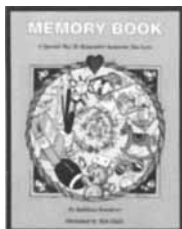


# Looking beyond the illustrations

## 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

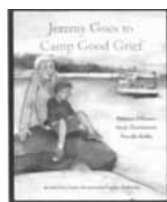


Kansas City, KS, USA:  
Landmark Editions/  
Milton Keynes, Bucks,  
UK: Incentive Plus  
1996  
61pp  
PRICE \$16.95/£16.95 hb  
ISBN 0 93384 960 5

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.

## A B S T R A C T S

**A comparison of grief as related to miscarriage and termination for fetal abnormality**

Keefe-Cooperman K. *Omega* 2004-2005: **50**(4); 281-300

The purpose of this study was to discover whether the grief reactions of women who experienced miscarriage and women who terminated for fetal abnormality would differ, and to identify the factors that differentiated the two groups. In fact, the author found that the reactions were substantially similar in terms of loss of self-esteem in three areas: biological self-esteem, moral self-esteem and social self-esteem. The groups were then combined to analyse within-group factors. Six fixed variables were found to be related to vulnerability for a grief reaction. These factors included: the time since the most recent loss; the intervention of counselling; employment outside the home; feeling responsible for the perinatal loss; the age of the mother as related to guilt; and the gestational length of pregnancy. Further research is needed to include, among other factors, a wider range of ethical and socioeconomic backgrounds among the women being studied, and further investigation into the role of counselling in facilitating the grieving process.

**'Was life worth living'? Older widowers and their explicit discourses of the decision to live**

Bennett KM. *Mortality* 2005: **10**(2); 144-154

Many people have to face widowhood in later life. There are two particular issues that turn the focus on widowers: first, there is evidence that they are more likely to die earlier than widows and, secondly, that they are often believed to cope less well. However, explanations for this are not well developed. During two studies of widowhood in 60 older men, there was an explicit discussion about the decision, by a third of the men, to continue with life following the death of their spouses. Issues which were covered included the meaning of their lives, their age, their responsibilities, and the mortality of their friends. There was often a clear expression of stoicism in their decision to keep on living, and to make their lives positive.

**Psychological and religious coping strategies of mothers bereaved by the sudden death of a child**

Anderson MJ, Marwit SJ, Vandenberg B, Chibnall JT. *Death Studies* 2005: **29**(9); 811-826

This article examines how a group of mothers coped with the sudden accidental and/or violent death of a child. It discusses three types of psychological coping (task-based, emotion-based, avoidance), two types of religious coping (positive, negative) and their interactions with the mothers' grief. The authors conclude that neither a task-orientated nor a positive religious approach, used on its own, may have a good outcome, whereas used in conjunction they are likely to result in lower levels of grief. They point out, however, that their study has limitations, especially the small size of the sample, and the fact that it spanned a relatively long time since death and addressed a particularly difficult type of loss that may not typify the relation between grief and coping found in other types of loss.

**To continue or relinquish bonds: a review of consequences for the bereaved**

Stroebe M, Schut H. *Death Studies* 2005: **29**(6); 477-494

This article reviews research on the fundamental question of whether the bond with a deceased person should be continued or broken. During the 20th century a shift took place from an emphasis on the benefit of breaking these bonds to an investigation of the benefit of keeping them. The different beneficial formulations are examined, and the empirical evidence relating to the (mal)adaptive value of retaining or relinquishing bonds is assessed. The review shows that according to the available literature there is simply no choosing between the two apparent alternatives: certain types of continuing bonds may sometimes be either helpful or harmful, while the same may be said of relinquishing certain types of bonds. Researchers need to work towards an understanding of how, and for whom, continuing or relinquishing bonds furthers adjustment. ●

**Sheila Hodges and John Bush**

## V A L E D I C T I O N

**Sheila Hodges and John Bush**

The topic of bereavement crosses the boundary between psychology, sociology, medicine, social work and other disciplines. It follows that articles about bereavement can be found in many journals and it has always been difficult for the editors of *Bereavement Care* to keep track of them. We were very fortunate when, 12 years ago, Sheila Hodges and John Bush volunteered to take on the role of locating and reviewing significant new papers for our journal.

As directors of Victor Gollancz, both had a background in editing and publishing and, after Victor retired, John ran that company for 17 years while Sheila continued to edit the prestigious list of authors, including Daphne du Maurier. When they, in turn, retired they became volunteers to St Christopher's Hospice, London, where they helped with the regular support groups for bereaved families. But they were also keen to use their literary skills for the benefit of bereaved people. The library at St Christopher's contains what is probably the most comprehensive collection of books and journals on bereavement in the world and it was the librarian who suggested that I meet the Bushes

to discuss how they could be of use.

Since that time John and Sheila have scanned hundreds of journals in search of articles on bereavement. They have created our regular column of reviews, kept us informed of developments in the field and introduced us to many fascinating and unexpected byways. As the editor to whom they have regularly sent their reviews I have found my task made very easy; in fact their articulate contributions have seldom needed editing at all, and it has always been a pleasure to receive them. We owe them a great debt. Sadly Sheila and John have now decided to retire from this role and the editors wish to thank them both for all that they have done and the high standard that they have set.

Their place will be taken by one of the very few people whose knowledge and understanding of the literature on bereavement matches their own, Denise Brady. Denise is senior librarian at St Christopher's Hospice and an authority on bereavement in her own right. Indeed she already writes a well informed bereavement blog-spot on the internet at <http://bereavementupdate.blogspot.com/>. We look forward to her contribution. ● *CMP*

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES 2006****Individual Subscribers**

for an individual subscriber for personal use

UK: £18.00	Europe: €31.00
USA: US \$34.00	Canada: CAN \$48.00
Australia: AUST \$49.00	All others: Stg £20.00

**Libraries and Organisations**

for multiple readership, eg hospitals, colleges, hospices, departments, companies

UK: £31.00	Europe: €51.00
USA: US \$57.00	Canada: CAN \$78.00
Australia: AUST \$80.00	All others: Stg £33.00

**Cruise Volunteers**

Please apply for special rates