

worried about upsetting them and they did not know where else to go for help.

Young people who had not experienced a bereavement did not perceive that they would need anyone to listen or give them comfort and support, but support was a strong theme in the focus group, suggesting that the experiences of this group had increased their understanding of grief.

From this study I would recommend that:

- bereavement support services find ways to inform more health and education professionals about their services for young people
- bereavement support services work closely with youth workers, school counsellors, and teachers to share experiences and offer information and education
- those in regular contact with young people (eg a school counsellor, nurse or youth worker or, where someone has been terminally ill, a member of the hospice staff) try to form relationships with them before a bereavement. Teachers, for whom such relationships are part of their role, are in an ideal position to empathise and offer acceptable help
- information is made available to young people about counselling skills and how to support each other, possibly in groups
- group work is promoted to give young people the opportunity to share experiences and support one another
- those who offer services should not give up on young people because they reject help. We need to be proactive, offering choices and an open door •

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BOOK REVIEW

Helping Kids Manage Grief, Fear and Anger

Terri Akin, David Cowan, Susanna Palomares, Dianne Schilling



Austin, TX, USA:
Pro.ed/Milton
Keynes, Bucks, UK:
Incentive Plus
1999
120pp
\$22.00/£25.00 pb

This book offers more than 40 activities which are designed to 'help children explore, understand and express their feelings in safe and acceptable ways'. It is aimed at children aged 8-16 years old. The introduction explains the rationale behind the worksheets in a very clear and helpful way, although some references acknowledging where those

ideas came from would have been a welcome addition.

The book is largely based on cognitive behavioural therapy. The worksheets systematically assist children with identifying, labelling, understanding and controlling emotions, moving on to coping with grief, fear and anger. The activities are designed to be used by whole class groups, although it would be easy to adapt many of them for individual work. The focus is not on bereavement in particular, but rather on increasing more general emotional competence.

If you are already imaginative and creative in your work with children this book may not have much to offer, but if you sometimes struggle for the time, energy or inclination to tackle these difficult topics, this book may help. •

David Trickey
Chartered Clinical Psychologist

strength and endurance, the willow for flexibility, for example – and woods are still seen as atmospheric, almost sacred places today.

Both individuals and groups come to the Woodland Trust to seek special ways of commemorating and celebrating the lives of loved ones. In fact the vast majority of larger woodland dedications – stands of trees, whole acres, benches or posts in groves – are for memorial purposes. One group, Fragile Angels, donated a one-acre grove of ancient woodland as a memorial to babies and children who died or were brain damaged as a result of negligent surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary between 1988 and 1995. Many of the families attended the unveiling of a memorial plaque at the grove. One mother said: 'The memorial is about regaining control of our children's memories. It is not about apportioning blame. It helps us, the families, to have public closure. We can honour and value our children peacefully from this beautiful place of reflection which will always be here.' Another group, the Human BSE Foundation dedicated two acres of woodland to all of the victims of Human BSE (vCJD) past, present and future, and installed two benches to provide places of contemplation and remembrance.

Recently the parents of a teenager killed in a cycling accident organised a sponsored walk to raise money and made a donation for a special bench, sculpted out of an oak log, to be placed in the woods where their son had walked his dog and served as a volunteer with the Trust. A widower planted two oak saplings at his wife's favourite spot in a Trust wood near their home. The growing natural monuments symbolise the couple's love of nature and will pay tribute to their lives and memories of this special place for many centuries to come.

When a death has happened many miles from home or the body is irretrievable, a living memorial can help with the grieving process. In 2003 the UK Bali Bombing Victims Group planted a woodland grove and names of the victims were carved on a memorial stone. ●

The Woodland Trust tel: 01476 581136;
e-mail: dedications@woodland-trust.org.uk;
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/dedications

BOOK REVIEWS

Helping Bereaved Parents A Clinician's Guide

Richard Tedeschi, Lawrence Calhoun



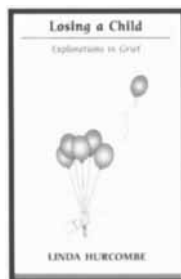
Hove, E Sussex, UK:
Brunner Routledge,
2004
£52.50 hb
ISBN 0 41594 796 0
£16.95 pb
ISBN 1 58391 364 5

