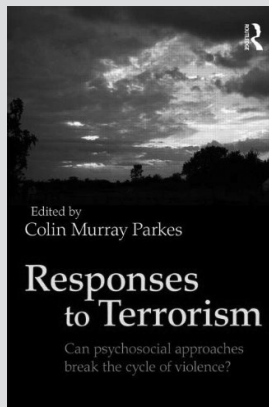


# Book Reviews



## Responses to terrorism: can psychosocial approaches break the cycle of violence?

Colin Murray Parkes (ed)

London and New York: Routledge  
2014  
280pp  
£29.99 (pb)  
ISBN: 978 0 415 70624 7

Bereavement by suicide has long been recognised as bringing particular pressures and requiring a specific response. Much less has been written about the consequences of bereavement by murder, and still less by bereavement through terrorist murder.

This book is advertised as ‘of special interest to politicians, diplomats, military, media, psychiatrists, thanatologists, palliative care and bereavement staff, as well as anyone with an interest in terrorism and its causes’. It is an early fruit of the young but growing field of psychopolitics, in which politicians, diplomats, academics and mental health professionals work across disciplines, via publications and conferences, with the aim of transferring insights from individual and group psychology to the field of conflict resolution. It remains to be seen how strong a tree will emerge from these hybrid shoots, but this book is a sturdy start.

The 12 authors hail from a wide range of disciplines, and some are undoubtedly heavy hitters in their fields, such as Colin Murray Parkes and John (now Lord) Alderdice, a psychiatrist and psychotherapist by profession who played a significant part in bringing Northern Ireland to the relative peace now prevailing there. Northern Ireland and Rwanda are used as case studies throughout the text, which is divided into 16 chapters (of varying degrees of accessibility) arranged in three parts.

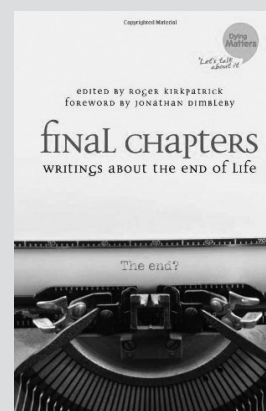
The titles of these parts – The context of terrorism, Responses to a terrorist attack and Breaking the cycle – indicate that the needs of individuals bereaved by acts of terrorism and those trying to treat them are both peripheral and central to this project. Peripheral in the sense that this is not the book’s prime focus, which looks at the responses

to terrorism at community, societal and governmental levels, rather than the perspective of a bereaved individual; and yet central too, in the sense that the very purpose of terrorism is to intimidate communities, societies and governments by killing their members in ways which generate a response in the bereaved and those loyal to them.

Mercifully few bereavement counsellors will see cases of people bereaved via terrorism, and it is in the nature of terrorism that the political impacts intended by its perpetrators are disproportionate to the numbers of innocents they kill. For this reason, bereavement counsellors who read the book in the hope of finding insights to deploy therapeutically may be disappointed. But those who, like the wider public, come to it in the hope of developing an improved understanding of how some political disputes spiral into terrorism, how state responses often prolong and intensify the cycle of violence, and how alternative approaches may bring more fruit, will find much of interest. ■

### Stephen Potts

Consultant Psychiatrist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh



## Final chapters – writings about the end of life

Roger Kirkpatrick (ed)

London UK: Jessica Kingsley  
2014  
128pp  
£8.99  
ISBN 978 1 84905 490 4

*Final chapters* is a selection of 30 essays and poems submitted for a creative writing competition run by the Dying Matters Coalition. It has a foreword by Jonathan Dimpleby.

The authors share their experiences of facing death, their own, or that of a loved one. All do this in a different but powerful way, describing their intense and often overwhelming feelings. Through their writing, they are

able to share what many find hard to verbalise or even acknowledge.

One contributor contemplates their impending death, seeing the seasons for the last time and likening their experience to pregnancy ‘the body insisting on the primacy of its needs’.

A young doctor caring for her patients at night, while her grandfather is dying, realises that ‘treating each patient as if they were a member of my own family helps me to get through the long, unsociable hours and emotionally difficult situations we face every day’.

