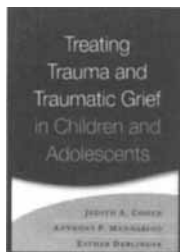


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BOOK REVIEW

Treating Trauma and Traumatic grief in Children and Adolescents

Judith Cohen, Anthony Mannarino, Esther Deblinger



New York: Guilford Press, 2006
256pp
£23.00 hb
ISBN 1 58385 308 4

The authors of this marvellous text have undertaken more randomised control trials than any other group of the effects of trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (TF-CBT) for children presenting with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These children mainly developed PTSD after sexual abuse and so the interventions need a little adjusting to meet the needs of children affected by other traumas. After the bombing of the twin towers in New York, the group did extend their work to meet the needs of children suffering from traumatic grief, although that has yet to be subjected to the same level of evaluation.

The authors developed a series of manuals to guide clinicians in therapy. The approach involves direct work with the child and parallel work with the parents. The therapy focuses on the trauma and the way it has been interpreted by the child so that muddled ideas, inaccurate cognitions and strange memories are tackled directly. Though the approach is very flexible, the authors are aware that by writing it all down, it necessarily appears sequential and rigid, so they are at pains to illustrate how the various elements of treatment inter-

connect and build on each other.

For readers of *Bereavement Care*, the main interest will be in how the techniques are expanded to deal with traumatic grief in children and adolescents. Like most experienced practitioners, the authors argue that grieving often cannot begin until the traumatic event has been dealt with. Remembering the dead loved one is simply too painful if every time the child tries to remember them, they relive the dreadful circumstances of the death. Thus, practitioners need to be familiar with all the sections on dealing with trauma and apply these before tackling the grief.

Throughout the book, the authors rightly take a broad view of what constitutes both PTSD and traumatic grief. They focus almost entirely on their own manuals, which is fair enough, but somewhat confusingly they use the term TF-CBT as if it was a trade-mark for their approach rather than a generic term for a set of approaches that are developing very quickly worldwide. Thus, they do not say anything about eye movement techniques (EMDR) nor narrative exposure therapy, although they incorporate elements of each in their work. They advise that therapists trained in other approaches should first get training in CBT before trying to apply the package. Such training is available free on-line at www.musc.edu/tfcbt. Perhaps this will be a stimulus for UK public sector child and adolescent mental health services to leap into the CBT age. Certainly, there is a great deal of experience and wisdom in the very clear and practical 'lessons' incorporated in this text. ●

William Yule
Emeritus Professor, King's College, London

EVENTS IN 2008

Consequences of loss: resilience and complications in the grief experience.

8th International conference on grief and bereavement in contemporary society. 15-18 July. Melbourne, Australia. Key speakers: George Bonanno, Grace Christ, Robert Neymeyer, Colin Murray Parkes, Holly Prigerson, Beverley Raphael, Margaret Stroebe. Email conference@grief.org.au; tel [+61] 3 9265 2100.

Global mourning: death among and beyond ourselves. 30th ADEC annual conference. 30 April-3 May. Quebec, Canada. Key speakers: Leila Gupta, Stephen Lewis, Kim Phuc. Visit <http://adec.org/conf/index.cfm>

Events at St Christopher's Hospice. London. **Candle 10th anniversary conference.** 12 June. Speakers Frances Kraus, David Trickey, Nigel Hartley. **Roots of resilience: what makes a good outcome following disaster.** 14 March. Linda Machin, Stephen Regel, David Trickey. Tel [+44] 20 8768 4656; visit www.stchristophers.org.uk/bookingform

Song-writing as therapy in palliative and bereavement care. 7-8 March. Oxford, UK. Bob Heath. Tel [+44] 1865 225886; visit www.sobellhospiceoxford.org

BOOK REVIEWS

Cremation comes of age

Committed to the Cleansing Flame

Brian Parsons
Reading, Berks, UK: Spire Books
2006, 319pp, £34.95 pb
ISBN 1 90495 504 0