This book intends to provide 'ways that will help clinicians to understand, and constructively engage bereaved parents'. The authors begin with the grieving parents, giving plenty of quotes and illustrations from their clinical practice. If the reader is familiar with this work this may feel a little unnecessary, but for others it would act as an orientation to this particular field. An overview of grief models follows – again, too brief for academics or experienced professionals, but very suitable for newcomers. I was particularly struck by the authors' balance between acknowledging what research can tell us whilst accepting the individual differences which might be encountered in practice. When the authors suggest the actual words that clinicians might use, initially I thought this was too prescriptive, but in fact this is valuable guidance in an area where practitioners often do not know what to say. They recommend a stance which they call 'expert companionship' which blends human compassion with a degree of expertise that may not be available from friends and relatives: 'expertise is woven into your interactions, rather than revealed through knowledge'.

David Trickey
Chartered Clinical Psychologist

Losing a Child Explorations in grief

Linda Hurcombe



London, Sheldon Press
2004
179pp
£7.99 pb
ISBN 0 85969 886 6

In this book Linda Hurcombe, whose daughter Caitlin died by suicide aged 19, aims to address what follows for parents when a child dies.

Running through the book is the author's own experience of loss, which provides valuable insight and leaves the reader with a strong sense of Caitlin. The strength of the book lies in the author's ability to truly share what this daughter meant to her and the grief that she felt in dealing with a very difficult death. Clearly she gained comfort from her Christian faith although this is not an overwhelming aspect of the book.

The author also covers the loss of a baby, siblings' grief, and murder. While the author's story is very powerful, these aspects are dealt with more factually and although illustrated with case studies, do not make nearly such compelling reading. Perhaps those who have lost a baby or whose child has been murdered would find more connection in a book specifically on this subject.

The practical aspects highlighted will help not only bereaved parents, but also the professionals who endeavour to understand what might be helpful; however, the contacts section could be more comprehensive. A significant omission is that the impact of losing a child on the parental relationship is not addressed, and the male perspective is unfortunately missing. I was left with a quest to understand what happened in the key relationships in the author's family, not least with her female partner.

Jenni Thomas
President, The Child Bereavement Trust, UK

When Your Child Dies

Theresa Huntley



Minneapolis, MN,
USA: Augsburg/
Edinburgh, UK:
Alban Books, 2001
47pp
\$3.99/£2.99 pb
ISBN 0 80664 261 0

This is another attractive pocket-sized book in Augsburg's 'Hope and Healing' series. It explains to bereaved parents how grief is an ongoing process, with psychological, spiritual and, often, physical effects. The grieving of men, women and siblings is considered as is the effect of grief on relationships within the family, including with other children and with the child's grandparents, as well as with relationships with friends and colleagues. Since the book is clear and concise, it is accessible to parents who are mourning the death of a child and can be recommended to them and their advisors. ●

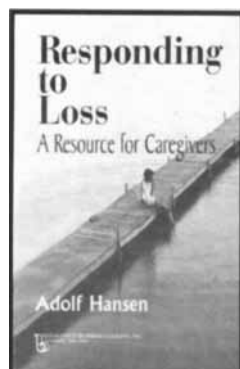
Dr Martin Newman
Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

BOOK REVIEWS

Relating grief and attachment

Responding to Loss

A resource for caregivers



Adolf Hansen

Amityville, New York,

USA: Baywood, 2004

132pp

\$34.95 hb

ISBN 0 89503 301 1

ADOLF HANSEN BRINGS WISDOM, scholarship, spirituality and personal experience together in *Responding to Loss*, opening his volume with the words: 'To live is to experience loss. To survive is to learn how to respond'. That, basically, is what this fine book is all about: teaching us to understand the experience of bereavement, and suggesting guidelines to help us through grief. In expanding on these themes, Hansen provides both insightful analysis and vivid illustration, using examples from real-life situations, and sharing with the reader his personal, heart-breaking account of the loss of his own daughter, Bonnie.

To help us understand the experience of loss, Hansen grounds his writing in attachment theory, but his understanding of attachment is broader in scope and more varied in intensity than the approach of the classic attachment theorists. Importantly, while acknowledging that those close to us hold the core functions in meaning making, this expansion enables exploration of a wider variety of meaningful attachments.

