

Healing Hearts



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A Note from Jennifer...

As we step into November, a month that traditionally invites us to reflect on gratitude, my heart is full as I think of the incredible community that surrounds and supports Bo's Place. I am deeply grateful for each of you—our participants, volunteers, staff, and leadership. Your commitment to our mission allows us to extend a compassionate hand to families and individuals who are grieving, creating a ripple of hope and healing that reaches far beyond our walls.

November is also Children's Grief Awareness Month, a time to bring attention to the unique needs of children who are grieving and the caregivers and helpers who support them. At Bo's Place, we are dedicated to being here for these children and their families. Together, we can continue to make a profound impact in the lives of these young people, showing them that they are not alone and helping them build resilience for the future.

Grateful for this community of Bo's Place and the role each of you play.

With Bright Hope for Tomorrow,

Jennifer Boubel
Executive Director



November is Children's Grief Awareness Month - Join us to FLIP THE SCRIPT

In recognition of Children's Grief Awareness Month this November, Bo's Place is coming together with other members of the National Alliance for Children's Grief to "flip the script" on grief. Throughout the month, we are collectively committed to

providing essential tools and resources to foster a more grief-informed society. This initiative, created by NACG, seeks to address the common challenges people face when supporting those who are grieving, aiming to replace potentially hurtful statements or silence with action-based responses.

Drawing directly from the feedback of young people who are grieving, the campaign encourages individuals, communities, and professionals to shift away from hurtful and dismissive words often said to young people who are grieving. They highlighted the painful impact of common phrases like "it'll be fine" or "that sucks," which can isolate and invalidate what is, for many, a deeply personal experience. Instead, the young people are asking for real, tangible support, replacing these words with actions that genuinely make a difference, such as simply sitting and listening while pressing pause on the advice and understanding that everyone's grief experience is unique.



They are asking us to:

- Be present.
- Listen actively.
- Actions speak louder than words.
- Press pause on advice.
- Get moving - grief is physical, not just emotional.
- Cultivate a supportive environment for sharing.
- Empower young people's voices.
- Recognize the uniqueness of each person's grief.

Children's Grief Awareness Month serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of acknowledging and supporting children who are grieving and their families. According to the JAG Institute's 2024 Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model Report, an alarming statistic underscores the urgency of this effort: 1 in 12 children, or approximately 6.3 million children, in the United States, will experience the death of a parent or sibling by the age of 18. The profound impact of this loss cannot be understated. In 2022 alone, nearly 1,100 children were bereaved every day, emphasizing the need for greater awareness and support for those navigating the complexities of childhood grief.

Throughout November, we will be sharing actions we can take to support a young person who is grieving. By fostering a more grief-informed society, we can collectively help alleviate the pain and isolation that children who are grieving often experience.

For more information on Children's Grief Awareness Month and to access valuable resources for supporting children who are grieving, please visit the NACG website and follow us this month on social media.

[NACG Website](#)

[Bo's Place Facebook](#)

[Bo's Place Instagram](#)



Grief on the Stage: *The Year of Magical Thinking* at Main Street Theatre

Our friends at Main Street Theater are presenting *The Year of Magical Thinking* through November 17 at their Rice Village location (2540 Times Blvd).

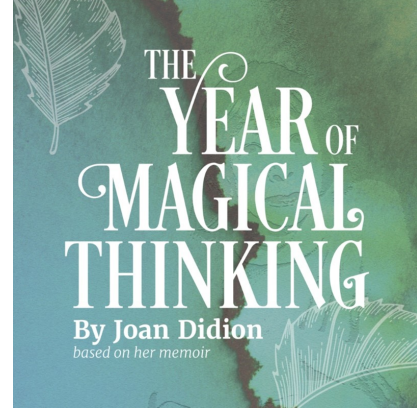
In this dramatic adaptation of her award-winning, bestselling memoir, Joan Didion transforms the story of the sudden and unexpected loss of her husband and the prolonged illness of her only daughter into a stunning and powerful one-woman play that is a deep exploration of grief and loss and how we cope.

