

## ABSTRACTS

### Grief rituals: aspects that facilitate adjustment to bereavement

Castle J, Phillips VL. *Journal of Loss and Trauma* 2003; 8(1): 41-71

Based on the participation of 50 Californian adults, this study discusses the extent to which post-funeral ritual can help the mourning process. The authors found that such rituals are useful from various points of view: they help the bereaved to maintain social bonds and a sense of control through making decisions, to externalise their deeper feelings and keep in touch with their emotions, and to legitimise their continued emotional connection with the deceased. Invaluable components of

these rituals include symbolic elements such as photos and music, and sharing the ritual with chosen others. A spiritual aspect is also very important.

### Battling the Black Sea despair: cross-cultural consultation following an air disaster

Malkinson R. *Journal of Loss & Trauma* 2003; 8(2): 99-113

With the increasing number of man-made traumatic losses around the world, there seems to be a sense of global vulnerability and a need for suitable intervention programmes. This article describes a working seminar for professionals in Novosibirsk, former Soviet Union, a community that suffered a traumatic loss following an air disaster in 2001, when a plane on its way from Tel Aviv to Russia

was shot down by the Ukraine during a naval exercise. The author was invited by two Jewish organisations to go to Novosibirsk to conduct a seminar on traumatic grief and initiate consultations with the bereaved families. This interesting article describes her experiences and the difficulties caused by language and cultural differences. It emphasises the added trauma of coming to terms with death in the absence of a body.

### Conflict in the context of care: an examination of role conflict between the bereaved and the funeral director in the UK

Parsons B. *Mortality* 2003; 8(1): 67-87

There is evidence that funeral directors can become a target for the anger of the

bereaved for whom they are among the primary caregivers. While anger is recognised as a characteristic of the grieving process, analysis of the role of funeral directors reveals a number of areas where additional conflict can be generated. This article identifies and discusses four areas. The first three are interrelated and concern the relationship between the funeral director and the bereaved: namely, the economic environment of funerals; the contractual relationship between the funeral director and the client; and control of the funeral. The fourth area considers the role of the funeral director as the agent between the bereaved and others who are involved in carrying out the ceremony: the officiant, the cemetery and the crematorium. **BC**

Sheila Hodges and John Bush

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## WORKING WITH BEREAVED COUPLES

This group of three afternoon workshops will focus on thinking about the couple relationship in the wake of the death of a child. The tragedy will inevitably impact on the couple's relationship and often exacerbate existing tensions, patterns of relating and conflicts. The nature of the relationship might also impact on the course that mourning takes for each partner. The workshop will also focus on thinking about the anxieties that practitioners bring when contemplating focusing on the couple, rather than just seeing one partner.

Date: January 16, 30, February 13 2004.

Cost: £135 for all three. Course leader: Jenny Riddell

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120 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5BA Tel: 020 7447 3725

www.tmsi.org.uk

## International Conference

The 7th International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society will be hosted by Cruse Bereavement Care

on 12-15 July 2005  
at King's College, London  
Further information in the next issue