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ALL CHANGE

Whether we like it or not, the world is changing and we need all the information we can digest in order to keep up with it. Despite the fact that death and bereavement have always been

with us, the problems to which they give rise and the solutions to these problems are much affected by these changes. Every paper in this journal deals with some aspect of a world in transition.

Alfons Deeken writes about the traditional ways of comprehending death and bereavement in Japan and describes how these are changing in the face of technological and cultural change. With acts of terrorism occurring in many parts of the world, the lessons we can learn from Northern Ireland take on new relevance. Maura McDermott and Orla Moore consider the case of Jane, who, at the age of 15, witnessed the explosion of the Omagh bomb and suffered post-traumatic stress as a result.

Holly Prigerson will be a plenary speaker at the 7th International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society which will be held on 12-15 July 2005 at King's College, London, UK (see p48 for more details). In this issue she reports the results of recent research, which clearly defines and distinguishes complicated grief from other psychological problems arising after bereavement. At last we have a way of

measuring both the suffering caused by, and the effectiveness of treatments for this condition, several of which are described, although none has yet passed the test of scientific evaluation.

EDITORIAL

Colin Murray Parkes

Holly Prigerson's research distinguishes complicated grief from other psychological problems arising after bereavement. At last we have a way of measuring both the suffering caused by, and the effectiveness of treatments for this condition

She comments, 'Bereaved people who report ample social support, and those who report being frequent users of the internet and email, have been shown to be at significantly lower risk of developing complicated grief'.

The importance of these new methods of communication cannot be underestimated and are

now a regular feature of *Bereavement Care*. In this edition Amanda Aitken examines the phenomenon of on-line memorials, which offer bereaved people a new way of reviewing, recording, sharing and perpetuating their memories of the dead.

Another promising development is the provision of services for bereaved children and young people. In the UK a variety of these have sprung up, here and there, in response to individual initiatives. The time has come for all of those working in this field to share their expertise and to work together towards the provision of an integrated service. The paper by Alison Penny, the Network Development Officer of the Childhood Bereavement Network, points the way forward.

If ever you think that you know all that you need to know about bereavement, read *Bereavement Care*.