



Portland Institute
For Loss and Transition

Director: Robert A. Neimeyer, PhD

**Certification Program in
Family-Focused Grief Therapy (FFGT)**

FFGT Certification Overview (Approximately 60 Hours)

Required Component

- 1) Certification Core Courses: 6 modules / 3 credits
- 2) FFGT Orientation: 4 modules / 4 credits
- 3) FFGT Techniques Modules: 6 techniques / 6 credits
- 4) FFGT Case Studies: 2 cases / 2 credits
- 5) FFGT Practicum Studio: 4 studio sessions / 4 credits
- 6) FFGT Mentoring: 3 sessions / 3 credits
- 7) FFGT Session Evaluation: 1 recording submission / 1 credit

Note: All the above components can be taken in either online or onsite versions, in any combination and any sequence the learner desires.

Required Components

Note: All of the Portland Institute's diverse curriculum, both onsite and online, is informed by an **Experiential Learning Model**. Thus, in addition to systematic faculty instruction, each module includes opportunities for learners to hone their skills in case conceptualization, practice specific therapeutic techniques, and often apply the tools they are learning to their own life losses in order to gain first-hand acquaintance with them. Many also include video demonstrations of the use of particular grief therapy methods. In the online learning setting, learners who wish to pursue certification then complete and return a short **Responsive Journal** following a rubric provided for that specific module. Portland Institute faculty provide brief written feedback on each submission to continue the personal dialogue with learners.

1) Certification Core Courses (6 Modules / 3 Credits)

The Core Courses are offered as a series of 3-hour online modules, or onsite full-day workshops that can be taken in any of several locations around the world each year. All are required for FFGT Certification. Learners may complete these courses in any sequence they desire.

- a) *Grief and Its Complications (2 Modules)*: Contemporary models of grief, including conceptualization and diagnosis of complicated grief or prolonged grief disorder.
- b) *Grief Therapy – A Trauma-Informed Approach (2 Modules)*: Trauma-oriented interventions to help grievers process the Event Story of the loss and integrate it into their larger self-narrative.
- c) *Grief Therapy – An Attachment-Informed Approach (2 Modules)*: Attachment-oriented interventions to help grievers access the Back Story of the relationship and reconstruct the continuing bond with the deceased.

2) Orientation to Family-Focused Grief Therapy (4 Modules / 4 Credits)

The Orientation to Family-Focused Grief Therapy equips learners to go beyond the individual perspectives and look at grief and loss through a systemic lens, in addition to Meaning Reconstruction framework. Unique losses in family, such as spousal loss, parental loss, child loss, and sibling loss, and their varied dynamics and implications are examined. Learners pursuing FFGT Certification are required to complete at least four Orientation Modules through live webinars or online recordings, or onsite workshops offered at any location in the world.

These Orientation Modules cover the following essential areas:

- Systemic impacts of loss in a family and the resulting changes in family dynamics
- Different grieving and coping styles within a couple / family
- Developmental considerations for individual family members
- Family life cycle and its implications on family's coping
- Uniqueness of spousal loss, parental / guardian loss, child loss, and sibling loss
- Principles in deciding on individual or conjoint sessions
- Strategies in facilitating an experience of shared grief among family members

3) FFGT Techniques Modules (6 Techniques / 6 Credits)

Each module is focused on a specific therapy tools or techniques that may be delivered through onsite workshops, live webinars or online recordings. Learners briefly practice particular methods during the onsite workshops or live webinars. In the online learning setting, learners are invited to reflect on these methods in their *Responsive Journals*. Learners pursuing FFGT Certification are required to learn at least six Techniques.

4) FFGT Case Studies (2 Cases / 2 Credits)

Each case study consists of a case conceptualization exercise or videotaped clinical session with a close process analysis to reveal the therapist's moment-to-moment reading of the client's need and readiness to engage in specific meaning reconstruction tasks. Learners are required to complete at least two Case Studies through live webinars, online recordings or onsite workshops for FFGT Certification.

5) FFGT Practicum Studio (4 Studio Sessions / 4 Credits)

Learners form small groups and practice Meaning Reconstruction skills in conjoint sessions with couples and family members, with Portland Institute faculty serving as coaches, for role-play in a shared language. Each session includes practice with learners taking turns in the role of the therapist, clients and observer, followed by feedback and processing. Learners are required to complete at least four Studio sessions for FFGT Certification.

6) FFGT Mentoring (3 Sessions / 3 Credits)

Learners are required to fulfill at least three 1-hour individual Mentoring sessions in Meaning Reconstruction for grief and loss in families with one of the Portland Institute faculty in a shared language. These sessions may be conducted in face-to-face mode, or via phone or videoconference.

7) FFGT Session Evaluation (1 Recording / 1 Credit)

Following the completion of all the above Components, learners need to submit one 50-minute video recording of an application of Meaning Reconstruction in addressing grief and loss in a family context in an actual session or in role play, along with a transcript of the session. The session is then evaluated for demonstration of competency in working with grieving clients from a meaning-making and systemic perspectives. Learners then either receive extensive written feedback or schedule a 1-hour feedback session with one of the Portland Institute faculty in a shared language.

Note:

Completion of all the required components leads to a Certification in Family-Focused Grief Therapy (FFGT). All licensed or registered counselors or therapists completing FFGT Certification will be listed on the Portland Institute website as part of our Global Provider Network.

Fee Structure

FFGT Certification Enrollment

All learners interested in pursuing FFGT Certification pay a **one-time Enrollment Fee of USD \$100** at the Store on the Portland Institute website and enter their profile of relevant professional background information. The Institute will then open a personalized Progress Tracker to monitor their progress toward completion of certification requirements.

Pricing

All required components (except Mentoring and Session Evaluation) may be delivered either in (a) convenient virtual **Live Training** or recorded **Online Training** modules of 3 hours each or (b) single or multi-day onsite **Workshops, Training Institutes** or **Retreats**. Online training modules are a uniform USD \$99 each, whereas the cost of onsite training is established with PI's various partner organizations around the world and therefore varies somewhat in pricing depending on local economic conditions, costs of facilities etc. Mentoring and Session Evaluation, which are tailored to each individual learner, carry fees of USD \$495 and \$345 respectively. Thus, the overall **cost of certification may range between USD \$3,200-\$4,000** (excluding the cost of travel and accommodation in the case of onsite training), well below the cost of many certification programs in the health and mental health professions.

Availability

Virtual **Live Training** and recorded **Online Training** modules are available through the PI website for learners throughout the world. **Onsite** learning opportunities in each major world region (e.g. North America, South America, Europe and Asia) are announced on the Portland Institute website and are continually being updated as new training programs and partner organizations are added.

Have further questions? Simply email us for more details:

carolyn@portlandinstitute.org