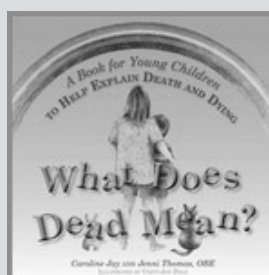
Several of the authors are daughters writing about mothers with dementia. One describes it as ‘dying in very slow motion’ and ‘the disease dismantles everything that tells them who they are’.

One man describes the fear of facing death while anticipating blood results from his doctor who appears nervous, only to find that the results are normal. It is his doctor of 30 years who has cancer and wanted to tell him personally, having a short time to live.

This book makes a significant contribution to the literature on death, dying and bereavement. The contributions are honest, moving and thought provoking. ■

### Wendy Laughlin

Bereavement Volunteer



### What does dead mean?

Caroline Jay and Jenni Thomas, illustrated by Unity-Joy Dale

London UK: Jessica Kingsley  
2013  
32pp  
£9.99  
ISBN: 978 1 849053 55 6

Many adults with children who have been bereaved assume that because a child can say the words about death and grief that they understand what those words mean. They leave the child to make assumptions and decisions based on their muddled feelings and misunderstandings. The adult is sometimes in too much grief themselves to be able to help the child, thankful that they seem to understand. And the questions that children need answers for, go unasked and unanswered.

The authors of *What does dead mean?* have considerable experience of working with children in bereavement, and have attempted to answer 17 key questions such as ‘What do dead people look like?’ ‘Why

do people have to die?’ ‘Is it someone’s fault?’ All questions that children may be afraid to ask.

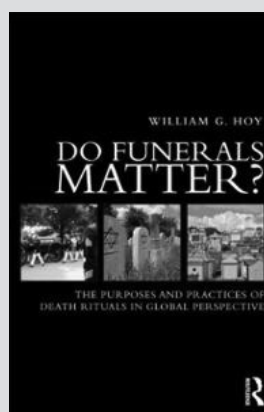
Each question is given a factual answer, and in turn a question is asked to encourage some dialogue, painting or drawing. The rest is up to the reader and the person supporting them, be it parent, teacher, faith leader or bereavement supporter. It addresses the issues about different faiths by acknowledging that different people believe different things, and again invites the reader to express their own beliefs.

Each question is accompanied by tasteful drawings which reflect the diverseness of society, and finishes with a useful list of ‘what can help to let feeling out?’ There is a selection of useful websites at the end.

The authors indicate that it is suitable for young children age 4+, and I have used it with a 10-year-old boy who found it useful to challenge his misconceptions. This one will remain in my tool kit! ■

### Janet Dowling

Bereavement Volunteer



### Do funerals matter? The purposes and practices of death rituals in global perspective

William G. Hoy

Hove: Routledge  
2013  
207pp  
£25.99  
ISBN: 978 0 415 66205 5

This book is an unusual mixture of research study, personal history and textbook on bereavement support. It begins with an introduction and overview of funeral traditions and future trends, mainly in the North American context. Grounded in the author’s extensive research into past and present death rituals, Chapters 2 to 6 describe five practices that he finds central to cultures worldwide. These are termed *anchors* in that participating in them provides a mooring to mourners buffeted by grief. The anchors are *significant symbols*, *gathered community*, *ritual action*, *cultural heritage* and *the body’s presence*. The text draws on examples from state and celebrity funerals (including President Kennedy, Princess Diana, and Michael Jackson) and many cultures/religions to illustrate each anchor. It does not aim to give a comprehensive picture of particular groups, but contrasts diverse beliefs, symbols and customs, giving ample references for further research. It provides a poignant

window into ancient civilisations, such as the contents of child graves in the Seine Valley over 6000 years ago.

Chapters 7 and 8 examine the trend for personalised, non-traditional funerals and the North American funeral industry, but do not cover the growing practice of cyber-grieving (see Tett, 2014). Most relevant to bereavement support work are the final chapters: *clinical perspectives on the value of funerals* and *using ritual in grief counselling*. The former suggests the answer to the book's title question is that yes, funerals do matter, and play an important part in helping mourners navigate the early stages of grief. The latter gives practical advice on the therapeutic use of bereavement rituals months or even years after the loss to make good any lack in relation to the core anchors. For example, the counsellor might ask: 'what would you go back and change about the funeral if you could?' (p 177) and then work with the client to co-create a ceremony using photos and memorabilia as *significant symbols* and a tree or flower to represent *the body's presence*. The text emphasises this needs to be done sensitively, taking account of cultural differences and the client's history and attitude to ritual.

