

# Featured Plenary Speakers

## Joan Halifax



Roshi Joan Halifax is a Buddhist teacher; Zen priest; anthropologist; author; and founder, abbot, and head teacher of Upaya Zen Center, a Buddhist monastery in Santa Fe, NM. She has worked in the area of death and dying for more than 35 years and serves as director of the Project on Being with Dying. A founding teacher of the Zen Peacemaker Order, her practice has focused on applied Buddhism. Her books include *The Human Encounter with Death*, *The Fruitful Darkness*, and *Being with Dying: Compassionate End-of-Life Care Training Guide*.

## Lynn Hughes, BAS




Ms. Hughes is founder of the Comfort Zone Camp, the nation's largest bereavement camp for children ages 7 to 17, who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, or primary caregiver. The primary mission of the camp is to offer bereaved children the opportunity to remember their loved ones in a safe and healing camp environment. The camps are held year-round in California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Virginia and are offered free of charge to bereaved children. Ms. Hughes is also author of the book *You Are Not Alone: Teens Talk About Life After the Loss of a Parent*.

## Deborah L. Grassman, MSN ARNP



Ms. Grassman is a nurse and author who has cared for thousands of veterans in a hospice setting over a 25-year career in a VA hospital. In her book, entitled *In Peace at Last*, veterans share their stories of pain and redemption, personal awakening, peace, and hospice experiences. The book is designed to help caregivers, family members, and veterans themselves understand the impact of war and military culture on lives and emotions. Ms. Grassman also authored the article, "Wounded Warriors: Their Last Battle."



**Gail Sheehy  
Special Guest Speaker**

Best-selling author and AARP caregiving ambassador Gail Sheehy will discuss her recent palliative care advocacy efforts and why she feels it is critically important to return control to people during key passages in their lives. Don't miss this insightful and inspiring session on Friday, March 5.

## Aaron M. Gilson, PhD MS MSSW



Dr. Gilson is director of the US program of the Pain & Policy Studies Group/WHO Collaborating Center for Policy and Communications in Cancer Care, a division of the Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. In that role, he developed a methodology to evaluate federal- and state-controlled substances and healthcare practice policies, reviewed the trends in medical use and abuse of opioid analgesics, and evaluated changes in knowledge and attitudes of state medical regulators and Wisconsin physicians and pharmacists regarding issues of pain management and the use of controlled substances. He also serves on the expert panel to develop evidence-based clinical practice guidelines for the use of opioid analgesics for chronic noncancer pain, jointly sponsored by the American Pain Society and the American Academy of Pain Medicine.

## Holly Prigerson, PhD



Dr. Prigerson is director of the Center for Psycho-Oncology and Palliative Care Research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and associate professor of psychiatry at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. She directs and teaches seminars on psychiatric epidemiology, psycho-oncology, and grief and most recently authored two highly publicized articles, "Coping with Cancer: Religious Coping Predicts Use of Intensive Life-Prolonging Care Near Death" (*JAMA*) and "Health Care Costs in the Last Week of Life: Associations With End-of-Life Conversations" (*Archives of Internal Medicine*).

## Jeannine M. Brant, MS RN AOCN



Ms. Brant is an oncology clinical nurse specialist and pain consultant at Billings Clinic Cancer Center in Billings, MT. She is also a cancer support group facilitator, chair of the pain task force, executive committee member of institutional review board, and a member of the Nursing Clinical Advancement Committee, a clinical ladder program for nurses who work at the bedside. Ms. Brant is an affiliate assistant professor in the College of Nursing at Montana State University in Bozeman and associate editor for the "Patient Education" and "Picture This" columns.