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Compassionate Community Case Study

# Death Cafes

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Boundary Community Hospice Association  
Grand Forks, BC

# Death Cafes

## In a Nutshell

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Creating a safe space for community members to explore themes around death, dying, grief, loss and living fully

A worldwide leaderless social movement in more than 65 countries

Using the tenets of [DeathCafe.com](https://www.deathcafe.com)

Based on sharing stories - everyone is a story teller

9 - 23 people typically attend

“There are many more laughs than what one might expect – keep it safe, confidential and light.”

# At the Cafe

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Facilitator has topics in mind but adjusts to the needs/ interests of the participants

Begin with introductions and the ground rules – confidentiality listening respectfully, many interpretations of religion and spirituality

People are not expected to speak – share their stories at their own pace

Facilitator is like a talk show host and just needs to be curious about people

Conversations moves from chit chat to real connection very quickly

People to invite Community members wanting to explore themes around death, dying, grief, loss and living fully

Facilitator Easy to run with one volunteer facilitator

Topics DeathCafe.com provides a list of topics, however, participants often have themes and topics they would like to discuss

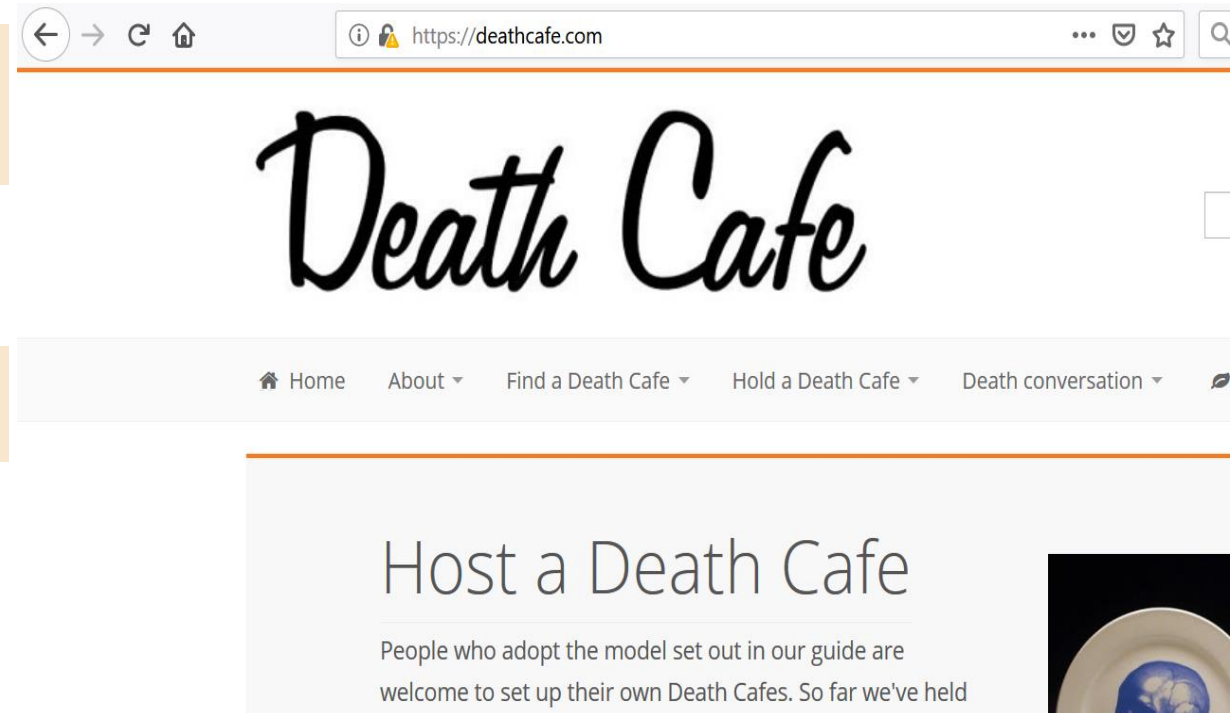
Costs Minimal – A meeting room (in kind) and refreshments, poster

Location A quiet, easily accessible location (e.g. back room of library)

Refreshments Tea, coffee and cookies

Marketing Poster  
Post at key locations around town (e.g. library, community centre, restaurants)

# Resources Needed



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Death Cafe website. The browser address bar displays "https://deathcafe.com". The main heading is "Death Cafe" in a large, black, cursive font. Below the heading is a navigation menu with links: Home, About, Find a Death Cafe, Hold a Death Cafe, and Death conversation. A prominent section titled "Host a Death Cafe" is visible, with the text: "People who adopt the model set out in our guide are welcome to set up their own Death Cafes. So far we've held". A small image of a white plate with a blue globe design is partially visible on the right side of the page.

# Lessons learned/ Wisdom

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- ❖ Good conversations, normalizing the topics of death, dying, grief and loss
- ❖ Reducing social isolation and building community
- ❖ Death Cafes attract people who care for community – has unexpectedly brought in volunteers
- ❖ No posting of topics in advance – topics are determined by those who attend
- ❖ Have not needed to use the topics supplied on DeathCafe.com because people have experiences they want to discuss
- ❖ Stopped using an evaluation form as it changed the dynamics – keep informal
- ❖ Should be a “Life Café” as it makes people want to make the most of their lives
- ❖ Story: one woman who was afraid of death –and so many things about living – has shifted to really enjoying living

