

of first-hand accounts and case studies of disasters and explores how the bereaved and survivors were treated. There is a particular emphasis on inquests and enquiries, the law, the media and the importance of corporate memory and responsibility.

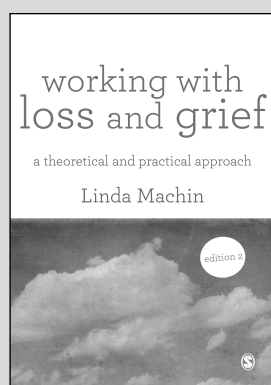
The strength of the narrative lies very much in the power of personal experience, and the reader shares a number of timelines that show how the disaster happened, the immediate actions of emergency and statutory services and most importantly lessons both identified and learned. Some of the stories make for difficult reading, but nonetheless are compelling.

As an experienced military planner and having been involved in a number of significant tragic events, I can relate to many of the stories and experiences of those affected. This book should be essential reading for all individuals and organisations involved in emergency/disaster planning and for those who must deal with the survivors and those affected by events.

It is no wonder that the authors are in demand to talk at planning conferences and training courses and this book is an appropriate legacy of their own and others' work.

Keith Lane

Military Bereavement Project Officer
Cruse Bereavement Care



Working with loss and grief: a theoretical and practical approach (2nd edition)

Linda Machin

London: SAGE Publications Ltd
2014 (first edition 2009)
176pp
£23.99
ISBN: 978 1446248881

This book describes the development of an original model of bereavement and loss, the Range of Response to Loss (RRL) model, and its application in supporting clients experiencing significant loss or bereavement. This second edition updates the research evidence and offers new assessment tools. It also has new material on integrating the RRL model with a pluralistic therapeutic repertoire.

The RRL model maps the widely varying individual patterns of grief as an interaction of two dimensions. First, how far the person's reactions may be controlled ('a need

to avoid emotions and stay within ... safe bounds' p60) or overwhelmed ('being deeply sunk into the distress of grief' p60). Secondly, the person's varying degrees of resilience and vulnerability in mediating the grief reactions such that they are more or less able to function day-to-day. The model is put in the context of a comprehensive overview of the evolution of grief theory and wider social and cultural factors. Theory, accounts of research studies and case studies are interwoven to show how the model grew out of individual stories of grief and how it links conceptually with other key models: attachment theory, stress theory, dual process and personality related.

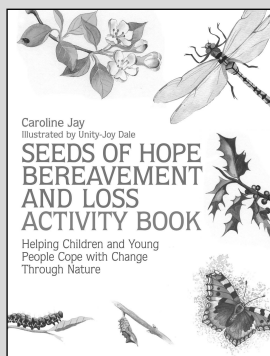
Important in the model's application is a self-report questionnaire – the Adult Attitude to Grief (AAG) scale. Tested and developed in various field studies, the AAG scale is a research and practice tool that measures and validates the RRL components. It asks clients to indicate their responses to nine statements about their thoughts, beliefs and feelings: three each for overwhelmed, controlled and resilient. This gives a picture of the client's emotional and cognitive reactions and coping responses, and is scored to give an overall measure of vulnerability. The book gives guidance for using the AAG scale at different stages in grief counselling to assess the need for intervention, guide therapeutic goals and strategies, and review progress. For Cruse and other bereavement services seeking to develop a more systematic approach, the AAG scale has the advantage of being a validated questionnaire focussed specifically on grief and with professional support – the author invites those interested in working with the AAG scale and becoming part of a user network to contact aag@coreims.co.uk.

I recommend this book to experienced practitioners and all interested in the integration of theory, evidence and practice. Those interested in concepts of resilience, and other assessment and intervention strategies focussed on loss and grief, might also consult Humphrey and Zimpfer (2008).

Sue Wayne

Bereavement Volunteer

Humphrey GM, Zimpfer DG (2008). *Counselling for grief and bereavement* (2nd edition). London: Sage Publications Ltd.