From Dust to Ashes

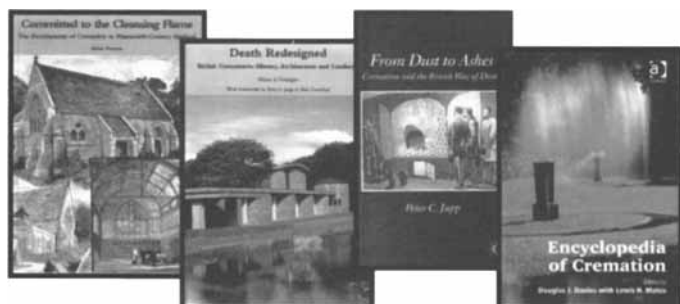
Peter Jupp
London: Palgrave, 2006
224pp, £52.00/\$90.00 hb
ISBN 0 33369 298 5

Death Redefined

Hilary Grainger
Reading, Berks, UK: Spire Books
2006, 551pp, £34.95 pb
ISBN 1 90496 507 5

Encyclopedia of Cremation

Douglas Davies, Lewis Mates (eds)
Aldershot, Hamps, UK: Ashgate
2006, 516pp, £65.00/\$124.95 hb
ISBN 0 75463 773 5



IT IS VERY HARD TO RESIST the analogy with buses, that after a long wait, four books on cremation suddenly come along all at once. However, in combination, these works substantially increase our understanding of the history and current state of cremation in this country and abroad.

Brian Parson's study, *Committed to the Cleansing Flame*, is an early history of cremation, focusing on the building and management of the first crematorium at Woking. The crematorium was not established by a local authority, but by the (then) Cremation Society of England. The Cremation Society was not faced with an easy task: although the cremator was built in 1879, the first cremation did not take place until 1885 and initial numbers were limited. The book ends in 1902, with the passage of the first Cremation Act. Well and imaginatively illustrated, Parson's text adds welcome detail to the early history of cremation and Woking Crematorium.

A companion text, *From Dust to Ashes*, charts a longer course. Starting from the 1820s, Peter Jupp follows the progress of burial and cremation reform through to the present day. This account offers perhaps more in the way of contextual information about the changes in our burial culture, and is a particularly useful account of the issues currently being debated. In this respect, it makes a useful reference text for practitioners seeking background information on the disposal of foetal remains, the natural death movement,

environmental issues as they relate to cremation, and the impact of the Shipman case on cremation certification.

More specialised but nonetheless important is Hilary Grainger's *Death Redefined*. Cremation offered a new form of disposal, but also new problems for landscape designers and architects who were faced with the task of arriving at an appropriate aesthetic. This was a significant issue. The required aesthetic would have to acknowledge and counter the considerable prejudice that first existed against the new mode of disposal. Grainger rightly asserts that the crematorium is very much a 20th century building type, the shifting design of which over time reflected the changing priorities given to death and the commemoration. Crematoria are remarkably complex spaces accommodating the practicalities of disposal of the dead with the need – not always graciously executed – to offer consolation to the bereaved. To the practitioner, the book constitutes a reminder that spatial and aesthetic concerns are important to the way in which loss and associated rituals are framed. As with Parson's study, Grainger's work is well illustrated and includes a gazetteer of British crematoria.

Finally, Davies and Mates' *Encyclopedia of Cremation* is an erudite and fascinating introduction to myriad aspects of its subject, with contributions ranging wide in terms of both geography and academic discipline. The contributions made by practitioners and by research students are at the cutting edge and indicate the very new nature of much of the material. Although it cannot be imagined that bereavement counsellors would rush to read this text from start to finish, it provides a very useful means of satisfying niggling and marginal enquiries that would otherwise be difficult to answer. For example, entries include reference to a wide range of minority ethnic practices, to technical terms that might defy easy definition, and to practices such as memorialisation. Of all the reviewed texts, this is by far the most expensive, but also the one most likely to become dog-eared through frequent reference, and to reward a casual dip.