Hansen's approach also enables readers to understand how their own attachments to their (deceased) loved ones may fundamentally differ, how various forces may influence attachment patterns, and how their own grief may relate, also differently, to the nature of the particular attachment. Yet the book goes far beyond an application of attachment theory, by incorporating knowledge from sources as varied as pastoral care, theology, family approaches, and from writers ranging from Viktor Frankl to Judith Viorst.

To help us to survive and learn how to respond, Hansen argues, we need first to realise the nature of our loss: the breaks in attachment that are hardest to respond to are those that are

'permeated by meaning that is deep, significant, and ongoing'. Hansen covers patterns commonly involved in pre- as well as post-bereavement adjustment to such losses, before going on to discuss determinants that make every person's experience of grief unique. Finally, before his personal postscript, he addresses issues of (spiritual) transformation: 'Responding necessitates and enables change!', describing intra- and interpersonal resources that individuals have available in choosing transformations for themselves.

Any resource for caregivers is likely to be compared with the classic volume by William Worden*. Yet Hansen's volume is not overshadowed, it is different. It carries the stamp of his personal philosophy and beliefs as well as his professional knowledge and experience. His is a smaller volume than Worden's, accessible to bereaved people themselves and to those in their informal social network, as well as potentially a helpful resource for professionals (eg at the end of each chapter it provides useful exercises for the bereaved and for caregivers). Worden's is more specifically for the professional health care practitioner. These two books complement rather

than overlap: there should be room for both in our libraries.

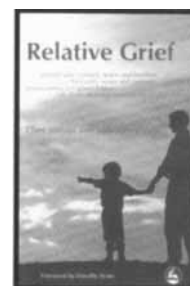
Margaret Stroebe

Associate Professor, Utrecht University

* Worden JW. Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner, 3rd edn. New York: Springer, 2003

Relative Grief

Clare Jenkins, Judy Merry



London: Jessica Kingsley, 2005

203pp

£12.95 pb

ISBN 1 84310 257 9

Jenkins and Merry have collected together the personal testimonies of some who have lost close relatives or friends through death from natural causes, illness, accident, suicide and murder. They are helpfully organised into chapters, so that the stories are told by parents, grandparents, siblings and partners. Unlike some books which rely and over-interpret personal recollections, these first-hand accounts are allowed to speak for themselves

REVIEWS

and are both interesting and moving. I liked the thought articulated in one account that, however short a life, it is a complete life. I also liked the analogy given by a Buddhist monk to one sister after her twin brother was killed in a road traffic accident, that life is like sunbathing on a beach – you gather things around you (sun-lotion, towel, etc) and, at the end of the day, you pack everything up and walk away. As you look back along the beach, you can't even see where you were. I am usually somewhat wary of recommending books based on personal anecdotes but this one is very useful and a pleasure to read, and will be of great value to all who work with the bereaved, as well as to those who have been bereaved themselves.

Dr Martin Newman

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

Helping Grieving People

Shep Jeffreys



New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2005
341pp
\$26.99 pb
ISBN 0 415 94603 4

The bereavement supporter, or 'exquisite witness' for a grieving person must understand that they are entering a sacred space and approach with compassion and deep respect, seeking to truly hear and understand what is being experienced. This accompaniment is at the heart of the support promoted in this book for hospice volunteers, family caregivers, pastoral care workers and others aiming to care for the bereaved. Jeffreys, a licensed psychologist and thanatologist from The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, draws upon personal experience of bereavement to provide a most accessible resource.

While some of the content may be too basic for those with experience in this field, the book is packed with practical tips, highlighted summaries, useful lists, comprehensible theory and sensible guidelines to care provision. Self-assessment exercises are interspersed to help readers reflect and incorporate relevant insights into their care. Every conceivable form of loss, whether of parent, child, spouse, sibling, elderly relative or friend, including those anticipated, unexpected, traumatic, stigmatised or welcomed, is reviewed in an eminently straightforward manner. Case studies enable students to explore how comprehensive their management plans might be. The resources and organisations listed and the sample advanced

directive will be useful only to those living in the USA. These, and the author's approach, give the book an American focus which may limit its interest for readers working elsewhere.

