



MOUNTAIN PLAINS
RURAL OPIOID TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2025

The final issue of a bi-monthly publication featuring information about the latest training and resources for communities addressing opioid and substance use disorders.

IN THIS EDITION:

Good News and
Gratitude

Care for the
Caretakers

Drug
Education 101

Grief and
Mindfulness

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) acknowledges that its office in Boulder, Colorado, is located on the unceded territories and ancestral homelands of the Hinóno'éí (Arapaho), Tsistsistas (Cheyenne), and Nuciu (Ute) nations. Through this land acknowledgment, WICHE aims to raise awareness about the region's shared and often painful history while honoring the Indigenous histories, perspectives, and experiences that have often been suppressed or forgotten then and now. WICHE respects and thanks the elders and peoples, both past and present, of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, and many other Native nations, who are the original stewards of this land and custodians of Indigenous knowledge and practice. [Click here to read more.](#)

GOOD NEWS

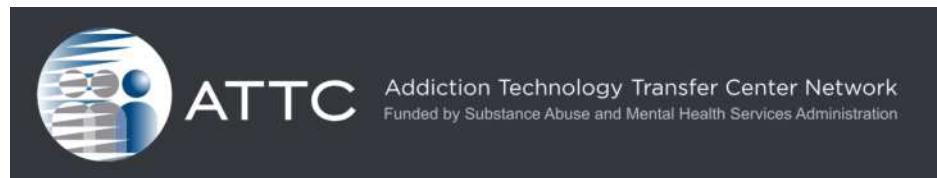
We are pleased to share that our request for a no-cost extension has been approved. This extension allows us to continue our work together and ensures that we can continue to offer support to the individuals, families, and communities in the states of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

We look forward to using this additional time to complete key activities with added depth and care.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

GRATITUDE FOR OUR PARTNERS

The Mountain Plains Addiction Technology Transfer Center



provides innovative and accessible learning opportunities on research-based practices in SUD treatment and recovery services.



Southwestern Plains Hub Mental Health Implementation Support

Southwestern Plains Hub MHIS supports HHS Regions 6 and 8 in implementing effective programs and practices.

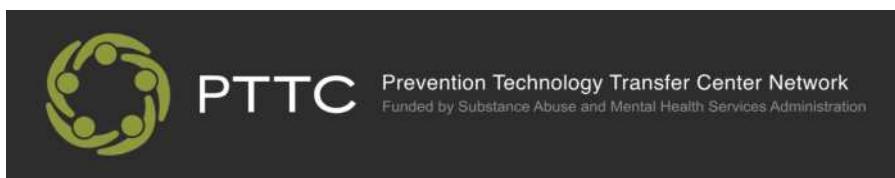
ORN provides evidence-based, culturally responsive education, training and consultation.

