

LOSS, GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT

Anticipatory Grief and
Pre-bereavement support

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‘Well everyone can
master grief, but he that
has it’

Much Ado about Nothing
Shakespeare (1564 -1616)

Introductions

- ◆ Role
- ◆ Roles of group
- ◆ Confidentiality
- ◆ Personal losses and bereavement
- ◆ How far can you go?

Workshop

- ◆ Theory and research surrounding anticipatory grief and pre-bereavement support
- ◆ Group work on exploring issues relating to death
- ◆ Group work on facilitating bereavement support

ANTICIPATORY GRIEF

'Any grief occurring prior to a loss, as distinguished from the grief which occurs after a loss'

Aldrich (1974)

'The grief that precedes loss leads to an intensification of the attachment and a greater pre-occupation with the other person'

Parke (2006, p1)

Anticipatory Grief

- ◆ Identified role changes prior to the death of a partner
- ◆ Highlighted the positive and important influence of social support (particularly families on the experience of anticipatory grief)

Duke, 1998

Anticipatory grief

- ◆ Can this make bereavement easier or does it 'prolong the agony'?
- ◆ Conflicting findings from research
- ◆ So is there a role for pre-bereavement support?

Walter (1999) On Bereavement – the Culture of grief

- ◆ Grief is like sex. It can be done on your own, it is best done with other people and is disapproved of if done in public'
- ◆ Talking about dying is not an easy subject
- ◆ Unlike bereavement, there is no death and therefore no certainty

In small groups discuss

- ◆ Personal plans for dying and death
- ◆ What is easy to discuss
- ◆ What is difficult to discuss

End of Life Care Strategy (2008)

- ◆ Raising awareness about dying
- ◆ Dying Matters
- ◆ National Council for Palliative Care
- ◆ <http://www.dyingmatters.org/>
- ◆ Can be joined by both individuals and organisations

EOLCS (2008)

- ◆ How we care for the dying is an indicator of how we care for all sick and vulnerable people. It is a measure of society as a whole and it is a litmus test for health and social care services

Health Care Commission, 2007

54% of complaints about hospital treatment were about communication and preparation for death

www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/db/documents/spotlightoncokmplaints.pdf

Black (2006)

- ◆ Supports the positive outcome of anticipatory grief in an editorial in *Bereavement Care*
- ◆ Encourages communication about death both before and after an illness is diagnosed, particularly with children.

Clukey, 2008 - Qualitative Study explored the retrospective perceptions of the anticipatory mourning experience of caregivers

- ◆ Anticipatory mourning involves a dynamic set of processes in response to an expected loss
- ◆ Realisation
- ◆ Caretaking
- ◆ Presence
- ◆ Finding meaning
- ◆ Transitioning

Implications for Practice

- ◆ Awareness of changes family roles
- ◆ Relationship attachments that can cause strain on family systems
- ◆ Familiarity with the complex demands placed on caregivers
- ◆ Caregivers needs for accurate information
- ◆ Anticipatory guidance and support resources
- ◆ Professional expertise - education
- ◆ A caring presence
- ◆ Effective pain and symptom management

ANTICIPATORY GRIEF

'A reaction to a multiple loss situation'

Evans (1994)

- ◆ Physiological
- ◆ Psychological
- ◆ Interpersonal
- ◆ Socio-cultural

Reid, Field, Payne & Relf, 2006

- ◆ Research into 5 English bereavement services
- ◆ Pre-bereavement support and continuity between this and bereavement support were considered important aspects
- ◆ Hospices should address the issue of providing appropriate level of bereavement support

Boerner and Schulz (2009)

- ◆ Talk about the death
- ◆ Reduce caregiver burden and distress
(may be beneficial later)
- ◆ Explore new goals
- ◆ Conversations about end of life issues

Problems?

- ◆ Sharing significant news - what has the person been told?

The truth may hurt but deceit hurts more (Fallowfield et al 2002)

- ◆ Relatives being given the information
- ◆ Wanting/ready to hear the information

Herbert et al, 2006

- ◆ Uncertainty
- ◆ Medical
- ◆ Practical
- ◆ Psychosocial
- ◆ Spiritual

Preparedness for death

Herbert et al (2009)

- ◆ Emotional - at peace with the prospect of death (?)
- ◆ Pragmatic - advance planning eg funeral
- ◆ Informational - end of life care

Case Study

- ◆ Jane, 56, is a single parent of James who is 26. She is aware that she is dying of metastatic malignant melanoma and has told James this. As the cancer has spread to her brain she has difficulty remembering things. James has asked to see someone from Cruse as he is having difficulty with acknowledging the imminent death of his mother.

Case Study 2

- ◆ Ada Jones is 76 and has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease. Her husband Jim is looking after her at home but is finding it increasingly difficult as he says that she is no longer the person he has been married to for 45 years. They have no children and have been a devoted couple. He has asked to see someone from Cruse, as he realises that she is dying but doesn't know when

Worden - Tasks of Mourning, 2009

- ◆ To accept the reality of the loss
- ◆ To process the pain of grief
- ◆ To adjust to a world without the deceased
- ◆ To find an enduring connection with the deceased in the midst of embarking on a new life

As death approaches

- ◆ Groups

How can the soon to be bereaved person be facilitated in their grief?

- ◆ Before/ at the time of death

- ◆ Immediately after death?

And finally

- ◆ Look after yourself