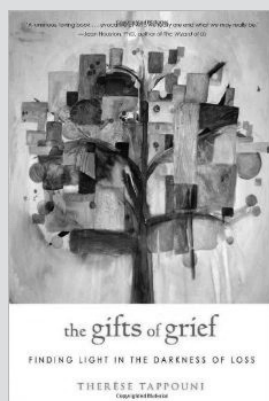
This book would be a useful resource for training, especially the questions for reflection and discussion listed at the end of each chapter. Interested readers could also consult a recent article in *Bereavement Care*, which considers the interaction between socially prescribed or expected death rituals and individual responses (Oyebode and Owens, 2013). ■

## Sue Wayne

Bereavement Volunteer

Oyebode JR, Owens RG (2013). Bereavement and the role of religious and cultural factors. *Bereavement Care Journal* 32(2) 60-64.

Tett G (2014). How to mourn online. *Financial Times Weekend Magazine*, June 28/29 46.



## The gifts of grief

Therese Tappouni

San Antonio, TX: Hierophant Publishing  
2013  
166pp  
£12.5  
ISBN: 978 1 938289 09 5

**T**herese Tappouni experienced the death of her 11-year-old son, Michael, in July 1974 when he was hit by a delivery van while out riding his bicycle.

After his death she suffered the end of her marriage and family business and health problems, she also became a heart-math therapist and found a new life partner. Tappouni's book reflects the transformative power of grief.

Tappouni notes that she got through the initial very difficult years by vowing that she would model for her remaining children, age 3 to 13 when Michael died, showing that 'you can be beaten down by grief but choose to rise again, stronger and more compassionate than ever' (pxvi).

She acknowledges that griever may have difficulty with her title, *The gifts of grief* and that for many the book might sit on their shelves for a while before being opened. The book is written for '... those who are ready and willing to create a new path through life' (p1). As such, it invites the reader into an active process to work one's way through grief, using journaling, guided meditations and recognising that one does have choices as to how one gets through the process. She integrates new findings from neuroscience, physics and biology to speak about how grief and the way in which we are treated during the grieving process get imprinted on our cells, and she speaks of the energy between people. She speaks of repeatedly using her exercises, 'until they replace the old grooves in the brain' (p3) and reminds the reader that each person's grief is unique to him or her, and it will take the time that it takes. Holding onto the pain of grief in the body causes other symptoms, so she encourages griever to move into the pain of grief in order to begin the healing process.

Tappouni's wisdom comes from her own meditations, insights, and her own healing process: 'Then one day in my meditation, I saw my heart and its possibilities. There, among the cracks and fissures, something luminous waited. I set out to determine the source of that light and recognized that I had to make a choice or I would fall into the trap of seeing myself as a victim. Michael, my other children and I deserved more. Unfortunately, just making the choice wasn't enough. I couldn't bypass the dark night and go directly to the light. I had to participate in the entire journey before I could find the grail' (p xvi-xvii).

The exercises in her book are divided into the following: Courage-taking the first step; overcoming fear and judgment; overcoming denial and guilt; healing; compassion and intention.

Other books to which the very helpful and insightful *The gifts of grief* can be compared also involve the concept that the broken heart lets the light shine through. They include: Kristine Carlson's *Heart-broken open*, describing how she was transformed after her idyllic life married to Richard Carlson, author of the *Don't sweat the small stuff* series, ended with his sudden death and Elizabeth Lesser's *Broken open: how difficult times can help us grow*, dealing with multiple different losses. Those interested in more information about meditation and grief will find Sameet

Kumar's *Grieving mindfully: a compassionate and spiritual guide to coping with loss* very useful.