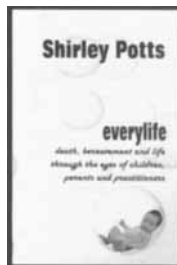
So reader-friendly was this book that I'd happily encourage the interested bereaved to dip into it to help make sense of what they are experiencing and to gauge its normality. Commonsense principles, like there is no right way to grieve, no universal timetable for the journey, and the diversity of grief responses are made plain. Danger signals are offered to guide when more professional help might be sought, while the evidence base for the book's recommendations is well referenced. Both cultural sensitivity and respect for social and religious rituals are evident throughout. ●

David Kissane

Chairman, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York

Everylife

Shirley Potts



Wiltshire, UK: APS Publishing, 2005
211pp
£14.95 pb
ISBN 1 9038 772 61

Shirley Potts was the first full-time family support coordinator in a UK children's hospice (Derian House), and has inspired many others over the years through her talks and training workshops. In this welcome publication she offers an exposition, rich in practical detail, of how to approach, set up and run supportive group sessions for families bereaved of a child.

Broadly, Potts looks at the theories behind her work with bereaved families in the first section of her book, how she does it in the second, and her own philosophical approach in the third. The strongest section is the middle one, which gives a clear picture of the bereavement support offered to families at Derian House and how the different components are structured. The high numbers of men attending the 'Stepping Stones' groups will be of interest to any worker in this field, as it can be hard to find ways to make groups appealing to men. I agree with Potts' hypothesis for the reasons they do attend, ie they have already formed a relationship with the worker prior to the death of their child, the home visit to initiate contact is made at a time when they can be present, and there are other men in the group.

Potts describes a small research study she conducted with bereaved parents and draws out the themes she identified in the interviews. One theme, 'connectedness', will be of especial interest to readers of this journal: the author 'felt the overwhelming intimation in bereaved parents' conversation was toward ongoing connectedness with their deceased child'.

This book complements the existing literature on the subject by such authors as Hindmarch¹, and Dent and Stewart². It would be invaluable for anyone coming into the field, as it takes the reader, step by step, through the workings of a variety of support groups from the initial idea, outlining the activities for each group and the rationale behind them. ●

Frances Kraus

Candle Project Leader, St Christopher's Hospice

1. Hindmarch C. *On the Death of a Child*, 2nd edn. Oxford, UK: Radcliffe Press, 2000.
2. Dent A, Stewart A. *Sudden Death in Childhood*. Oxford, UK: Butterworth Heinemann, 2004.

EVENTS IN 2006

9th SIDS International Conference. 1-4 June. Yokohama, Japan. Contact SIDS Family Association Japan: tel +81 3545 61661; www.sids.gr.jp

Bereavement Research Forum. Symposium. June. London. Biannual conference. 23-24 November. St Albans, Herts, UK. Contact Sharon Cornford: tel [0]20 8525 6031; s.cornford@stjh.org.uk

Forgotten grievers. Annual conference, Cruse Bereavement Care. 14-16 Sept. Leicester, UK. Speakers include Peter White, Ravia Malik, Sue Read, Debbie Kerslake, Sue Stow. Tel [0]20 8939 9530; conference@cruse.org.uk

Death and society. MSc course. From October. Bath, UK. Contact Elaine Irvine, Dept of Social and Policy Sciences, University of Bath BA2 7AY; tel: [0]1225 383203; hss-pgr-coordinator@bath.ac.uk

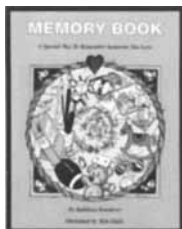
Losses throughout life. Conference, Kensington and Chelsea branch, Cruse Bereavement Care. 23 May. London, UK. Speakers include, Sr Frances Domenica, Jim Kuykendall, Margaret Goodall. Tel: [0]20 8964 3455; crusekenchelsea@btconnect.com

The bereavement journey. Symposium. 29 Sept. St Peter Port, Gurnsey. Speakers include Colin Murray Parkes, Gordon Riches, Kate Boydell, David Trickey. Gurnsey Bereavement Service: tel [0]1481 730996; gsybereavement@cwgsy.net

Looking beyond the illustrations

Memory Book

Kathleen Knoderer



Warminster, PA, USA:
Mar-Co Products/Milton
Keynes, Bucks, UK:
Incentive Plus, 2004
32pp
\$11.95/£12.95
1 57543 004 5

An American workbook for primary school-aged children useful as a special way to remember someone you love with notes for counsellors, it can be used individually or in groups. The authors recommend copying individual pages relevant to the child's needs or circumstances and see the completed workbook as a keepsake. I liked it for use with children over the first stage of acute grief, and as a stimulus for discussion about death, although the counsellor is warned not to answer the child's questions but to leave it to their carer to do so. I suspect that a good counsellor, who is well-trained and experienced, will be able to use their discretion with wisdom in the matter. It should certainly be available to those working with bereaved children although Heegaard's workbooks* take some beating.

