

Our Speakers



KEYNOTE SPEAKER, DR LUCY HONE

A renowned global expert on resilience and resilient grieving, Dr Lucy Hone offers a unique perspective – sharpened through academia and deeply applied through the grief of a personally devastating tragedy.

Lucy is an award-winning “pracademic” with a Masters’ degree in resilience psychology from the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in wellbeing science/public health from AUT University in Auckland, and a ground-breaking resilience researcher.

Lucy’s *Three Secrets of Resilient People* TEDx talk received more than 9 million views with translations into 15 languages. She is also the author of two books *Resilient Grieving* and *The Educators Guide to Whole-School Wellbeing*.

Her work has helped millions of people struggling through change, uncertainty, or loss re-learn how to live in the world around them, and realise that an energised, meaningful, joy-filled life is attainable.

Dr Lauren Breen, Professor of Psychology, Curtin University, Perth

Lauren is internationally recognised for her research on the psychology of grief and loss and its intersection with mental health. She has published over 170 journal articles and book chapters. In 2022, she received the Research Recognition Award from the Association for Death Education and Counseling (USA). She is a Fellow of Thanatology: Death, Dying and Bereavement (USA) and a Fellow of the Australian Psychological Society.

Lauren has a popular TEDx talk Six myths about grief to bust for yourself, and your loved ones. Her book *The Routledge International Handbook of Child and Adolescent Grief in Contemporary Contexts*, edited with Carrie Traher, was published in 2024. (Lauren’s presentation is a recorded session exclusive to this conference, due to Western Australian time zones.)



Judy Bailey, Grief Centre Patron

Judy Bailey is a writer and former broadcaster living in Auckland. She fronted primetime news for 26 years, becoming one the most

recognised faces in New Zealand.

As well as being a Patron of the Grief Centre for many years, she was a founding trustee and is a current Patron of Brainwave Trust Aotearoa and several other charitable organisations. In 2010 she was created an officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to broadcasting and the community.



Kayla Gordine, Awhina Wellness Founder

Kayla is a dynamic entrepreneur who seamlessly integrates business, culture, music, and wellness within the framework of Te Ao Māori.

As an artist, singer/songwriter, holistic

health coach and wellness facilitator, Kayla specialises in the art of curating meaningful and transformative experiences for the mind, body, and senses. She is dedicated to simplifying wellness and easing stress through daily practices rooted in her personal grief journey, having lost her brother to suicide and witnessing the extreme impacts of stress.

Virginia Brooks, She, her, ia Mental Health Foundation, Senior Community Engagement/Health Promoter

Virginia Brooks specialises in suicide prevention and postvention.

Virginia’s passion for peer support and postvention comes from lived experience of suicide loss.

She develops suicide prevention and bereavement resources for the MHF and chairs the MHF suicide bereavement service Advisory Group. Virginia helps run Solace, a suicide bereavement peer support group.



Mark Wilson, Mental Health Foundation, Communications and Marketing Team Lead (Media)

Prior to joining the Mental Health Foundation (MHF), Mark spent more than a decade working as a radio producer on a news and current affairs show. Mark has a lived experience of suicide and facilitates a bereavement support group in Auckland. He is a member of the MHF suicide bereavement advisory group and is passionate about educating people on the suicide loss experience and helping make healthy connections with other bereaved people.





**Sister Cabrini 'Ofa Makasiale
Counsellor, Psychotherapist,
Group Facilitator**

Cabrini is of Tongan and English background, born and raised in Fiji. Her vast career includes psychotherapist, counsellor, tutor,

supervisor, spiritual director and group facilitator. Her work features in many publications on Pasifika life, and she was awarded the University of Auckland Pasifika Excellence Award for Education in the Community. Her experience and theological background also contributed to her development of the Pacific Living without Violence – Training the Trainer Programme.

**Maureen Frayling,
Grief Centre Founding
Trustee**

Maureen trained as a nurse in Ireland, a midwife in Scotland and became a counsellor and educator in New Zealand.

While her early working life took her to London, Lesotho, and Mozambique she eventually joined North Shore Hospice as a nurse and grief counsellor. She founded the Grief Centre in 2008. Following 10 years as a Senior Lecturer in the Social Services Department at North Tec in Whangārei, her professional journey saw her return to work at North Haven Hospice in 2019 where she is currently a Specialist Palliative Care Nurse Educator.



**Dr Aida Dekhoda
Academic Psychologist,
Research Fellow, Counsellor**

Aida is an early career academic psychologist with a PhD in assisted dying in the context of dementia. She is a Post-doctoral Research

Fellow at the Victoria University of Wellington and a Research Fellow at the Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Auckland. Her research focuses on exploring the early experiences of the assisted dying service in Aotearoa looking at the safety, access, and equity of the service for people using or providing the service. Born in Iran, Aida is a provisional member registered with NZAC with an interest in providing counselling support for people dealing with chronic and life-limiting illnesses.



**Seno Tu'inukuafe
Counsellor**

Seno Tu'inukuafe (MNZAC) is a Tongan mother living on the North Shore. Born in Tonga, she migrated to New Zealand in 1986 and has been a counsellor since 2011. Seno holds

a Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling from the University of Auckland and recently completed a Master of Psychotherapy degree from Auckland University of Technology.

**Julia Sheikh
Counsellor, Co-chair, International
Refugee Advisory Panel**

Julia Sheikh was born in Pakistan and arrived in New Zealand as an asylum seeker with her family as a 10-year-old. More recently, she has acquired

an extensive counselling background, expertise in trauma and culturally informed mental health care, and worked with clients and families from refugee backgrounds, including crisis intervention and providing clinical support to the Christchurch Mosque attack victims.

She is on the New Zealand Refugee Advisory Panel, and a member and co-chair of the International Refugee Advisory Panel working with UNHCR – the United Nations Refugee Agency on matters of meaningful refugee representation at a global level to advocate for the refugee voice.



**Dr Margaret Agee,
Counsellor Educator, Grief
Centre Trustee**

Margaret is an experienced counsellor, supervisor, counsellor educator and a Life Member of the New Zealand Association of Counsellors.

She is passionate about the need for public and professional education about contemporary understandings of loss and grief, and for the provision of effective support for those experiencing grief in all its forms. For 20 years she was actively involved in the National Association for Loss and Grief and she is a member of the International Work Group on Death, Dying and Bereavement (IWG). She is also a founding member of the Board of the Grief Centre.

**Gillian Boyes
Chief Executive, Funeral Directors
Association of NZ (FDANZ)**

Gillian has been Chief Executive of the Funeral Directors Association for the last two years. With a previous background in regulation and communications, a particular focus has been on raising and monitoring standards and on promoting the role of funeral directors and the Association.

In late 2023 she led work to release an industry report that included research on the role of funerals in managing bereaved relatives' mental health and grief.



**For more information on our speakers
or general conference information:
griefcentre.org.nz/conference**