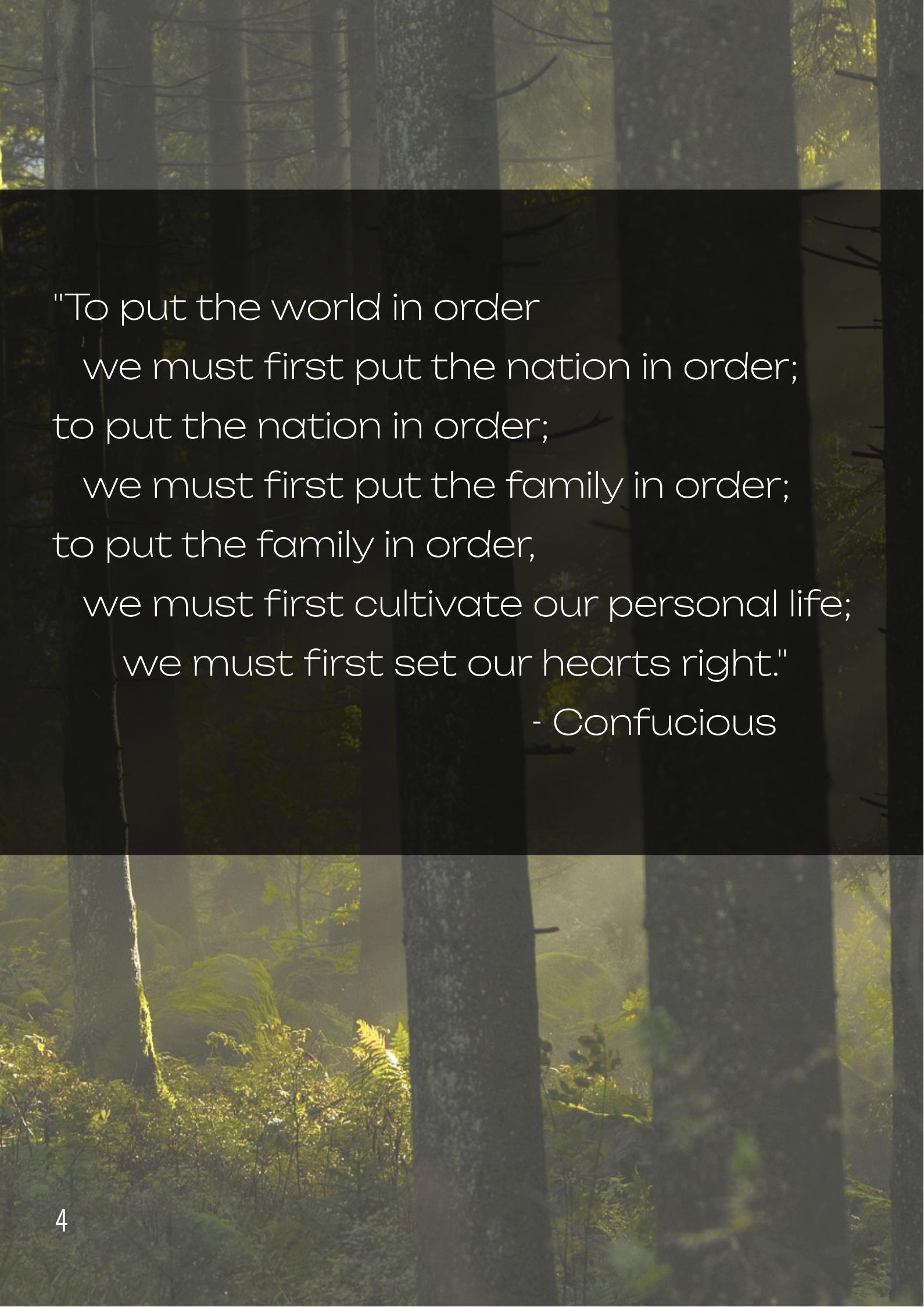


The HEART Initiative brings unique academic resources into the community, partnering locally and nationally to address the opioid epidemic and other pressing public health issues.

Utah State University | **HEART Extension**

The Mountain Plains PTTC provides high-quality training and technical assistance to the substance misuse prevention workforce.