Overall, what is the message brought by these combined texts? For this reviewer, there is a timely reminder that our burial culture is mutable, and that its directions can be actively led by agencies with sufficient energy and purpose. Through much of the 20th

BOOK REVIEWS

century, agendas were being set by what might be termed 'elite' actors and agencies: the Cremation Society and its heroic activists, leading commentators in scientific and professional arenas, and policy-makers. There is a common acknowledgement in these texts that cremation has become a mass experience, that in many areas – Great Britain included – cremation is the preferred mode of disposal. However, there remains a nagging suspicion that the voice of the bereaved remains absent from all these accounts, and a history of cremation based on family accounts and oral histories remains as yet unwritten. ●

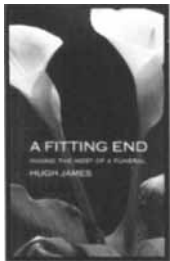
Julie Rugg

Cemetery Research Group, University of York

A Fitting End

Making the most of a funeral

Hugh James



Norwich, Norfolk, UK
Canterbury Press
2004
177pp
£12.99 pb
ISBN 1 85311 602 5

A recent radio programme highlighted the issue of the re-use of graves for the burial of people not related to the original occupiers of the grave. The discussion seemed to centre upon pragmatic and economic issues about the use of space in cemeteries, and made no reference to the emotional implications for the bereaved relatives of those previously interred. The programme highlighted the changes in funeral and burial customs which have been taking place in British society in recent years, but we need to be able to understand and interpret the implication of these changes for bereaved people.

Against this background, James writes as a priest with pastoral experience ministering to bereaved people at the time of a funeral, a trainer of clergy, and an academic researcher into the character of funeral practices. He refers to changes in medical and religious understanding of death and how these have altered perceptions

about what is fitting at the funeral. As fewer people now feel comfortable with the religious service and the beliefs it expresses, the author offers an answer to the question 'Whose funeral is it anyway?': in the past, the emphasis was on commending the soul of the dead person to God, whereas now the focus is on celebrating the life that has been and comforting the bereaved.

James describes the increasing range of organisations and agencies involved in funerals and the changing social influences which determine their content and character, touching on alternative funerals and cremation ceremonies with and without clergy officiating. Those who support the bereaved will be familiar with the difficult circumstances which may surround a death (eg sudden, violent or unexpected); the author suggests how these circumstances may be addressed appropriately at the time of the funeral.

A Fitting End provides a background of well-researched information which will help those asked to give sensitive guidance to bereaved relatives 'at a time of helplessness and vulnerability'. Though addressed to clergy and others who arrange and conduct funerals, it will also be of interest to bereavement supporters who want to increase their understanding of the cultural background in contemporary Britain and the context for grieving offered through funeral ceremonies. ●

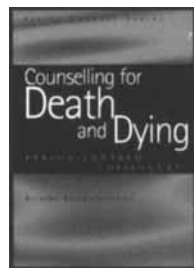
Peter Hammersley

Prison Chaplain

Counselling for Death and Dying

Person Centred Dialogues

Richard Bryant-Jeffries



Oxford, UK
Raddcliffe Publishing
2006
179pp
£19.95/\$38.00 pb
ISBN 1 84619 079 7

Previous books concerned with counselling for those who are dying or bereaved, for example *Counselling In*

*Terminal Care and Bereavement**, have been more generalist and descriptive of the processes involved. *Counselling for Death and Dying* offers us something different, specifically exploring how the person-centred approach (PCA) is used when working with people who have been bereaved or are facing death.

The introduction and overview of the principles and practice of PCA is accessible and helpful. Two case studies are presented: Billy who is struggling to come to terms with the death of his father, and Barbara who faces the diagnosis of impending death. The dialogues are presented in a format that includes the inner thoughts of both the counsellor and client, along with a number of supervision sessions. At the end of each chapter there are useful points for discussion and reflection. A helpful theoretical explanation of what is happening is presented in boxes and included within the dialogue.

The book is easy to read and the description of the therapeutic process very engaging. Discussion points at the end of the chapters are particularly helpful, keeping the reader thinking about not only what is going on in the sessions but also the impact of these on the counsellor. Nowhere is there any reference to any of the models or stages of grief; the focus of this book, as of the person-centred approach, is on the therapeutic relationship between the client and counsellor.

