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Building Bridges: A Therapy Group for Living with Advanced Illnesses

"When a group of individuals becomes a 'we,' a harmonious whole, they have reached as high as humans can reach." Albert Einstein

Dr. David Zuniga is offering two therapy groups for patients with an advanced illness, or their caregivers.

Background: While there are some advanced illness-related support groups in Central Texas, there are virtually no professional therapy groups for the unique and specific concerns of patients and caregivers facing an advanced diagnosis. Living with an advanced illness presents many challenges for both patients and their caregivers. The initial shock, fear, and sometimes anger may be accompanied by concerns about pain, debilitation, finances, relationships and death.

These therapy groups will offer nurturing, confidential spaces where patients and caregivers can feel comfortable discussing topics such as whether or not to continue treatment, anticipatory grief, and living fully with a chronic illness. Sharing common experiences, solutions, and support tends to help people live well despite the obstacles that life brings.

Who is eligible for these therapy groups? Anyone who is an advanced illness patient, or caregiver for an advanced illness patient, may be eligible for these therapy groups.

What is expected of participants? As this is group therapy, clients are asked to make a weekly commitment to attend group therapy.

Logistics: These are weekly, confidential professional therapy groups, one on Tuesdays, 10AM to 11:20AM, and the other on Wednesdays, 11:30AM-12:50PM. Group therapy is \$50 per session. Free funding may be available for oncology patients and cancer caregivers by the Flatwater Foundation. Sliding scale spaces may also be available. These therapy groups will meet at Dr. Zuniga's office (address listed above), which is located near Zilker Park off Mopac. For detailed directions: <u>www.drdavidzuniga.com</u>.

Questions / Registration: For questions or to register, contact Dr. David Zuniga.

About Dr. Zuniga: Dr. Zuniga earned his Ph.D. in clinical psychology and is a licensed psychologist in private practice; previously he was a faculty member in the Integrative Medicine Department of MD Anderson Cancer Center. He also earned a masters degree from Harvard Divinity School. Prior to his current psychology practice he worked for over a decade as an interfaith chaplain and administrator in pediatric and adult oncology, palliative, and end-of-life care. He has published widely and spoken internationally at leading academic conferences on healthcare-related concerns.