

November 2023

Dear EBF Friends and Community,

I am writing with exciting and bittersweet news that we wanted you, our members, to hear first. Effective early next year, the EBF will close its doors, but the legacy of Ernest Becker's work will continue as part of an exciting organization called the International Society for the Science of Existential Psychology ([ISSEP.org](https://www.issep.org)).

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ISSEP is founded and run by scholars influenced by Becker, including many long-standing friends of the EBF. Founded in 2019, its mission is “to encourage and support the scientific discovery, communication, and application of key research findings in existential psychology.”

Although we will no longer function as an active Foundation, ISSEP will host an archived version of our website and other content to keep it accessible to interested readers. They will acknowledge Ernest Becker's influence on the field of existential psychology with the establishment of the Ernest Becker Honors, including annual grants and awards to support original new research, scholarly publications, and conference event presentations based on Becker's work.

ISSEP will also be working together with the Ernest Becker Honors recipients to produce a variety of Feature articles for ISSEP's website each year, designed to communicate Becker's work in an accessible and engaging way. These articles will serve as a vehicle to further highlight contributions of the award recipients, as well as to communicate knowledge related to Becker's work.

It would not feel true to the work of Becker if we did not acknowledge that the closing of the EBF is itself a death of sorts. It's certainly an end of a chapter, but it's also a passing of the baton into capable hands and the next generation of Becker fans.

When our beloved founder, Neil Elgee, and his dear friends and thinkers established the EBF in Neil and Lee's living room 30 years ago, he wanted to spread the word of Becker. Since then:

- We have seen the establishment of Terror Management Theory (TMT), the “Immortality Project” and application of his synthesis that Becker never knew he would have: thousands of studies all over the world now apply Becker's ideas to study the ways in which mortality impacts human behavior.
- The 2003 documentary film commissioned by EBF about Becker's work and TMT – *Flight From Death: The Quest for Immortality* – was awarded Best Documentary seven different times.
- We have produced close to 150 newsletters applying Becker's ideas to current events in the modern world including politics, social issues, art, film, interviews, book reviews, and more.
- We have hosted conferences, lectures, workshops, institutes, and webinars, on issues such as prejudice, politics, war, gun violence, bullying, religion, environmentalism, feminism, end of life issues, religion, consumerism, and more.
- We have supervised student projects, interns, and volunteers interested in the work of Ernest Becker.

- The EBF's blog has received hundreds of submissions from all over the world applying Ernest Becker's ideas to diverse topics.
- The EBF website saw on average 3,500 visitors per month from 204 countries.
- Ernest Becker's work has been referenced or discussed in thousands of research publications as well as news outlets including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Seattle Times*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Psychology Today*, and more.
- *The Denial of Death* has been printed in 12 languages and is still to this day selling 500-1000 copies worldwide each month on Amazon.
- Becker's work and TMT have been referenced in hundreds of podcasts and counting.
- Multiple artists and musical groups have been inspired by Becker, including songs with Ernest Becker or Terror Management Theory directly in the title.

We have accomplished more than our founders could have imagined, and our story will live on with ISSEP. We couldn't have achieved these things without **your** support over the years. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for contributing to making the world a more thoughtful and accepting place.

We are planning a small celebration in Seattle, as we come to a close, for EBF & ISSEP board members, staff, and friends. It will take place on the afternoon of December 2 and include a panel discussion with Sheldon Solomon and ISSEP's President, Ken Vail, among others. If you would like to attend, please contact [lyla@ernestbecker.org](mailto:lyla@ernestbecker.org) or leave us a voicemail at 206-428-1964. We have limited space, but we will welcome as many interested EBF friends as possible.

We encourage everyone to support the EBF's continued legacy by signing up for ISSEP's emails. You will be able to stay apprised of the EBF awards and current research in the field of existential psychology. To add yourself to the mailing list (you can unsubscribe at any time), go to: [www.issep.org/becker-subscribe](http://www.issep.org/becker-subscribe)

Finally, we have designed special mugs to commemorate the EBF's legacy! Please consider purchasing one at: [www.issep.org/ebf-commemorative-mugs](http://www.issep.org/ebf-commemorative-mugs)

Thank you for helping make the Ernest Becker Foundation the rich community of humans that we have been privileged to take part in.

Sincerely,



Deborah Jacobs  
Executive Director

P.S. Stay tuned for some final content coming your way. Our last newsletter this December will be on death denial and consumer behavior – it will be a good one! We have also created a free course that will be offered in perpetuity on the online learning platform Udemy.com, which will serve as an intro and overview of Becker's ideas. It is in the final stages and should be ready soon. We will send a link if this is ready before we close, otherwise make sure to subscribe to ISSEP's email list to receive updates about this and other Becker-related content!