Richard Bryant-Jeffries captures the emotion, struggle and challenge of being alongside someone bereaved or facing death and I would recommend the book particularly for counsellors, both those who are trainees and the more experienced, whatever their theoretical perspective. Others working in bereavement and palliative care may find it of interest. It is a useful text that not only helps you to understand the PCA but challenges you to reflect on your own approach to working with clients. ●

Nikki Archer

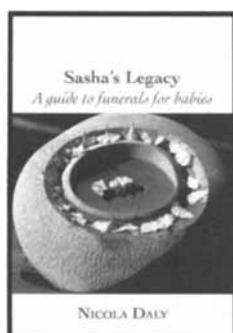
Clinical Support and Bereavement Service Manager

• PARKES CM, RELF M, COULDRICK A (1996). *Counselling In Terminal Care and Bereavement*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Celebrating short lives

Sasha's Legacy

A Guide to Funerals for Babies



Nicola Daly
Wellington, New Zealand:
Steele Roberts
2005
120pp
\$NZ 29.99 pb
ISBN 1 87733 856 7

The first part of this book recounts the stories of seven bereaved mothers and couples whose babies were stillborn, how they were (or were not) supported, and their experiences with organising and holding their babies' funerals. The parents talk about what helped and what made things worse, what has given them lasting positive memories, and the hurts, disappointments and regrets that they cannot forget. The stories illustrate the importance of enabling and encouraging parents to ask for and organise what they want at this crucial time, and of leaving them with pride and satisfaction at what they were able to do for their baby after his or her death. They also illustrate parents' vulnerability to implications of disapproval or criticism from the people around them at this time.

The rest of the book deals with the practicalities, first covering the period between the death and the funeral, with advice on what to say and what not to say, decisions to be made and creating memories. The next chapters discuss planning and leading a funeral and the many ways that a funeral can be structured. The book ends with poems, mainly written by local bereaved parents, suggestions for suitable music and useful websites. Some of the suggestions and examples are specific to New Zealand, where the author

lives, but most are relevant anywhere.

This book is aimed mainly at celebrants and others who lead funerals, health professionals, social workers, funeral directors and anyone else who might be involved in helping parents organise a funeral. I know of no other book dealing specifically with this issue. Bereaved parents and family members might also find it helpful to read, though I am not sure whether they could deal with it immediately after

losing their own baby.

Nicola Daly has a wonderfully positive and creative approach, both compassionate and practical, focusing on parents' needs and encouraging those supporting them at this difficult time to do the same. This book will give confidence to those who need it and inspiration and good ideas to everyone. ●

Alix Henley

Researcher/author on health issues, adviser to SANDS

For bereaved parents and families

Parenting Under Pressure: Bereavement

Claire Collis



East Molesey, Surrey,
UK: Young Voice
2004, 76pp
£15.00 pb
ISBN 1 90345 619 3

As the title suggests, this book is aimed at helping parents understand some of the feelings that may be experienced by a family following bereavement. It takes the

form of a collection of short accounts from parents, children, grandparents and other family members and looks at a range of types of bereavement. These stories are interspersed with short snippets of interpretation for the reader.

The chapters follow the adults and children from the time of bereavement through to many years later. Each is divided into sections, detailed on the contents page, so it is easy to find what you are looking for. A lively layout, with pictures, poems and quotes, gives the book a reader-friendly feel and the format lends itself to dipping into, so that people can come back to the book

BOOK REVIEWS

at a later stage of grief and still find something relevant to them. On the other hand, there is so much crammed onto the pages that the impact of each experience is often lost amongst a sea of print, and the layout and small type sizes could make it inaccessible for people with a visual impairment.

Nonetheless, I would recommend this book to parents seeking more information following bereavement, or to professionals not used to working with bereaved families. Chapter 5, for example, has a particularly useful section for schools and teachers. Those already working with bereaved families may find it helpful as a resource or to suggest to adult clients.

Emma Roycroft

Barnardo's Orchard Service

Finding Your Way After Your Child Dies

Phyllis Wezeman, Kenneth Wezeman



Notre Dame, IN, USA: Ave
Maria Press/Edinburgh,
UK: Alban Books, 2001
192pp
\$11.99/£6.99 pb
ISBN 0 87793 700 1

The authors remind us that parents whose child has died may experience a recurring sense of loss throughout their lives – for example, when seeing other children on a bus, at birthdays, at holiday times, graduation parties, wedding celebrations, and so on. Hearing a particular piece of music, or hearing the name of the deceased child may also be evocative and perhaps painful reminders of the loss.

