages and has earned graduated degrees in theology, ethics, world religions and law. Richard was ordained a Roman Catholic priest and served as chaplain and ethicist for the US Air Force and numerous North American health care systems.

Richard with his late wife, Mary, co-founded the Sacred Art of Living Center in Bend, Oregon in 1997. More than twenty thousand students throughout North America, Europe, Asia and India have graduated from the Sacred Art of Living & Dying training courses taught by the Groves including more than nearly three thousand physicians worldwide. Richard's latest book, *The American Book of Living and Dying: Lessons in Healing Spiritual Pain* has been widely compared to the groundbreaking work of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. In 2006 the Groves created The Anamcara Project, a first of its kind professional apprenticeship in the sacred arts of living and dying.

Richard has a passion for bringing together the worlds of medical science, psychology, spirituality and cultural diversity. As a university professor of philosophy and world religions, Richard is an advocate for a more innovative approach to education on issues related to end of life care. As a health care educator, Richard has taught a variety of professional audiences on issues related to integrated medicine and the art of dying.

Groves is a highly sought after keynote speaker at conferences internationally on topics that include wellness, aging and palliative care. He continues to work as a tireless advocate for a more effective and holistic approach to pain management and human suffering. His latest project in an on-line education program called the Soul & Science for Caregivers.

Dean Sharpe MD, MHA

Dean Sharpe trained as a general surgeon and worked in private practice from 1980 to 2002. He shifted focus, obtained a Master's Degree in Health Administration, becoming Vice President of Medical Affairs at St. Charles Medical Center for twelve years, sharing this position with his surgical practice from 1994-2002. Informatics and computerized medical records came and he facilitated the change at St. Charles from 2004 to 2006. As the Vice President of Medical Affairs and VP Clinical Informatics, relationship and change facilitation was the major role of the job.

His love has always been as facilitator and educator, so starting in 1992, he helped design and facilitate “People Centered Teams”, an organizational development and personal growth seminar, both at St. Charles and nationally, impacting the lives of over 5000 participants. He helped design and taught two levels of Death and Dying workshops at St. Charles in the 90’s with the goal that caregivers would become more comfortable with their own mortality as well as their patients. His belief as physician has always included the role of facilitating the relationship between patient and illness since this healthy relationship allows healing, regardless of physical cure. The vision and mission of the Sacred Art of Living and Dying Center and the SALAD seminars are a natural extension of Dean’s previous interests and work. He is married to Marlis Beier, and has two daughters and two grandsons. He lives in Bend, Oregon and enjoys cooking, skiing, hiking, gardening, and being with his family.

Marlis Beier, M.D.

Marlis Beier started her professional career in Obstetrics and Gynecology and practiced for seventeen years. She found gratification in both the clinical challenges and accompanying those facing life transitions around sexuality, motherhood, loss and medical crisis. During that time, her desire to prevent unwanted teen pregnancy led to presentations, making an educational video and teaching in schools as well as founding a mentoring teen theater group.

Life and identity shifted when exacerbation of multiple sclerosis ended her private practice. Finding meaning in her own losses and change stimulated learning storytelling, spiritual work, dream tending and writing. An ordained Maggid (Jewish storytelling and teacher), she speaks at faith communities as well as to secular groups. Her focus changed from accompanying those giving birth to those facing the end of life. Her volunteer work includes hospice, interfaith networking and Volunteers in Medicine (caring for indigent patients). Seminars at the Sacred Art of Living Center motivated her to begin teaching dream tending, facilitating end of life review (a personal Vidui) and acting as a spiritual director. Facilitating material and ritual at the Sacred Art of Living and Dying programs comes naturally from her practicing personal, family and community ritual in Judaism, fitting in with her love of stories.

Her greatest love is her family, including husband Dean Sharpe, M.D., two daughters, Marissa and Anneliese, and grandsons Thielsen and Sawyer. The saga of Anneliese’s health challenges since age one inspired her to become a better doctor, mother and companion to any one facing illness or challenge.