## Let's Have Dinner and Talk About Death (LHD) Launches on August 24th with over 300 global dinners.

Sneak Preview: www.deathoverdinner.org/preview.

Full site launches 8/24/13, 6am Pacific Standard Time @ www.deathoverdinner.org

This Saturday, Version 1.0 of Lets Have Dinner and Talk About Death goes live allowing individuals around the world to organize and host small dinner parties to discuss this important and often avoided topic. To celebrate our launch LHD partnered with the Elisabeth Kubler Ross Foundation, The National Hospice and Palliative Care Association and our many remarkable advisors to invite hundreds of global citizens to test drive our preview site - and organize global dinners on August 24th. The results have been remarkable:

- Over 300 individuals have registered to organize dinners on August 24th.
- At last count a dozen countries are represented: Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, India,
  Canada, France, Norway, Vanuatu, Japan, Greece, South Africa, and Germany
- Death over Dinner Advisor, Frank Ostaseski, one of the leading voices in end of life care will join renowned spiritual teacher Ram Dass the night of our global launch. They will be joined by others in discussing the healing role of Lovingkindness near Death. The following day they will teach a program on the subject in Maui. You can watch a free taped webcast of their program on August 28th.
- LHD Founder Michael Hebb will be co-hosting a dinner with Native American Leader Chase Iron Eyes on sacred Lakota land Pe'Sla in the Black Hills of South Dakota.
- Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's son Ken Ross and EKR Foundation President Dianne Gray will be hosting a picnic at Elisabeth's gravesite.
- Founder of Origin Magazine, Paul Miller (aka DJ Spooky) and photographer Casey Kelbaugh will be hosting a dinner on the island of Vanuatu.
- Dinners are being planned in Nebraska, Tampa Bay, Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and hundreds of far flung locations.

"As hospice and palliative care professionals, we see firsthand what happens when families do not talk about wishes and care choices before a loved one is faced with a medical crisis," said J. Donald Schumacher, president and CEO of NHPCO. "We also see

how families that have openly discussed what they and their loved ones would want are able to find more support and comfort during the journey at the end of life."

August 24th is just the beginning. It is our hope that individuals, families and friends will continue to host dinners throughout the year. We will be refining our platform on a continuous basis, ensuring that we are providing meaningful tools to individuals taking part in this project.

## What happens after dinner?

While the power of participating in a death dinner stands on its own, we want to use the momentum of these engagements to allow participants to formalize their end of life plans. A survey by the California HealthCare Foundation in 2012 found that 82% of people believe that it is important to put wishes for their final days in writing, yet only 23% have followed that task through to completion.

LHD is thrilled to be collaborating with Everplans.com, a NYC tech startup that, for the past 3 years, has been focused on creating content to help people do better end of life planning. Those who attend a dinner will receive a (co-branded and produced) workbook that will help people make decisions about choosing a health care proxy, writing a living will and deciding whether or not to become an organ donor. Everplans.com is the most comprehensive resource for getting an end of life plan in place. Everplans co-founder, Abby Schneiderman, also an advisor to Death over Dinner, will be hosting a dinner this weekend with her parents.

For updates on dinners happening around the globe, follow Let's Have Dinner and Talk About Death on Facebook and Twitter.

## **About Let's Have Dinner and Talk about Death Project**

The Let's Have Dinner and Talk about Death project brings the important subject of end of life into the foreground and gives people the opportunity to talk about it. The Let's Have Dinner and Talk about Death project stemmed from a Master of Communication in Digital Media (MCDM) course at The University of Washington. The course and

resulting long-term project is intended to not only create communal dialogues around death, healthcare and human life, but to bolster a universal discourse, ushering in a revolution of life itself. The syllabus for the course is available at www.learni.st. For more information about Let's Have Dinner and Talk project, watch our founders TEDMED talk from the Kennedy Center.