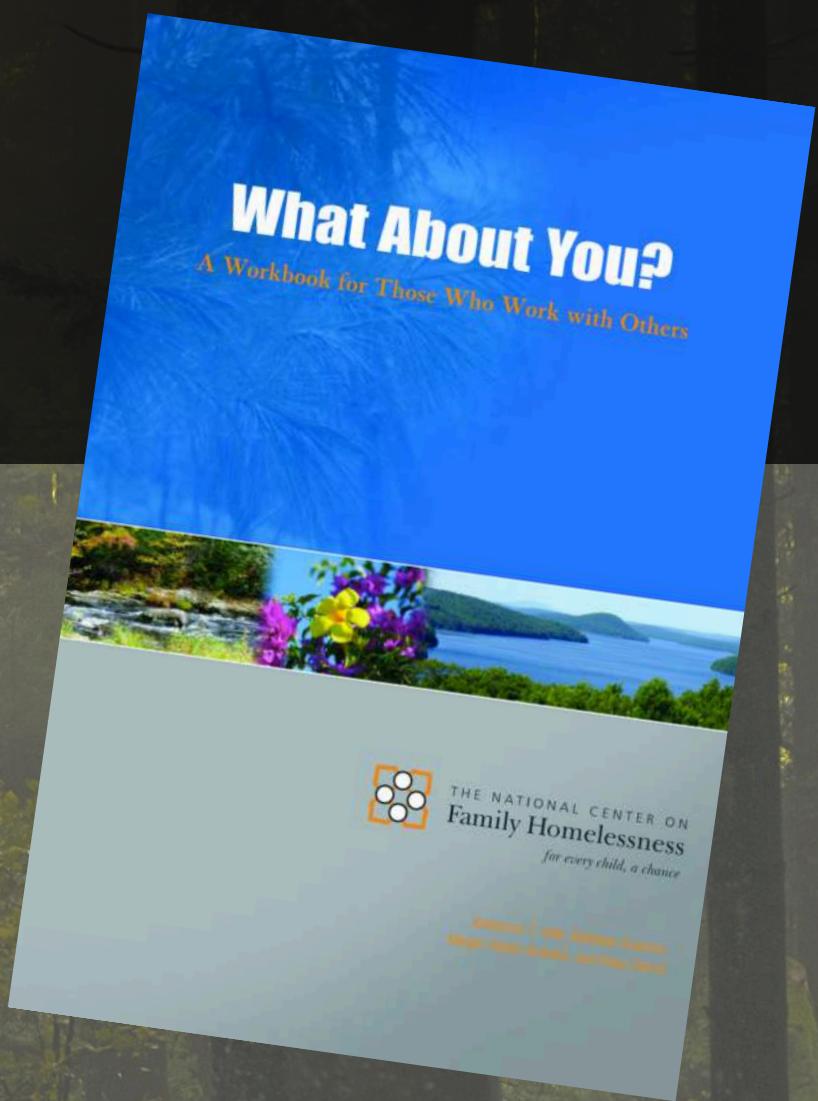


"To put the world in order
we must first put the nation in order;
to put the nation in order;
we must first put the family in order;
to put the family in order,
we must first cultivate our personal life;
we must first set our hearts right."

- Confucious

Care for the Caretakers: What About You?

What About You: A Workbook for Those Who Work with Others is a resource produced by the National Center on Family Homelessness, but is a helpful resource for anyone who cares for others.



DRUG 101



Naloxone Awareness #1 (32 mins.)

Naloxone Awareness #2 (29 mins.)

Naloxone Awareness #3 (31 mins.)

Overdose Preparedness (30 mins.)

Implementing Contingency Management (35 mins.)

Supporting People Affected by a Loved One's Substance Use, Models of Intervention (57 mins.)

Evidence Based Care for MOUD and SUD Continuum (56 mins.)

EDUCATION

Developing Patient Agreements and Adherence within Alcohol Use Disorder /Medications for Opioid Use Disorder Clinic Settings (29 mins.)

Neurobiology of Substance Use Disorders and Intersection with Trauma (67 mins.)

Understanding and Promoting Recovery Capital as Protective Factors (58 mins.)

Effective Community Coordination in Rural Areas Through the Situation Table Model (39 mins.)

GRIEF

HOW TO BE WITH SADNESS

"To help you move through your sadness, validate it. Take it day by day or even minute by minute. Ask yourself what you need for comfort, and give yourself permission to get it. Most importantly: treat your own sadness and grief the same way you would treat others you love and care about."