Main Street Theater reached out to Bo's Place about this production so that we could be community partners. Grief related topics can bring up one's own thoughts and feelings

about their bereavement experiences. For each performance, Bo's Place flyers will be available in the lobby for attendees to learn more about our grief support or resources. We hope that all community members experiencing bereavement will know Bo's Place is here to help.

If you would like to hear more about grief and loss, the public is welcome to Main Street Theater on Sunday, November 3rd following the matinee for a discussion with Bo's Place Program Director Marian Mankin, and MaryScott Hagle, who works in Houston as a professional end-of-life doula and grief companion, providing support and guidance for someone nearing death and their family.

If you would like to attend the play, Main Street Theater has generously offered friends of Bo's Place a \$10 discount if you use the code **MSTBO** when purchasing your tickets.



Information & Tickets



Volunteer Spotlight: Ethel Herrera

Born in Tampico, Mexico, Volunteer Facilitator Ethel Herrera is married to her high school sweetheart and is mother to two daughters. Ethel and her family have lived in four different countries and in 19 houses. She likes to travel and firmly believes "the only things we take with us when we die are experiences and memories, my goal is to continue collecting as many as possible!"

Ethel's journey with grief and loss started with the death of her father when she was 20 and her mother when she was 36. After her mother's death, she attended grief support groups while living in Argentina. She shared she felt very alone living in a country that was not her own, but enrolling in the group gave her community. Eventually, Ethel earned a second degree in psychology, specializing in Thanatology (the study of death and dying).



She became a Bo's Place Volunteer Support Group Facilitator in 2022 and volunteered in our Saturday Spanish Family Group. Recently, Ethel has graciously assisted with a second group on Tuesday nights in order for Bo's Place to offer a group for Spanish speaking men. She shared "It has been a wonderful experience to accompany men who have lost their children, shed tears and allow themselves to be vulnerable. Men in the Hispanic community carry many taboos regarding showing their feelings. It is not easy for them to show their pain and when they manage to do it at Bo's Place, that is nothing more than magic."

When reflecting on her time facilitating groups, Ethel shared "these last two years that I have been volunteering at Bo's Place have been special. They have allowed me to give more of myself to the Hispanic community of Houston. I know what it is like to experience grief in a country that was not mine and where I had no other family to hug me. Being able to hug my paisanos (fellow countryman) has given me a feeling of fulfillment and I feel that I am paying forward what they did for me in Argentina."

Thank you for all that you do for our Spanish speaking participants, Ethel.



Marathon Runners: Join Team Bo's Place!

Break out your sneakers to walk or run for Team Bo's Place! Join us for the Chevron Houston Marathon, Aramco Houston Half Marathon or We are Houston 5K on January 18-19, 2025 (less than three months away!). Team Bo's Place members receive a tech shirt for race day, an invitation to our Pancake Breakfast on race weekend, and more! Each mile you run gets us one step closer to ensuring that no one has to grieve alone.

For questions, please email marathon@bosplace.org.



Information & Registration



Meet the 2025 Robin Bush Award Recipients: Sue Smith and Craig Brown

Bo's Place will honor Sue Smith and Craig Brown with the Robin Bush Award, given at the Hearts of Hope event each year to individuals who have made a marked difference in the lives of others.

Sue and Craig have gone above and beyond for Bo's Place, other nonprofits and their family foundation with their gifts of time, leadership, devotion to mission, and philanthropic support. Sue recently completed her 17th consecutive year of leadership as a Bo's Place Board member and was a past President (2011-2012). Craig is the Founder and Chairman and Sue is the Executive Vice President of the Craig and Galen Brown Foundation, which strives to develop leaders who will positively impact and serve their communities and humanity at large.

Sue and Craig have made service to others and to their community their defining mission, and we look forward to honoring them, with gratitude, at Hearts of Hope 2025. Please join us in honoring them at the Hearts of Hope 2025 Dinner!



