

CommunityCare live21

BDC, London | 12-13 October

Learning sponsor



Hampshire
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Dealing with loss and grief

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Loss and Bereavement in Social Work

In a post covid World

13th October 2021

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The Guardian
University Guide 2022

TOP 25
UK UNIVERSITY

Overarching aim for today - Dealing with loss and grief:

The coronavirus pandemic has created an unprecedented intensity of bereavement and loss for many social workers and the people they support. 18 months on from the start of the first lockdown, this session will consider the ongoing impact of this traumatic period and provide advice and guidance for social workers dealing with their own experiences of loss, as well as supporting bereaved people.

Learning Points:

- ▶ Processing the 'secondary trauma' of the pandemic if those you work with have experienced trauma and loss
- ▶ Managing personal loss and grief while working with people who are also suffering; dealing with 'triggers'
- ▶ Supporting adults and children who have been bereaved, taking into account the impact of Covid restrictions on saying goodbye and grieving and the ongoing effect this may have on family and friends.

Keeping Safe

This is a huge topic that we're only going to be able to scratch the surface of today

LEARNING TO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

The Conflicting Nature of Bereavement



- ▶ Description of the photo
- ▶ Dichotomy of self presentation
- ▶ Inner turmoil of loss for us all
- ▶ Theory of bereavement and the framework it provides

Recognition of Grief

MOURNING AND MELANCHOLIA SIGMUND FREUD (1917)

“WE FIND A PLACE FOR WHAT WE LOSE. ALTHOUGH WE KNOW THAT AFTER SUCH A LOSS THE ACUTE STAGE OF MOURNING WILL SUBSIDE, WE ALSO KNOW THAT WE SHALL ALSO REMAIN INCONSOLABLE AND WILL NEVER FIND A SUBSTITUTE. NO MATTER WHAT MAY FILL THE GAP, EVEN IF IT BE FILLED COMPLETELY IT NEVERTHELESS REMAINS SOMETHING ELSE.”

Grief is experienced after any loss not only death.

- ▶ Over the years patterns of behaviour ,thoughts and feelings have been recognised.
- ▶ That doesn't mean to say that everyone conforms to these patterns.
- ▶ Far from it – we are all unique.
- ▶ However theory can help us consider some of those patterns for ourselves and others.

Theories of Bereavement

- ▶ John Bowlby - Attachment Styles (1960)
- ▶ Elizabeth Kubler Ross - Stages of Grief (1969)
- ▶ Colin Murray Parkes - Phases of Grief (1972)
- ▶ William Worden - Tasks of Mourning (1982)
- ▶ Phyllis Silverman and Dennis Klass – Continuing Bonds (1996)
- ▶ Lois Tonkin – Growing around Grief (1996)
- ▶ Stroebe and Schutt – Dual Process Model (1999)
- ▶ Linda Machin - Adult Attitude to Grief (2009)

Bereaved through Covid

- ▶ Most theories advocate that you try and prepare yourself for an expected death - even when you are prepared you may well experience shock.
- ▶ Need to say goodbye
- ▶ See the body
- ▶ Perform religious or other rituals
- ▶ Attend a funeral
- ▶ **Grieving may be more difficult if you have been denied the above**

How can you help others or yourself?

- ▶ Talk to people
- ▶ Find other ways to express feelings or thoughts
- ▶ Create a ritual – these can help!
- ▶ Visit the grave or crematorium

Added Stresses of Working during Covid

- ▶ Lack of PPE in the first instance
- ▶ Existential threat
- ▶ Pokes at our mortality
- ▶ Lacks security or a framework
- ▶ Worrying about catching it ourselves or passing it on to others.
- ▶ Concerns around being vaccinated
- ▶ Symptoms may be insomnia, depression, fear, anxiety, ptsd, vicarious trauma, irritation ,stress, isolation, worthlessness (All ,of course, can also be seen in clients or service users)

Secondary Trauma

- ▶ Experiencing indirectly the stress of a trauma experienced by someone else.
- ▶ Example – of supervision
- ▶ There may be instances for you where service users have described their situations to you and you have been affected by it.
- ▶ You may not know initially that you have been affected but you may experience feelings/thoughts that don't seem to belong to you.
- ▶ Discussing it in supervision is really helpful!

Research with social work students (2019) with Denise Turner

RESEARCH AT LONDON METROPOLITAN TOGETHER WITH CHICHESTER UNIVERSITY ASKED A GROUP OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS, AMONGST OTHER THINGS, WHETHER THEY FELT THAT THEY WERE TAUGHT ENOUGH ABOUT BEREAVEMENT ON THEIR COURSES.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE ANSWER TO THAT WAS?!