Hilary Jacobs Hendel, LCSW

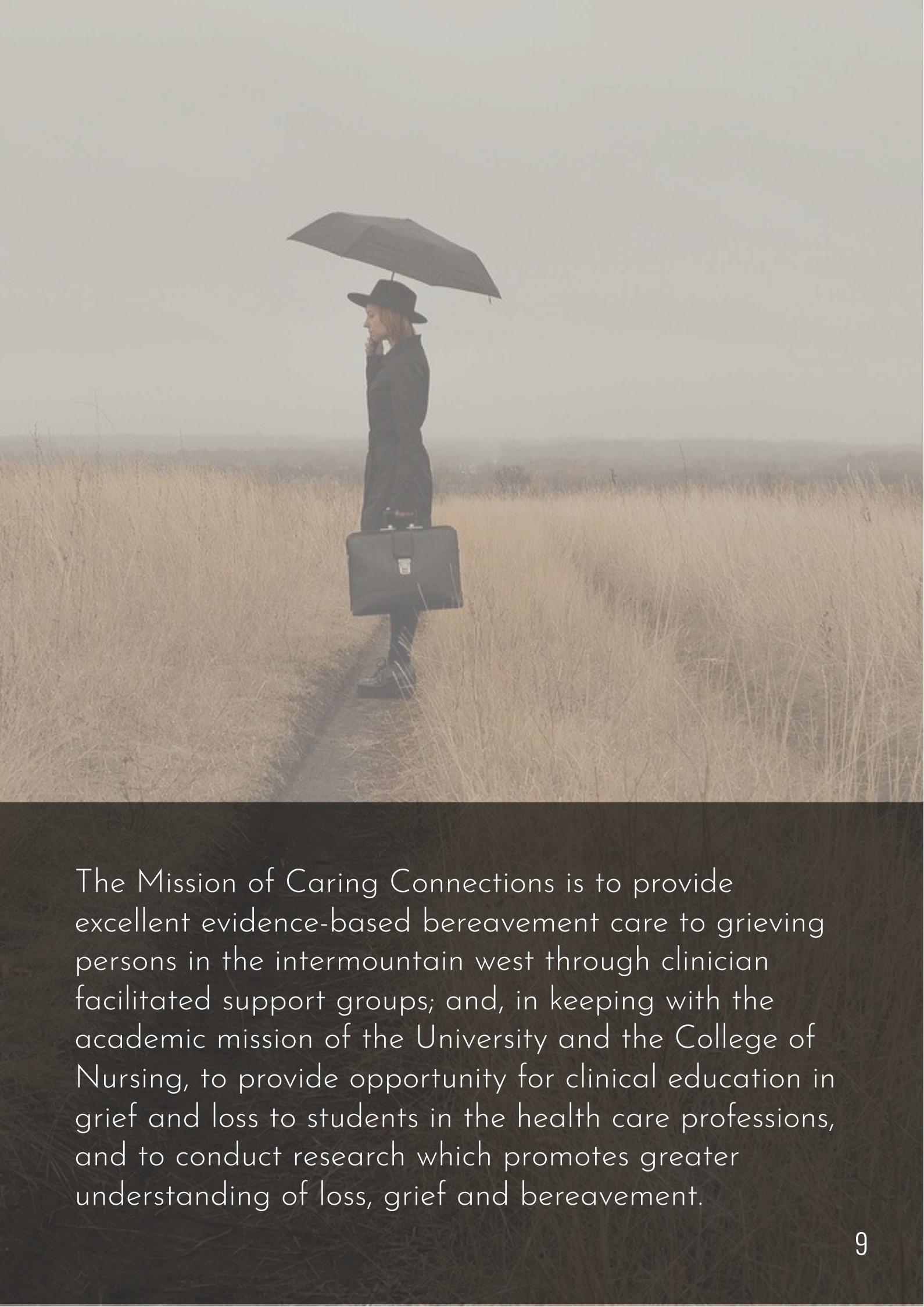


COLLEGE OF NURSING

CARING CONNECTIONS

GRIEVING AN OVERDOSE LOSS

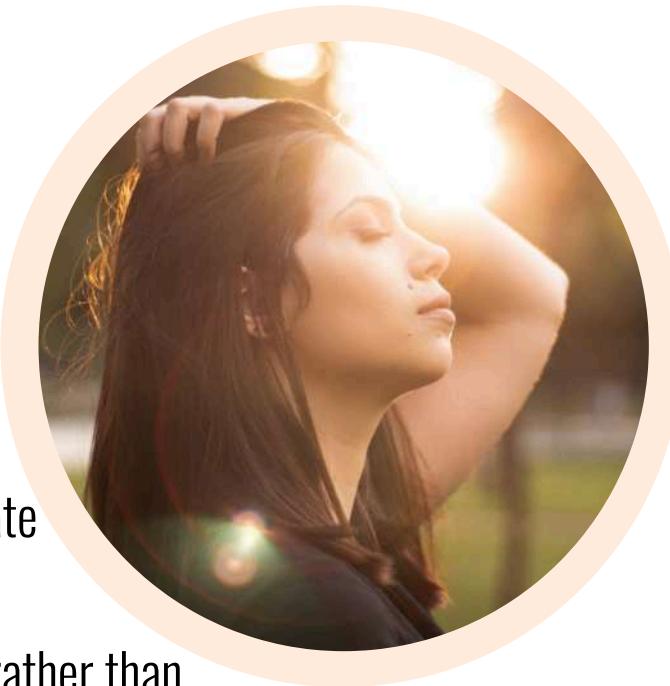
JOIN A GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP



The Mission of Caring Connections is to provide excellent evidence-based bereavement care to grieving persons in the intermountain west through clinician facilitated support groups; and, in keeping with the academic mission of the University and the College of Nursing, to provide opportunity for clinical education in grief and loss to students in the health care professions, and to conduct research which promotes greater understanding of loss, grief and bereavement.

What is Mindfulness? (31 mins.)

Mindfulness is defined as "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally". The presentation contrasts the state of being "Mind Full" with being "Mindful". The session's specific focus is on "Breath Awareness".



Core Concept of Mindfulness: Acceptance (29 mins.)

Definition: Acceptance is described as "the state of actively opening to the truth in the present moment". It involves acknowledging what is, rather than judging it as good or bad, and is presented as the first step toward change.

Pain vs. Suffering: The presentation introduces a formula: $\text{Pain} \times \text{Resistance} = \text{Suffering}$. It emphasizes the idea that while "Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional," a quote attributed to Haruki Murakami. When you find yourself wanting a situation to be different, the guidance is to return your attention to the breath.

MINDFULNESS

Core Concepts of Mindfulness: Attention, Awareness, and Acceptance (31 mins.)



The central theme for this session is the "Triangle of Awareness". This practice is a method for "breaking autopilot by bringing awareness to body sensations, thoughts, & emotions".

Loving Kindness (Metta) Meditation (60 mins.)