Rosie – coming to terms with the death of a sibling

Josh – coming to terms with the death of a friend

Stephanie Jeffs, Jaqui Thomas.



Oxford, UK: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2005, 24pp,
£5.99 hb each. 1 84101 422 2/1 84101 423 0

Rosie is a story about two infant school-aged sisters. Rosie is ill and mummy explains to her sister that she will not get better and will go to live with Lord Jesus in Heaven where there are no more tears or pain or suffering. Josh befriends the painter who does a good job of his bedroom but is killed in an accident, and Josh gets a similar explanation. I thought both books were well illustrated and were sensitive and helpful books for children of primary school age, dealing with questions they are likely to

have in mind, from a Christian perspective. The authors make the distinction about the separation of the body, which is buried, from the soul which continues. However, like most religious 'explanations' of death, they do the usual cop-out about corporeal decomposition. Josh, his friend and their families are all black which would be useful in working with a black Christian family.

Don't Despair on Thursdays!

Adolph Moser

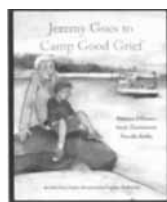


Kansas City, KS, USA:
Landmark Editions/
Milton Keynes, Bucks,
UK: Incentive Plus
1996
61pp
PRICE \$16.95/£16.95 hb
ISBN 0 93384 960 5

Another book from the USA written by a clinical psychologist and part of a series of books on stresses of various kinds, for children of primary school age, to be read with an adult. Delightfully illustrated, it describes to the reader ways of coping with the emotions of grief in a humorous and practical way. I think that every school library should stock it and it would also be useful on the shelf of counsellors working with bereaved children.

Jeremy Goes to Camp Good Grief

Rebecca DiSunno, Sarah Zimmerman, Priscilla Ruffin



Westhampton Beach,
NY, USA: East End
Hospice, 2004
52pp
\$14.95 pb
ISBN 0 97549 320 5

Written specifically to introduce this day camp in New York State to prospective campers, I found the book interesting but of limited use outside the area served by the camp, which lasts five days and uses art therapists, bereavement counsellors and others to work with bereaved children. It is, like all the books for children reviewed here, outstanding in its illustrations, but its chief value for those out of reach of the camp is to inspire other hospices to emulate them. I know of no day camp in the UK

like it – although Winston's Wish in Gloucestershire runs a similar residential camp. I hope they are all evaluating the efficacy of such camps.

Sad Book

Michael Rosen



London: Walker
Books, 2004
26pp
£10.99 hb
0 74459 898 2

I have saved this book till last. Wittily illustrated by Quentin Blake, it was inspired by the death of the author's son, and is a discourse on sadness. I wish it were not so expensive but, if you can, buy it for all your bereaved friends, young and old. From the first words, under the illustration of a grinning man, 'This is me being sad. Maybe you think I'm being happy in this picture. Really I'm being sad but pretending I'm being happy. I'm doing that because I think people won't like me if I look sad', you know it speaks to and for all bereaved people large and small. I loved it and I suspect that children will too. ●

Dora Black

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

* Heegaard M. When Someone Very Special Dies.
Mineapolis, MN, USA: Woodland Press, 1988.

A B S T R A C T S

Loss of the assumptive world – how we deal with death and loss

Beder J. *Omega* 2004-2005: 50(4); 255-265

The assumptive world concept refers to the assumptions or beliefs that ground, secure, stabilise, and orient people. They are our core beliefs that provide us with expectations about the world and ourselves. In the face of death and trauma, these beliefs are shattered, and disorientation and even panic can enter the lives of those affected. In essence, the security of their beliefs has been aborted. This article looks at the concept of the assumptive world, how attachments are impacted by its violation, and makes suggestions for intervention for those who work to rebuild survivors of loss. As in most helping encounters, timing, presence, and support are crucial.