Supervision

- ▶ What do you need from supervision?
- ▶ Do you feel you can talk to your supervisor about your self and what you need? (if not who else can you talk to? It may be helpful to consider counselling?)
- ▶ Do you have a choice of supervisors?

We are them and They are us – the pandemic as a leveller

- ▶ Just because we are social workers it doesn't mean to say that we're not affected by any of the situations we find ourselves working with – it could be us there and in the pandemic it often was.
- ▶ Just because we are supporting others doesn't make us immune
- ▶ It is not weak to ask for help and support – that's one thing I think the pandemic has done – made it easier to ask for help /more acceptable to talk about our mental health – I hope this is true!!

References

- ▶ Beddoe, L. and Davys, A. Challenges in Professional Supervision (2016) Jessica Kingsley
- ▶ Freud, Sigmund (1917) On Mourning and Melancholia
- ▶ Machin, L. [The Range of Response to Loss model as a theory for practice – Mapping Grief \(mapping-grief.care\)](#)
- ▶ Stroebe, M., Stroebe, W. and Hanson, R. (Eds) (1993) Handbook of Bereavement Theory (1993) Cambridge University Press
- ▶ Turner, D. (Ed) (2021) Social Work and Covid-19: Lessons for Education and Practice Critical Publishing
- ▶ Turner, D. and Price, M. (2021) 'Resilient when it comes to death': Exploring the significance of bereavement for the well – being of social work students " has just been published in Volume 20, Issue 5 of *Qualitative Social Work*

Resources (General)

- ▶ At a Loss - www.ataloss.org
- ▶ Bereavement UK - www.bereavement.co.uk/
- ▶ Cruse - www.cruse.org.uk
- ▶ Dying Matters - www.dyingmatters.org
- ▶ Hospice Uk - www.hospiceuk.org
- ▶ Macmillan - www.macmillan.org.uk
- ▶ Marie Curie - www.mariecurie.org.uk
- ▶ SCIE - www.scie.org.uk
- ▶ Sue Ryder - www.sueryder.org

Resources (Covid)

- ▶ www.bps.org.uk/coronavirus-resources/public/coping-death-and-grief
- ▶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-the-bereaved/what-to-do-when-someone-dies-during-the-covid-19-pandemic
- ▶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/steps-to-take-following-the-death-of-a-person-who-worked-in-adult-social-care-in-england/bereavement-resources-for-the-social-care-workforce
- ▶ [September: Bereavement during COVID-19 | News and features | University of Bristol](#)
- ▶ www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk

Resources (Children)

- ▶ Childhood Bereavement Network - [Childhood Bereavement Network](#)
- ▶ Child Bereavement UK (CBUK) - www.childbereavementuk.org
- ▶ Compassionate Friends - www.tcf.org.uk
- ▶ Grief Encounter - www.griefencounter.org.uk
- ▶ Helen and Douglas House - www.helenanddouglas.org.uk
- ▶ Together for Short Lives - www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk
- ▶ Winston's Wish - www.winstonswish.org
- ▶ Young Lives versus Cancer (formally CLIC Sargent) - www.younglivesvscancer.org.uk/what-we-do/

Resources (Specialist)

- ▶ Age Uk - www.ageuk.org.uk
- ▶ Bereaved from Drugs or Alcohol - www.beadproject.org.uk
- ▶ Bereaved Gypsy or Traveller Families - www.childbereavementuk.org/information-grief-in-gypsy-traveller-families
- ▶ Bereaved by Murder or Manslaughter - [SAMM – Support after Murder and Manslaughter](#)
- ▶ Brake - www.brake.org.uk/how-we-help/get-help-if-a-crash-victim
- ▶ Interfaith - interfaith.org.uk - [The Inter Faith Network \(IFN\)](#)
www.interfaith.org.uk
- ▶ Mencap - www.mencap.org.uk/search?search=bereavement
- ▶ Papyrus (suicide prevention) - www.papyrus-uk.org
- ▶ Samaritans - www.samaritans.org

Resources (Specialist)

- ▶ Sobs - [Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide – Overcoming the isolation of people bereaved by suicide \(uksobs.org\)](http://uksobs.org)
- ▶ Stillbirth and Neonatal Death - www.sands.org.uk
- ▶ Support for people with autism - www.autismspeaks.org/grief-and-bereavement-resources

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