Purchase Tables & Tickets



Grant Spotlight: Discount Tire Houston - Driven to Care Grant

In September, Discount Tire Houston, in conjunction with The Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation, awarded Bo's Place a \$10,000 grant. This grant has helped to provide meals for the entire month of October for our family support groups. We want to thank the Discount Tire - Driven to Care Ambassadors for their incredible generosity and support!



Happenings

Lori Bokone and Dianne Baek, Bo's Place Clinicians, presented "*Understanding and Supporting the Bereaved*" to 300 **HISD School Counselors and Social Workers** on October 3.



On October 8, **First Community Credit Union** had a day of service at Bo's Place planting flowers, creating luminaria craft kits, and making marigolds to prepare for *Ofrenda: A Día de los Muertos Event*. The First Community Credit Union Foundation also provided Bo's Place with a generous donation in honor of the day of service.



A double-feature of *Good Grief for School Professionals* was presented on October 11 in **Goose Creek Consolidated ISD**. Their Counseling and Student Wellness Network Staff received training on current grief theory, children's grief throughout developmental stages, ways to offer support, and examples of grief-based books, activities, and student support plans. Bo's Place presenters included Dianne Baek, Lori Bokone, Jennifer Boubel, and Donna Olson-Salas.



Bo's Place sponsored and attended Annual **Global Wave of Light** on October 13 at Bell Park. The event was organized by Missing Pieces Support Group, and honored the families who have had babies and infants die through miscarriage, stillbirth, and neonatal demise. Attendees created paper lanterns, read poetry, and shared their babies' names. Bo's Place was honored to be a part of this event in recognition of Pregnancy, Child, and Infant Loss Awareness Month.



On October 15, Marian Mankin, Bo's Place Program Director, presented to Stephanie Eisenbaum's "Advanced Practice with Groups" class at the **University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work**. Marian spoke to the students about Bo's Place and our support group structures and techniques



At a monthly **Coastal Prairie Quilt Guild** meeting on October 17, Courtney Reynolds and Russ Robinett, Bo's Place Clinicians, gave a presentation about Bo's Place to about 40 quilters. Many of these quilters have helped to create the beautiful quilts that are displayed at Bo's Place. Two new quilts for Bo's Place were presented at the meeting.



The **Junior League of Houston, Inc.** hosted a marigold making party on October 17 where members were educated on Bo's Place's mission, the importance of Día de los Muertos, and the activities and resources offered to participants related to this significant holiday.



On October 18, Bo's Place partnered with The Institute for Spirituality and Health to present "**Four Faith Perspectives on Bereavement: Understanding & Supporting the Bereaved and Yourself**". This in-person training featured speakers from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism. Our training room was filled with attendees who got to hear an overview of each faith tradition's beliefs regarding death and dying, tips on offering culturally appropriate support for bereaved members of these faith traditions, and self-care tools for those supporting the bereaved.



Lori Bokone, Bo's Place School Program Manager, and Debi Biner, Bo's Place Volunteer, attended a mental health fair at **KIPP Intrepid Preparatory School** on October 24. The goal of the event was to promote wellness and mental health awareness among KIPP students and families. We are proud to partner with KIPP for our school-based program and to share about our services within school communities.



Bo's Place kicked off our 35th Anniversary year with a luncheon on October 31 honoring our **Past Board of Directors Presidents**. It was so wonderful to see the room full of the leaders who have championed our past and shaped our future. We are grateful to all of those who have served as a board volunteer for Bo's Place and we are so hopeful for what the next 35 years (and beyond!) hold in store.



Bo's Place Grief Support Services

At Bo's Place, we believe that grieving families heal when they share their experiences with each other. We offer free Grief Support Groups in English and Spanish to families and individuals.

If you or someone you know would like information about Bo's Place Grief Support Groups for children, families, and adults, click [here](#) or call 713.942.8339.

Bo's Place exists to enhance the lives of those who have experienced the death of a loved one.



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