Seeds of hope bereavement and loss activity book: Helping children and young people cope with change through nature

Caroline Jay and Unity Joy Dale (illus)

London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
2015
84pp
£14.99
ISBN: 978 1849055468

This book presents a series of activities based on looking at nature and finding many examples of the cycle of life where there is a beginning, an end and then a beginning again. Each page or double page spread offers a different activity to explore issues related to bereavement and draws on different cultures. Thus the medicine wheel allows the child to explore four characters – eagle, mouse, bear and buffalo – and how they symbolise the seasons, their strengths and how they relate to different emotional states.

Mandalas are introduced from nature and the child is encouraged to use drawing and colouring as a way of creating time to think, and of expressing feelings. I particularly enjoyed the section on the language of flowers and the potential for another way of expressing emotion. The snakes and ladders game vividly illustrates a way of discussing feelings – such as being brought down by incidents – but also finding the ways to more positive experiences.

The book includes several poems and stories relating to loss, and there is a good list of websites at the back of the book. There is also a section aimed at adults that offers thoughts on how children respond to loss at different ages (less than 5, 5-11, teenagers.) A teachers' section offers activity programmes that could be used in primary and secondary schools.

The authors have given permission for several pages to be photocopied for use with the book which include a feelings tree, some 'cut out' stickers and pictures to be coloured in. These are indicated by a tick.

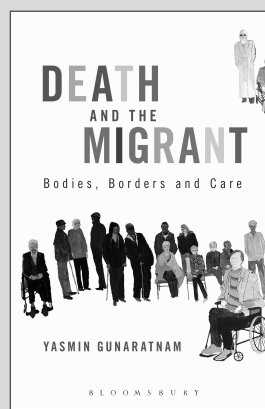
This book could be given to an older child to explore for themselves, and then confer with a supportive adult, or used by an adult to work through with a younger child. The layout and vivid illustrations allow for child and adult to dip in and out, flick through and see what activities they are drawn to in the moment. I feel this would be a valuable resource when working with children and young people, and adults would benefit as well. It complements the author's previous excellent offering, *What does dead mean?* Both

books will be in my resource bag when I meet with young clients.

Janet Dowling

Bereavement Volunteer

Jay C, Thomas J and Dale UJ (illus) (2013). *What does dead mean?* London UK: Jessica Kingsley.



Death and the migrant – Bodies, borders and care

Yasmin Gunaratnam

London: Bloomsbury Academic
2013
208pp
£16.00
ISBN: 978 147251 533 9

Yasmin Gunaratnam's interest in death and dying in Britain arose from looking after both parents (migrants from Sri Lanka) and witnessing their marginality. Finding a need to understand an 'emptiness' she began to research the health care of those who, for whatever reason, are displaced from their territory.

The introduction outlines difficulties faced by migrants, in life, which are then exacerbated during sickness and dying. A chronological journey flows from the beginnings of the hospice movement to the current development of palliative and home care.

The first generation of post-war migrants, plus more recent incomers, are now reaching old age and facing death in what is not their homeland. Many of these early settlers displayed admirable resilience and fortitude. When finding that the UK was not their promised land they struggled to belong, to hold on to love and family values, to maintain dignity and faith. The author causes us to consider not only miscommunication through language, but other issues such as societal and cultural taboos and stigma, living with secrets and lies, identity, food and nutrition, lack of access to historical medical records, medicine, pain control and grieving.

Dying people's stories are told with honesty and compassion, adding reality and humanity, and emphasising their challenges. We hear of the Hindu belief that the soul's departure is eased if the dying person lies on the floor, and of black Caribbean men in the UK being 30% more likely to die from prostate cancer than white men. One man tells of always feeling 'in the wrong box', never being good enough to get other than a menial job, and therefore not good enough to be diagnosed early enough for appropriate treatment. Taking a very sick relative home to die is cheaper than repatriating a

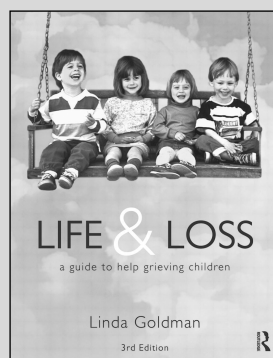
dead body. 'Noisy' mourning in the quiet of a UK hospice is the antithesis to Western ideas about dying peacefully.