The session's focus is on the practice of "Loving Kindness," also known as Metta, as a way to connect with the present moment.



The technique involves visualizing different levels of connection, moving from close relationships to outer rings of connection. This practice demonstrates the value of loving yourself and then focusing your attention outwards.

The phrases that are silently repeated begin with:

May I be well
May I be safe
May I be free from suffering
May I be happy
May I be healthy
May I live in joy and peace

And then gently move to:

May you be well
May you be safe
May you be free from suffering
May you be happy
May you be healthy
May you live in joy and peace

ABOUT US

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) has been strengthening higher education, workforce development, and behavioral health throughout the region since 1953. As an interstate compact, WICHE partners with states, territories, freely associated states, and postsecondary institutions in the West to share knowledge, create resources, and develop innovative solutions that address some of society's most pressing needs.

In 2022, WICHE was awarded a two-year grant from SAMHSA to establish the Mountain Plains Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (MP ROTAC). In 2024, SAMHSA awarded additional funding to WICHE to continue MP ROTAC projects for a third year (9/2024 - 9/2025). MP ROTAC is dedicated to supporting opioid and stimulant prevention, treatment, and recovery in HHS Region 8, comprised of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. MP ROTAC develops and disseminates resources, training, and technical assistance to rural communities across the continuum of care. In partnership with our Regional Advisory Workgroup, MP ROTAC's efforts aim to meet the needs of a wide variety of audiences that are not traditionally targeted by other training efforts. We look forward to serving you and making a difference in Region 8's rural communities!



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