

Healing Hearts



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Lunar New Year

Lunar New Year is a celebration among East and Southeast Asian countries that begins with the first full moon of the lunar calendar. The lunar calendar is based on cycles of the moon; therefore, the holiday dates vary slightly each year between January and February. Lunar New Year is celebrated for multiple days.

Traditions associated with Lunar New Year include thoroughly cleaning homes, family celebrations, religious ceremonies honoring ancestors, dances, fireworks, gifting family members with red envelopes containing money, and lantern festivals.



Each year in the Lunar calendar is represented by one of the 12 Zodiac animals. These animals are associated with varying personality traits that are said to apply to people born in those years. For example, this year is the year of the dragon. Some of the associated personality traits of people born in the year of the dragon include honesty, loyalty, and intelligence.

For the bereaved, any holiday or special event can be a reminder of the absence of someone who died, so it can be helpful to find ways to intentionally honor their memory at those times. At Bo's Place, we do an activity in our support groups, where children identify the Zodiac animal of the person who died and their own Zodiac animal to discuss their associated personality traits. This activity provides an opportunity to discuss the traits they and their person have, and the ways they are alike and different.

When someone dies, people often stop asking about them, and those who were close to them miss sharing stories and talking about their personality and habits. Activities like this encourage participants to talk about their person who died, integrate their memory into their lives, build a strong continuing bond, and make a meaningful connection with the deceased.

Houston offers many upcoming activities to celebrate the Lunar New Year. Asia Society of Houston is offering a Lunar New Year festival with free activities. More information, including a link to register for the event, can be found on their website. For additional resources and activities to help bereaved families and individuals talk and share about their loved one please visit Bo's Place @home or our website.



Adult Support Groups

Bo's Place's grief support groups began as a program for children and their caregivers, but did you know we also provide free online grief support group for adults living in the greater Houston area?

The Adult Group meets once a week on Zoom for 9 weeks. There is a separate group for young adults (ages 18-early 30s). Adults who have completed our 9-week Adult Group program have the option to continue receiving support on an ongoing basis through our Monthly Adult Group.



Often times, our participants connect outside of group to support each other. Sometimes they have their own group chat, they get together for meals, and some have even become travel buddies going on trips together!

As we reflect back on the last year, we wanted to share what our online Monthly Adult Group members have said about what Bo's Place means to them:

- *"I can say you all probably saved my life."*
- *"I am immensely grateful for the support and countless meetings I've attended through this platform. I consider you all my saving grace as much as my grief family."*
- *"I appreciate Bo's Place for all the love, support, programs and resources that provide us sooo much comfort in times of need."*

For more information on the Adult Group or any of Bo's Place services, please call 713-942-8339 or email info@bosplace.org to connect with a member of our Program staff.



Volunteer Spotlight: Sherri Razo

Sherri Razo, a bereavement coordinator/chaplain at Oasis Hospice, is a new volunteer to Bo's Place, but has quickly fallen in love with being a support group facilitator. She was born in Lubbock, Texas, but has lived in 22 different places from California to Vermont. Houston has been her home four of those 22 times and hopefully she is here to stay.

She first got involved with Bo's Place through our Community Education and Training classes, which she says "provided learning to support me in my professional job and helped me to grow more proficient in supporting others with their grief. As I learned about Bo's Place, I began to recommend Bo's Place to some of our families." Eventually she saw a call for facilitators in our newsletter and decided it was time to "pay it forward."

Sherri also shares that another reason for getting involved with Bo's Place was the death of her mother when she was 10 years old. After that death, she and her siblings were sent to live with family while her father was stationed on a US naval ship. "It was a lot of loss to deal with without any support. I learned at a young age that grief is a constant companion. Unfortunately, there weren't any resources like Bo's Place back then."



"Bo's Place has helped me to rekindle some of the memories and important traditions that I want to continue in order to honor my mom. I feel the Bo's Place Magic nearly every time I step on the property. Seeing kids having fun, or listening to someone finally share their story, or watching complete strangers come together over a common bond...each one finding healing for their broken heart is the magic of Bo's Place."