The book contains 52 short sections dealing with themes such as what to do with the allowance (pocket money) of the deceased child, what to do on the anniversary of their death, on their birthday, visiting the cemetery, visiting the church, the possible effects of seeing classmates of the deceased, vacations, dealing with clothes and other possessions, hearing certain music or radio programmes or seeing certain television programmes, mealtimes, coping with legal proceedings and so on. Each theme commences with a 'reflection' (for example, there may be joy in remembering a birthday anniversary), followed by suggested 'rituals' (for example, buy the

child's favourite cake and share it with family and friends, light a candle, share gifts with family and friends), a 'reading' (usually from the Bible), and finally a 'response' (a prayer).

The structure of the book makes it easy to read, and accessible, and many of the reflections and rituals are imaginative and helpful. Those of a non-Christian or

non-religious persuasion may find the religious aspects somewhat off-putting but that would be a shame, as there is plenty here that would be helpful to bereaved parents of all religious persuasions and none. ●

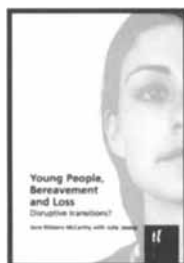
Dr Martin Newman

Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist

Young People, Bereavement and Loss

Disruptive Transitions?

Jane Ribbens McCarthy, with Julie Jessop



London: National
Children's Bureau
2005
96pp
£13.95 pb
ISBN 1 90478 746 0

In common with many UK child bereavement services, the Candle Service has enthusiastically welcomed this highly informative and useful publication. It is a condensed version of the recently published major study* reviewed in the last issue of *Bereavement Care* (2007; 26[2]: 38). The authors were funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to review the literature on bereavement and young people (defined as teenage to early 20s). They break new ground in emphasising the importance of the social context in which the bereavement occurs as a major factor, stressing the impact of inequalities, in health, social class and locality, on the likelihood of a young person experiencing bereavement and the increased potential for negative outcomes.

The report starts by presenting case studies of young people, part of a wider study, who had experienced a bereavement and had not received intervention. From these they draw some valuable conclusions about the ordinary experience of bereaved young people.

The methodology of the current research literature is then reviewed, and the authors present their approach. This is of particular interest, as it differs from the mainly psychological and biological view of adolescence that underpins most of the existing research base. The authors argue that this has resulted in a focus on bereavement as something apart from 'normal' life, requiring 'expert' knowl-

edge. They show that bereavement is the experience of most young people, and the implications for policy and practice at the end of the report are grounded in this concept. An invaluable appendix details the current statistical data.

The report raises several important issues for consideration:

- Death education should be much more widely included in school education
- A range of options for bereavement intervention are needed, rather than any single model
- Young people's voices need to be heard more, both in terms of their experience and in shaping services
- Though the research is inconclusive, it does seem that parental bereavement may put an individual at greater risk of social exclusion and mental health difficulties, and this risk is increased for more vulnerable young people who are also least likely to have access to services

As a manager of a service for bereaved children and families covering a geographical area with a lot of deprivation and disadvantage, the last point was of particular interest to me. Do we plan our services around the group of clients who attend their appointments and are well motivated about interventions, or do we strive reach the children and families who fail to engage? I believe that we have to be creative and flexible in extending our services to children and families for whom bereavement is only one of the issues they face, and very likely not to be the most pressing.

This review is thorough and thoughtful, tackling difficult questions in a considered and responsible way with the important issues well laid out and easily accessible. It is essential reading not only for service providers and funders, but for all with an interest in child bereavement. ●

Frances Kraus

Candle Project leader, St Christopher's Hospice

*MCCARTHY JR (2006). *Young People's Experiences of Loss and Bereavement*. Maidenhead, Berks: OUP

Self-help and bereavement support

Living with Loss and Grief

Julia Tugendhat



London: Sheldon Press, 2005
94pp
£7.99 pb
ISBN: 0 85969 944 7

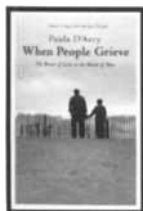
Covering a wide range of aspects of loss concisely, this would be a very useful addition to the bookshelf of anyone involved in helping bereaved people. The author clearly distinguishes between grief (an individual's feelings after a death) and mourning (the public expression of those feelings in rituals as an individual or a group). Examples are used throughout to illustrate various issues and many accounts are from recent events, either single deaths or international disasters, with which most readers will be familiar.