Yasmin reinforces the palliative care concept of 'total pain' – physical, social, psychological and spiritual, and the hospice as a 'community of the unalike'. We learn that Colin Murray Parkes was her supervisor whilst volunteering as a hospice worker, to give that element of critical reflection and reflexivity to her research.

Amongst others the extensive bibliography lists Frankl, Winnicott and Walter. Packed with facts and figures, this is an excellent source of reference for any sociology student, and for anyone with an interest in the diversity of human death and dying.

Heather Price

Cruse Bereavement Volunteer



Life and loss: A guide to help grieving children (3rd edition)

Linda Goldman

New York/East Sussex: Routledge
2014
266 pp
£23.99
ISBN: 978 0415630801

In the introduction of *Life and loss* Linda Goldman says 'This book was written for and about children, and for the adults who want to help them with their grief'.

This is a comprehensive overview of grief and loss. It observes the myths surrounding grief and mourning and acknowledges four psychological tasks of grief – understanding, grieving, commemorating and moving on, based loosely on Worden's tasks. Children's developmental understanding of loss is given due credence by offering simple advice on being honest about language and feelings. Family diversity and complexity is addressed in a world where 'diversity is the norm not the exception'. Cultural diversity, same sex parenting, and the impact of separation and divorce are considered and core human values of unity, harmony, kindness and compassion are promoted. Some discussion around technology and the potential challenges regarding children's vulnerability in terms of loss of privacy is also included, as are other losses experienced by children, including bullying, eating disorders, illness, divorce, and homelessness.

Goldman describes creating a **SAFE** and feeling environment for children who are 'acting in or out' by responding to them in a **SAFE** way:

- Seize the moment – to communicate
- Act – reach out

- Find Strengths
- Establish a relationship

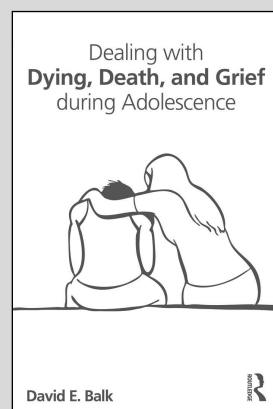
This book is an extremely useful resource for educators and adults who are supporting children. The section on creative ways of facilitating children in expressing their grief including the use of genograms and creative writing in storytelling, writing letters and poetry, all of which are explored in the context of meaning making, is extremely useful. In addition, facilitating memories using memory boxes, books, art, puppets and music is also valuable, particularly as it guides the reader through the use of these resources.

This book is user friendly and the index is so clearly laid out you can dip in and out of it very easily, supported by multiple references and websites which are recommended throughout to support the reader. If I had a criticism, it is that I feel this book tries to do too much. Perhaps the title is a little misleading in stating this is a guide to help grieving children. I assumed it was to support bereaved children. However it does remind the reader that children experience multiple losses and one's ability to cope with loss serves often to promote and re-inforce resilience in grief.

Goldman says 'Children follow the lead of the adults around them'. In this regard, in guiding adults to support children it serves a valuable purpose.

Valerie Keane

Social Worker in Palliative Care



Dealing with dying, death, and grief during adolescence

David E Balk

New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis
2014
268pp
£23.99
ISBN: 978 041553450

David Balk has brought together different theoretical approaches and practice-based evidence for working with adolescents who are bereaved or who are themselves facing a life-threatening illness. He treats them both as a reaction to life crises, rather than an isolated response to one or the other.

He focuses on three sources of bereavement, grief and mourning which adolescents' experience, highlighting the key issues that counsellors may need to address to support young people.

He emphasises that people supporting bereaved youngsters need to develop conceptual frameworks that inform them how to proceed in their work with clients, and enable them to

explain outcomes and identify matters that 'don't go according to expectation', rather than just 'winging it'.