When some people don't understand our commonly used phrase, "Bo's Place Magic," Sheri will explain that it is "healing the heart and finding hope." A big thank you to Sherri for helping us heal hearts. We are grateful to you for being a part of our volunteer team!



Register Now for "Good Grief for School Professionals"

We still have a few spots available for "Good Grief for School Professionals" on Friday, February 9, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., onsite at Bo's Place.

We hope you'll join us for this full-day, in-person workshop. It is designed for school professionals wanting to build their skills to effectively support bereaved students. Through this training, school professionals will gain an understanding of children's grief at different developmental stages, identify indicators of grief, and learn about current grief theory. Attendees will be provided with tips for talking to students about grief and death, as well as guidance on forming and facilitating a grief support group. Content is intended for those who are trained and experienced in providing social/emotional support to students. This workshop will include interactive exercises and attendees will be provided with educational handouts, samples of grief-based activities, and student support plans.



This training opportunity is being co-presented by Bo's Place School Groups Managers, Arlette Rodriguez, LCSW and Lori Bokone, M.Ed., LPC.

Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

What past attendees have said:

- *"I learned that grief is not linear and we need to allow our students the space and time to grieve while allowing them to know that we are there to support them."*
- *"This session affirmed my belief that children are not immune to the effects of grief and loss, and that it never completely heals, but just transforms over time."*
- *"I actually learned a lot. I learned how students at various stages of development deal with or process grief. I also learned how to best support them."*

Registration is limited, so we encourage you to register now. For questions, please email alison@bosplace.org.

Register Now



Save the Date



Saturday, May 4, 2024
5:00-7:00 p.m.
The Post Oak Hotel

Fady Armanious and Bill Baldwin
Amanda and Terry Boffone
Jayne and Garrett Johnston
Co-Chairs

Meredith Chastang and Liz Anders
Champions of Hope Award

We look forward to seeing you at the starting gate on May 4th!

Underwriting & Sponsorship Opportunities

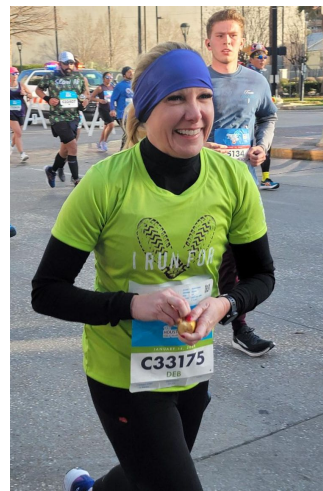
For more information, please email derby@bosplace.org.



Team Bo's Place Crosses the Finish Line

After months of training and fundraising, race weekend arrived for Team Bo's Place. Runners and walkers participated in the We are Houston 5K, Aramco Houston Half Marathon, and Chevron Houston Marathon. Participants and their families also enjoyed a Pancake Breakfast at Bo's Place following the 5K race.

We are grateful for our runners, donors, volunteers, and Corporate Partners who made this weekend possible. Each mile run and dollar raised makes a difference in the lives of families experiencing the death of a loved one.



Thank You to Our Corporate Partners!

ELITE



Happenings

Bo's Place was one of 20 charities selected to receive a contribution of \$10,000 as part of **Aramco's Committed to the Community program**, which celebrates the company's 20th anniversary as title sponsor of the Aramco Houston Half Marathon. Jennifer Boubel, Bo's Place Executive Director, attended a press conference on January 12 during Marathon Weekend to announce this exciting gift.



On January 14, Bo's Place staff and volunteers had fun cheering on runners and handing out oranges and bananas and lots of tissues at the **Marathon HOOPLA station** along the race course.



Bo's Place hosted an agency visit for the **Junior League of Houston, Inc.** provisional and transfer members on January 30. League members took a tour and learned what it would be like to sign up for a placement with Bo's Place through the Junior League.



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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