As well as death, other losses are discussed but these fit in well with the overall theme, eg loss of homeland by asylum seekers, loss of childhood by those sexually abused, loss of identity created by redundancy or retirement, and loss of health through illness and ageing. At the back is a helpful list of relevant addresses and further reading.

This book would be useful at many levels, from those without any formal training to experienced counsellors and psychotherapists. Several theoretical approaches are covered in an accessible style with attachment theory clearly explained, and Worden's tasks of mourning referred to throughout the text. Both interesting and informative, this book is my favourite from this group.

When People Grieve

Paula D'Arcy



New York: Crossroad Publishing/Dublin, Ireland
2005, 138pp
\$6.97/£13.85 pb
ISBN 0 824 52339 3

Though claiming to be both a 'road map' for bereaved people and a guide for those who are supporting them, this book is clearly aimed primarily at the supporters. It contains several suggestions of things to do or avoid and also

provides explanations for why people who are grieving may react or behave in certain ways. It is not written in an academic, text-book style and would make good reading for someone who has not made a study of grief but wants to both understand and help someone who has experienced a death. The author uses many of her own experiences of bereavement in the text and this enhances the points she makes

This is an interesting book that many will want to read from beginning to end, but it also works as a resource to dip into for information on specific topics that are relevant at the time. There is information on a wide range of issues, from the classic ones of shock, anger, guilt and depression to the more concrete ones of what not to say, suggestions for help, the gift of time and providing continuing support. Overall this is a very useful and practical book to recommend to those supporting the bereaved.

Understanding Your Grief The Understanding your Grief Journal

Alan D. Wolfelt



2003, 65pp
\$14.95 pb
ISBN: 1 87965 135 1



2004, 165 pp
\$14.95 pb
(\$25 for both books)
ISBN: 1 87965 139 4

Fort Collins, CO, USA
Companion Press

Understanding Your Grief is another excellent book both for bereaved people and professionals working with them. Alan Wolfelt has much experience and knowledge in grief counselling and this very readable book explains and clarifies many aspects, with a quotation summing up the issue being discussed on most pages. Common terms are defined and misconceptions clearly explained.

Wolfelt's approach is holistic, covering physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual aspects. The book's subtitle is *Ten Essential Touchstones for*

Finding Hope and Healing in Your Heart and the touchstones (benchmarks or tasks to guide you through bereavement) reflect this. However it is also possible to dip into this book on specific issues with the help of the chapter headings and comprehensive index. The organisations and support groups listed in the back are in the USA, but some have websites which may provide useful links for those living elsewhere.

At several points, the reader is directed to a workbook, *Understanding Your Grief Journal*, designed to be used alongside the main text. The journal provides plenty of space for thoughts and feelings and has useful prompts relating to the chapters in the book; I can imagine it being a useful tool. The 'free write' pages will be helpful for those wanting to express themselves freely so that this journal could become in a valuable account of a personal journey through grief

Grieving

Jerusha Hull McCormack



London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2005
144pp
£10.95 pb
ISBN 0 232 52629 X

The author of this book is a professor of English and this is evident both in her writing and the references to other literary works. She describes her experiences following the death of her husband and her discoveries on her journey through grief. Her style is quite directive at times, telling the reader what to do and not do, while she sees her purpose as simply providing 'signposts' by which the bereaved can find their own path to a new life. Towards the end of the book an exercise is described which I found very useful, involving moving a ball between three jars, each bigger than the last, to illustrate how grief remains the same size but our lives expand around it.

No knowledge of grief theories would be needed to read this book, but I am not sure that someone newly bereaved would find it helpful as it requires focus and concentration. Poems are quoted throughout and those who are interested in this genre and other types of literature will find much to interest them and may identify with the author, especially those looking back over their grief from a distance.