

Violence Within the Home and its Effects on Children

NEXUS XII

TRAINING CONFERENCE



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Morning Plenary Speaker

David Kessler



David Kessler is becoming one of the most well-known experts on death and dying by reaching hundreds of thousands of people through his books.

His first book, *The Needs of the Dying* is often the number one best-selling hospice book in the USA and has received praise by Mother Teresa. In 2007, because of its ongoing success and readership, HarperCollins Publishers issued a special 10th anniversary edition of *The Needs of the Dying*.

His newest book, *On Grief and Grieving*, co-authored with the legendary Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and completed one month before her death, is her final legacy and brings her life's work profoundly full circle. He also co-authored *Life Lessons* with Ms. Kübler-Ross and considers it an honor and privilege to have worked so closely with her on two books, and to be with her

during her passing.

As a modern day thanatologist, his work with the dying is no longer confined to the hospital. He is trained to go wherever death is and in whatever form; which of course means he is no stranger to disaster and trauma. He lectures nationally on loss, palliative care and compassion fatigue. As a volunteer, Mr. Kessler has served as a member of the Red Cross Aviation Disaster Team. He also volunteers his time as a special reserve police officer for the Los Angeles Police Department's Trauma Team. Mr. Kessler, along with Marianne Williamson, co-founded Project Angel Food which is a non-profit, charitable organization that delivers hot meals every day, free of charge, to over 1200 men, women, and children with life-challenging illnesses. He also is adoption ambassador for Department of Children and Family Services.

In his day-to-day work, Mr. Kessler is vice president of Patient Support Care Services for Citrus Valley Health Partners, a three-hospital system in Los Angeles County. He was able to obtain grants for over \$950,000 to expand their palliative care program with a special focus on the Latino community. He is responsible for the End of Life education for 900 physicians and 2000 nurses.

Last year, after the Terry Schiavo case, Mr. Kessler decided he wanted to do something in regards to advance directives. He started a program at Citrus Valley Hospital system to create a "Make Your Wishes Known Day" and invite the community to prepare their advance directives. They were able to help 453 people complete their advanced directives in one day.

Mr. Kessler's work has been discussed in the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, Business Week and Life Magazine, and has been featured on CNN-Cross Fire, NBC, MSNBC, PBS, Entertainment Tonight and Sally Jessy Raphael. He has written articles on end of life care for the Boston Globe, the Los Angeles Times and the San Francisco Chronicle.



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