Tappouni's MP3 meditations for grief to accompany the book are available on her website [www.theresetappouni.com](http://www.theresetappouni.com). ■

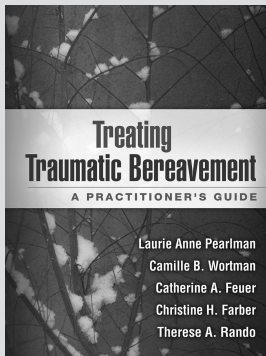
### Mary LS Vachon

Psychotherapist in private practice and Professor of Psychiatry

Carlson K (2010). *Heart-broken open*. New York: Harper Studio.

Kumar SM (2005). *Grieving mindfully: a compassionate and spiritual guide to coping with loss*. Oakland California: New Harbinger.

Lesser E (2005). *Broken open: how difficult times can help us grow*. New York: Villard.



### Treating traumatic bereavement: a practitioner's guide

Laurie Anne Pearlman,  
Camille Wortman,  
Catherine Feuer, Christine  
Farber and Therese A  
Rando

New York: Guilford Press  
2014  
358pp  
ISBN 978 1 4625 1317 8

This book is a welcome addition to the literature. The authors are women who have successfully integrated their accumulated theoretical, empirical and clinical experience into a rich volume on traumatic bereavement. They offer the readers a comprehensive book on a subject that only recently has started to receive a focused attention. Undoubtedly many readers will appreciate the opportunity to learn from the knowledge it contains as well as the practical perspective threaded throughout the book.

The book is divided into five sections and an appendix (including 32 handouts). Part I: *Fundamentals of traumatic bereavement* introduces the reader to basic issues related to traumatic death and traumatic bereavement, loss, grief and the mourning process and aspects of psychological trauma. Part 2 is entitled *Living with traumatic bereavement*, and details psychological dimensions and affected domains of life following traumatic bereavement. Part 3 *Risk factors and related evidence* provides the reader with a range of information about event-related factors, person-related factors and treatment research for grief and mourning, complicated grief (referring also to the debate over the

proposed diagnostic criteria in DSM-5). It also covers post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and research on integrated grief and trauma treatment.

The inclusion of empirical data on treatment efficacy of PTSD and complicated grief sets the scene for presenting in detail an integrated treatment approach as the focus of Part 4. This part is entitled *Guidelines for implementing the treatment approach*, and it lays out the structure and components of treatment, starting with assessment, implementing issues, building resources, processing trauma and facilitating mourning, based on Rando's conceptual framework of the 6 'R's'. Part 5 entitled *Challenges and implementing the treatment approach* addresses two important issues concerning the treatment of traumatic bereaved individuals: treatment challenges, and effects of treatment on therapists.

Upon completing reading the book, I was left with the impression that although the book does address issues of mourning in traumatic bereavement, the part of 'trauma' was more dominant. Less attention was given to the significance of continuing inner-relational factors in mourning. The loss of affiliation or attachment following traumatic bereavement as conceptualised in the Two Track Model of Bereavement (Malkinson, Rubin & Witztum, 2000; Rubin, Malkinson & Witztum, 2012) is a significant dimension in traumatic bereavement deserving a special assessment and intervention: 'The requirement to recognize attachment from a connection to the living person to one now dead is a challenge present in any loss' (Rubin *et al*, 2012, p72).

Integration is the book's most apparent strength: Integrating theory, research and practice; integrating the dual task in traumatic bereavement of mourning the loss and resolving the trauma; and integrating Constructivist Self Development (CSDT), the 'R' process, and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) in a systematically readable book. Finally, it implements a theoretical conceptual frame of reference into applicable clinical practice.

The book succeeds in providing the reader with an up-to-date, state-of-the-art review on traumatic bereavement with case examples, illustrations and clinical reflection on each case. I recommend this book to professionals, practitioners and researchers alike. ■

### Ruth Malkinson

Psychotherapist and researcher

Malkinson R, Rubin SS, Witztum E (eds) (2000). *Traumatic and nontraumatic loss and bereavement: clinical theory and practice*. Madison CT: Psychosocial Press.

Rubin SS, Malkinson R, Witztum E (2012). *Working with the bereaved: multiple lenses on loss and mourning*. New York: Routledge.