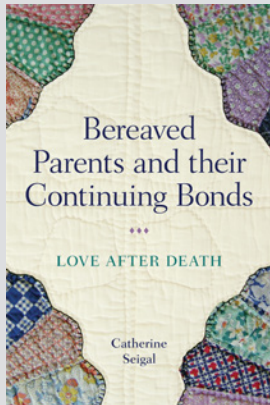


Book Reviews



Bereaved parents and their continuing bonds

Catherine Seigal

London: Jessica Kingsley
2017
144pp
978-1785923265

When my son Tim died, despite being a psychotherapist, I needed help with the depth of my grief and so went to bereavement counselling. It was of limited use, however, because the counsellors likened Tim's death to the loss of a parent. But the death of a child is unlike any other other loss and bites into your soul like nothing else. I therefore approached this book with trepidation. Yet throughout, Catherine writes with respect for the utterly altered landscape and dislocation from the world that bereaved parents so often feel. I soon realised this book held a rare combination of experience and humility, empathy and wisdom.

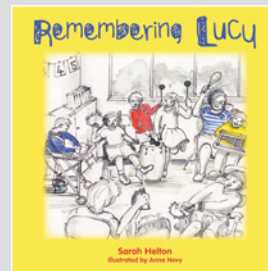
Catherine worked as a counsellor at a children's hospital. In this remarkable book she has distilled her work with bereaved parents and created a profound gift for anyone who has lost a child. She does not offer a theoretical map of the grieving process, neither does she offer advice, she simply allows the depth of the experience to speak to our hearts and minds about what is hard to articulate in any other way. As she points out, grief for a child who has died is not even a journey as this implies a direction and destination, and for many parents there is neither. Catherine goes right to the heart of the matter, writing about the love that is greater than death, and how it is in this love we find the continued bond with our dead children.

Yet this book is not only for parents, it is also a resource for counsellors. Catherine describes the therapeutic benefit of groups as well as counselling. She also has a chapter on what can interfere with the continuing bond after death. I would perhaps have liked more on the dynamics within a family when a child dies as the pains of such a profound loss are often lived out within the family system as a whole. Maybe Catherine can write another. Yet I would certainly recommend that this book be placed on the reading list for bereavement counselling courses. I for one will be

recommending it to parents struggling with a profundity beyond words, because this book speaks to that profundity. ■

Anne Geraghty

Author of 'Death, the Last God: A Modern Book of the Dead'



Remembering Lucy: a story about loss and grief in a school

Author: Sarah Helton.
Illustrator: Anna Navy

London: Jessica Kingsley
2017
32pp
978 1 78592 273 2

This is a picture book for using with children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) to address loss and grief in a school setting. It complements Helton's 'A special kind of grief' which was reviewed in the Spring 2018 edition of *Bereavement Care*.

The text is very simple (and in an easy to read font for us dyslexics), and goes through Joe's day and routine at school. He mentions friends who are away from school because of illness, the need to go to hospital, and then return back to school. Sadly his friend Lucy was ill, and then died. Joe reflects on the different ways they remembered Lucy in school with activities and shared memories, what he did when he was sad and how eventually he can remember Lucy smiling.

The illustrations are simple with splashes of bright primary colours. They are authentic to scenes in a SEND school setting and the kind of activities that would go on, even showing the different kinds of wheelchairs that the pupils are using. This is something you do not often get in picture books. I particularly liked an abstract sunset when the text mentions when people died.

At the back are seven pages of advice and guidance on using the book, and some suggestions on how to engage with individuals or the class. Helton advises that the book should be used regularly in schools as part of their death and bereavement curriculum to familiarise children with the ideas, and especially when a pupil dies. Her passion