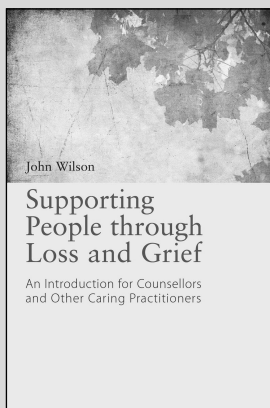
In his first chapter 'Adolescent development and serious life crises', he takes three phases of adolescent development (early, middle and late), and looks at the theory and evidence of responses to life crises that links developmental markers and issues that bereaved adolescents face. He produces useful tables of how adolescents respond to core issues when bereaved or dealing with a life-threatening illness.

Further chapters look at the physical, cognitive and personal changes in adolescent development, and the impact of families, peers, school, media, and gangs on how adolescents learn to function and manage with crises. He considers different models of coping mechanisms to deal with distressing life events, presenting them as a useful aid for counsellors to work with their clients. There is a comprehensive chapter on the principal causes of death during adolescence looking at accidents, murder, and suicide. He addresses chronic, life-threatening disease and terminal illness during adolescence outlining some of the more common forms of life-threatening illnesses which are likely to affect adolescents.

I found the book very useful in summarising the theoretical approaches to adolescence, and looking at the different models of coping and resilience, which would be useful in helping the individual counsellor to develop a better understanding of how to guide and support young people. He gives many examples to illustrate the theory, which helps in relating it to practice. The chapter on interventions is focused at organisations and health care programmes, and as such is not so useful to the individual counsellor, but health care commissioners take note! I feel it is a comprehensive approach to the theory and models of coping and resilience for adolescents, making it a useful addition to the counsellor's bookshelf, and my copy will certainly be referred to regularly.

Janet Dowling

Bereavement Volunteer



Supporting people through loss and grief: An introduction for counsellors and other caring practitioners

John Wilson

London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
2014
248pp
ISBN: 978 1849053761

In her foreword to this new guide for people working in grief support Dodie Graves describes its author as 'a good, safe pair of hands'. John Wilson's track record first as a volunteer (since 1999) and more latterly as a professional bereavement counsellor at St Catherine's Hospice in Scarborough, has equipped him perfectly to provide a clear, accessible and well laid out guide. His book will be useful for professionals, volunteers and especially those who train others in this area of care.

As one who has received the ABC training through Cruse but is otherwise not a trained counsellor, I read this book as a valuable 'refresher'. It takes the reader through the essentials of grief support, including an overview of the nature of grief, the core counselling skills and ways of working with the models of grief, whether with individuals or families. Wilson balances his clear summaries of theory with well chosen examples of practice, drawing on his own experience and some composite clients to bring the theory to life. Chapters on the historical development of grief theory, from Freud to Murray Parkes and beyond, and his chapter on Bowlby and attachment make helpful connections and are excellent introductions for trainees and trainers. Notes for trainers at the end of each chapter are well-integrated and provide practical signposts to turn Wilson's advice into action.

One of the most valuable chapters – because of its honesty – is the one that looks at working with difference. Here Wilson acknowledges the support of his colleague and friend Golnar Byat whose perspective challenges assumptions and provides important awareness about the nature of true diversity in grief support, taking into account the cultural backgrounds of client and volunteer.

This book is a welcome resource for those seeking a well-rounded introduction to grief work. In terms of the clarity of its theory I would place it on the bookshelf alongside Colin Murray Parkes' *Love and loss* and Worden's *Grief counselling and grief therapy*. For sheer practical usefulness I would compare it to Dodie Graves's *Talking with bereaved people*; a clear-sighted guide, grounded in experience, common sense and compassion. I am glad to have John Wilson's book on my bookshelf.

Jane Moss

Writer and Bereavement Volunteer

Graves D (2009). *Talking with bereaved people: an approach for structured and sensitive communication*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Parkes, CM (2006). *Love and loss, the roots of grief and its complications*. Hove, East Sussex: Routledge.

Worden, WJ (1983). *Grief counselling and grief therapy: a handbook for the mental health practitioner*. Hove, East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge.